

12 TIPS FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH TIC DISORDERS AND TOURETTE'S



Lack of knowledge:

Misunderstanding of tics can lead to beliefs that ticking is voluntary and can be controlled resulting in ineffective management strategies.

Punishment for tics:

Students may be punished for ticking, to “stop it,” or even rewarded for not engaging in tics – none of which address the involuntary nature of tics.

Impact on well-being:

The mismatch between the student’s lived experience and a punishment/reward system can cause stress and worsen their tics.

Waxing and waning of tics:

Tics may vary in intensity, leading to the false belief that the student is “doing it on purpose” during a more intense phase.

School-wide awareness:

A culture of understanding the involuntary nature of tics, along with tolerance in the school environment, helps reduce tics, improve management and decrease bullying.

Balanced approach:

Offer suitable accommodations that allow students to participate in all school activities in a way that works for them, ensuring emotional safety and proactive management.

Individualised management:

Tailor strategies to each child's needs – stress and unpredictable events may worsen tics for some, while boredom may have the same effect for others.

Collaboration is key:

Regular feedback and collaboration between family and school is crucial for appropriate classroom management and curriculum planning.

Monitor tic patterns:

Identify times when tics may be more intense and adjust support strategies accordingly, while fostering the student's strengths and interests.

Support for adolescents and adults:

Appropriate adaptations may also be needed at home or in the workplace as the individual grows.

Consider comorbidities:

Conditions like ADHD and OCD may be just as important to address as the tics themselves. A holistic approach to the child's needs ensures better outcomes.

Education awareness:

Understanding the complexities of tic disorders help differentiate between oppositional behaviours and tics, leading to more effective management strategies.