



Josh, Kelsey & Alex  
(11/96) of NY



**M**y role model is someone very close to my heart. My role model is someone I can really

look up to, I mean look down to. My role model is my younger cousin Alex, who is 11-years-old. My cousin Alex is a triplet. He has a brother and a sister. My cousin's story starts out very sad. He, his brother and sister were born about 3 months early. When they were born, they were all very small, but Alex was the smallest. When he was born his approximate weight was 1 pound 6 ounces. His brother and sister had to stay in the hospital for a couple of months when they were born, but Alex had to stay in the hospital for 13 months. He went to a developmental hospital when he was about 6 or 7-months-old, where the children were very sick and disabled. Some of the roommates he had died, which was very tragic. But luckily, Alex got strong enough to go home.

When he was only a couple of months old, he had a very hard time eating so the doctors had to insert a tube into his stomach. The tube was a feeding tube and liquid food was put in the tube. He had to have this tube in his stomach until he was a toddler. I remember the experiences after they took the tube out. Every time we were together for a holiday or another occasion, whenever we ate, my aunt and uncle had to take Alex in another room to feed him and you could hear him screaming very, very loudly. It also sounded like he was choking sometimes, and it was really scary. I could really feel his pain. You're probably wondering how Alex is doing today. Right now Alex is doing great. He is eating normally and he eats more than his brother and sister. He is also the biggest one of the triplets now. I really find that amazing. That is why my cousin Alex is my role model.

Alex is my role model for many reasons. Alex has always given me hope. He has shown me that anything is possible. He has also taught me to never give up. Alex has gone from the smallest to the biggest so if you never give up and fight for what you want, then nothing is too far or ever out of reach. One thing I really love about Alex is no matter how bad a situation might seem he can always make you smile. He always smiles when times are at its



Amy with Alex & Phillip with Kelsey and Josh  
The triplets first picture together at 9 months old.

darkest. Another thing I really admire about Alex is that he doesn't fall into peer pressure. He's not really interested in most sports and he is not afraid to do what he wants to do. An example of that was in sleep away camp this summer, when he didn't really want to play sports. He decided to be in the musical no matter what anybody said to him. I was really proud to see him up there with that big huge smile on his face. There is another thing I admire about Alex. He has plenty of courage. I would never have the guts to be in the show and get in front of everyone. He has also had a couple of surgeries and was very brave. Even though he has had all this happen to him in his life, I have never seen it stop him. He can avoid any obstacle no matter how big.

Alex has taught me many things in my life. I have learned that you shouldn't let anything stand in your way and control the way you live your life. I've learned to not give up on a goal or dream you have just because you're a little different from everyone else. Whenever I think an obstacle is too big for me to face, I just tell myself Alex has gone through harder times and has gotten through it. I know my obstacles are nothing compared to what he's faced. Alex has taught me to fight for what I want and to not give up. I am so lucky to have a cousin like Alex because he's touched my life in many ways.



by Will Gladstone of New York  
Will is 13-years-old and in the 8th grade.  
He is interested in all sports and likes to write.  
He lives with his mother and father,  
Lori and Fred, and his 17-year-old sister.

