



## From Small Acorns



### Growing pains fade says **Tiny Tom**

I'm playing football, running down the wing at full pace.

"Oi, midget! Pass!" my striker shouts.

I remember this because it was the first time I'd been picked on because of my height. It struck me really hard. I was only 12 and already being demoralised by what others thought about my height. It left me wanting to be bigger. I remember being worried about how I was to survive? Such a small lad in a big, scary, unforgiving world?

I'm now 15 and still only five foot one inch. I get all the stereotypical comments, and even more inventive ones like 'Tinie Tempah'; I have a shortfuse you see... Even teachers say or do things that are hurtful even if they don't realise it. When I speak to them they ask whether my neck is sore from looking up, but it never is, or they sit down, abruptly, to be at my eye level.

What makes short people short? It's a question I get asked a lot because I'm little. For most people it's down to genetics. Both my parents are short so it's likely that I will be too, although things

like height, eye colour, and hair colour can skip a generation so you never know.

If, like me, you're still a teenager, it could be that you just haven't hit full throttle IN puberty yet - so you'll grow up eventually. If that happens to me, then great, if it doesn't, still great I've come to terms with the fact that I'll probably never be tall.

Although my height has never prevented me from doing anything, other than go on rides at the theme park, I still get picked on because of it.

**“You could say it's difficult being short like me, having to jump up to open the window or climb all over my kitchen units for a pack of biscuits”**

It was at its worst a couple of years ago. I was constantly teased and one day I flipped out and ran from the classroom (mistake 1). Then I pretended I was ill to stay off school (mistake 2). And I didn't tell my mum (mistake 3), as I was worried what she would think. I don't know why

it did affect me so much.

I say 'did' because now I couldn't care less. I made a decision that I wasn't going to let them get to me. That was it, the point where I turned. I didn't care any more what people thought. I ignored them and moved on. It really worked! And they just left me alone.

You could say it's difficult being short like me, having to jump up to open the window or climb all over my kitchen units for a pack of biscuits. Although my height affected me in a negative way at one point

of the most successful actors. Because of his height he got all his great parts, The Penguin in 'Batman' or his part in 'Twins'. Lets be honest if he wasn't short the directors wouldn't even think twice of giving him those roles.

You see, being short isn't all that bad. I mean, yeah, you might encounter a few more hiccups on your path than some people, but that's life. Your height is not a burden. It's you. Don't EVER feel bad because people's ideas or views are incorrect and stupid.

## Call Calm

Exposure recently secured a grant from The Big Lottery's Awards for All scheme to highlight the issue of suicide in young men, as well as promoting services that exist to help them - specifically the Campaign Against Living Miserable (CALM).

We worked with local young poet Alex Canwell and acclaimed animator October Jones, both of who volunteered their services for free, to produce this brilliant short, the first part of the campaign.

Raising awareness to ensure more young men talk about their problems is a key way to combat suicide. The silence is killing us. No more.

To watch and share the animation please visit:

[www.youtube.com/exposureuk](http://www.youtube.com/exposureuk)



## Heart Locker

Exposure has secured a contract to deliver an exciting animation project for the National Health Service in south London. We're going to be creating three animated sequences and three interactive games to help promote a new online service for young people called My Health Locker, which is due to launch in 2013.

The service is designed to help young people keep track of their own health care, managing their own records, as well as accessing information to develop their knowledge of health and wellbeing.

We're looking for creative young people to contribute their ideas so that the work we develop relates to the target audience. We need your help to create characters and stories, developing scenes and scripts, recording the sounds and voice-overs and

