

**AMBER DWYER SUCCESS STORY**  
**Division 6 – 1<sup>st</sup> Place**

All my life I had been the kid to be made fun of. I was always the overweight girl in my class. In my 8<sup>th</sup> grade year, I wanted to be known as the girl who did something with her life. I wanted people to see me as I was not the biggest one in the class or who could eat the most Twinkies without throwing up first. I joined TOPS on August 27, 2007. I thought oh I am not going to fit in here – I'm just a kid. The TOPS members opened up with loving arms and said welcome. I had never felt this way before about anything! At first I laid back watched what was going on and finally I got involved.

I would go to meetings and they would have different things to do and various recipes to share. I would take them home and not do any thing with them because I thought they wouldn't help me. I would come to TOPS and lose 1/4 to 3/4 lb. of weight every other week. I wasn't satisfied so I asked how I could lose more. They started giving me recipes and asked what I like to eat. Then we did menus and would really track how much I was eating and I said to myself, "wow that's a lot of food."

I started cutting my portions down, I didn't change what I was eating Just cut portions down. I would go to TOPS and see that I was still only losing 1/4 to 3/4 lbs every other week. I got more recipes from my TOPS Members and they told me the foods that worked for them and the foods that might work for me. I did this and I noticed I was losing a 1/2 to 1 lb. every week. I thought to myself this is good but I still didn't feel healthy about myself. I was encouraged by my friends, family and TOPS members to join a sport or exercise a little by walking each week. I begin walking but not seeing results that I wanted. I started to play softball. I was exercising every day for 2-3 hours and was losing 1 to 2 lbs. every week. I then took up golf. Golf was hard walking up all those hills with your clubs on your back but I found it was fun. I then went to basketball --- lots of running and I mean lots of running, but my coach told me to take it at my pace and I would eventually catch up with the other girls. By the end of the season, I was only missing my sprints by 5 seconds from the other girls. Prior to that I was 30-40 seconds behind the girls. I was losing inches before I begin losing weight. My body fat then turned to muscle and I saw myself as a whole new person.

**I got caught up with everything I was doing and I stopped going to TOPS for a week and then I would go and miss a week – it became an off and on thing! Little by little I was putting on more and more weight. I starting going to weight room at school for 2-3 hours a day so that I could keep up with my exercise.**

**I still go to TOPS every week as well as working out every day. I realize TOPS is taking off pounds sensibly but it's facing the scale every week and telling your peers that you gained.**

**That's why its easy to do your exercise at home and step on scale and say oh I gained again. When you're in front of your peers and say you gained, it's a whole different experience and you have to face the scale I'm going to lose weight not for that boy, not for my friends, but for me!**

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