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Motivational speaker John Coutis talks about his life and shows off his mode of transport to Faith Baptist students yesterday. Picture by CRAIG CHAPMAN talk080306-5

'Not every day is a bad day'

By NATALIE PEUT
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JOHN Coutis doesn't ride around on a skateboard to look cool.

For him, it's a necessity. John was born with a severe disability that rendered his legs useless, but he defied medical opinion by refusing to die.

But John's fight for survival was nothing compared to the ordeal he suffered at the hands of school bullies. "From the first week I

started school at the age of 10 I started to be bullied because I was different, but it just got worse," he said.

"It was only the second week of school, I was tied up and put in a bin, and they then lit on fire.

"It was terrifying. I thought I was going to die, until a female teacher put herself in danger to save me.

"These people were out to murder me, all because I was different."

John said he later had his

legs amputated and now uses a skateboard to get around, despite having a wheelchair.

He said he kept to the motto: 'treat people the way you want to be treated'.

"I try to stay positive, but I do have my down days — everyday's not a good day but everyday's not a bad day," he said. John has been visiting various schools around Gladstone thanks to the sponsorship of the local council and the Central Queensland Ports Authority.



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