



## Speaking from Experience Young People & Type 1 Diabetes

### Transcript for chapter 6 of 8: Support

**Michael 18, diagnosed 16:** Mum, in particular, she's really good. When I was first diagnosed, with all the meetings with the educator and the dietician, she took it all on board and was putting it into place and everything.

**Marlon 10, diagnosed 6:** When I'm frustrated about diabetes, I talk to my mum.

**Michael:** The rest of the family are really good as well, but mum in particular. The rest of the family follow suit.

**Kayla 15, diagnosed 11:** I mostly talk to my friends about it. They always ask how I'm feeling and if I feel sick.

**Andrea 19, diagnosed 12:** If people notice that I don't look too good, or if I'm not acting normally, they'll tell me to go check my blood sugar levels. Like, I know I can get a bit agitated or upset when I'm low without any reason. So, sometimes, if I get really annoyed at my mum or my sister, more than normal anyway [laughs], they tell me to go just check myself because I'm not acting normally. So people pick up on it as well. One of my other friends could pick up whenever I was high because my eyes looked different. I don't understand why, but she would always say to go check my BSL because I was high.

**Tori 19, diagnosed 6:** Sometimes things are happening and you're getting a bit angry and it's out of character, I might not even know and I might be just going along with it, and they'll say, "Tori, you need to go and get sugar." Yeah, so either going and getting it for me, or taking me with them. Anything like that to treat the hypo is very helpful.

**Michael:** For my close friendship group, it was important to me that they knew about it and understood it. So, before we went away on one of the trips that we were going on... Most of the time, at school, the nurses were there, so if anything went wrong you could just get one of them to help out. But we were going away and it was just going to be us. So, I had all the boys that were going away and my close friendship group over to my house and we had a bit of an information session. It sounds a bit daggy, but it was really beneficial for them and it gave me greater confidence in them, like, if something did go wrong. Really, it wasn't that hard a thing to do. So, we just had them sit around and showed them the testing kit. I showed them all the injections that I have. We had a spare glucagon injection, so I showed them all how to use that. I gave them all the number of who to call if something was going wrong.

**Rachel 19, diagnosed 7:** I'd have hypo kits just in the classroom. All of my teachers knew, and all of the ladies down at the health centre knew that I was diabetic. They were really helpful. I remember my school principal was really helpful as well. He said, "If you need to inject yourself, you should be able to do it anywhere in the school."

**Michael:** While you have all these talks from educators and people at the hospital, all of that can sometimes go a bit over your head. So, talking to someone who was my own age, who had had it for a couple of years, was beneficial because it was a bit more realistic.

**Andrea:** I find that knowing other people, like my friends from diabetes camp who have the same condition as me, that they go through the same things that I do. So, if one day I'm running low all day and it's so frustrating, I know that they understand. There's lots of things that they understand about that other people don't. Like, if you get annoyed with having to inject yourself, they understand because they have to do the same thing. It's also good that, when you're hanging out with them and you have to do an injection at lunch time, so do they. So, you know that you're not the only person in the world who's got it.

**Michael:** Having a good relationship with your educator is good as well, and asking them anything. They're trained to know what to do, and what you're meant to do. So, if you don't know anything, ask them.

**Scott 19, diagnosed 4:** The big figures that have given me an idea about what diabetes is, in my earlier years, would be definitely my Diabetes Educator, for one. There have been a few [Diabetes Educators], but there's been one main one.

**Rachel:** It's definitely important to have a good relationship with your health professionals. I've recently changed from going to a children's clinic to an adult's clinic, so I'm still developing a good relationship with my new doctor because she obviously doesn't know me as well. It's important to find a doctor that you like and that you find comfortable going and seeing and one that you find helpful.

**Andrea:** I think that it's good if you feel comfortable with your diabetes educators and your doctors. I know, personally, I don't really talk to my diabetes educator anymore. But with your doctor, you usually see them at least three times a year usually. It's good, you end up having like a relationship with them. I know my doctor, when I finished high school and when I did my Deb, he told me to bring in my photos. So, it's nice if you can get along with them. You're seeing them all the time, so if you can have a relationship with them, it's really healthy.

**Kayla:** With my friends, I like to hang out and just do normal stuff, like a normal teenager.

**Marlon:** I feel like a regular kid.

**Tori:** That was a good thing for me in high school, if I needed to go to my locker, my friends would always come with me. I was never left alone or felt isolated because of it.

**Rachel:** I think having understanding from teachers is really important when you're a diabetic. I mean, firstly, when you're having hypos and things, it's great for teachers to understand that the child just needs to have something to eat and sit out for a bit.

**Scott:** For me, when the teacher knows what to do in that situation. It's not a sigh of relief, as in I don't have to look after myself, I would act the same whether they knew I had diabetes or not. I can relate it back to me being a lifeguard, for example. People can come in and put their kids in the pool but that doesn't mean that it's my sole responsibility to look after them, they've got to look after them as well. Having diabetes, in the class room, it's the



same kind of situation. I've still got to look after myself, but knowing that they're there and they know what's going on, it's good. It doesn't take my attention off myself, I can still do my work, I still have to pay attention to myself, but if anything happens, they're there to give me a hand.