

Introduction

The American Diabetes Association considers the protection of the rights of students with diabetes a vital part of its mission. This publication continues the effort of the Association to assist advocates who work to ensure that children with diabetes are educated in a medically safe environment and are provided with equal access to all school-related opportunities. Advocates are truly heroes. No work is more important than to ensure that those who are vulnerable receive equal educational opportunity in America's schools. We hope that *Legal Rights of Students with Diabetes* assists you in this important work.

Helping protect the rights of children can be a truly rewarding experience. Approximately one out of every 400 to 500 school children in the United States has type 1 diabetes and, although the exact number of children with type 2 diabetes is unclear, the numbers are increasing. Each of these children faces daily the challenge of managing and overcoming a chronic disease that impacts many aspects of their lives. Many of these children are treated with the dignity and accommodations they deserve. However, other children experience discrimination at school because of their diabetes; their rights are ignored and their health and safety are compromised.

Advocates have a valuable and necessary role to play in ensuring that these acts of discrimination are confronted and corrected. The Association is committed to helping advocates fulfill this role by providing information and resources needed to advocate effectively. This publication has been designed to give advocates information drawn from a variety of sources that will be helpful in advocating for children with diabetes.