

# My Diabetes Story...

## Andrés Alba



### Andrés just wants to go to camp.

Eleven-year-old Andrés Alba of Elburn, Illinois has a strong interest in math and science. The Illinois Mathematical and Science Academy (IMSA) offers an all-day summer camp that fits the wishes of students like Andrés who want to learn more about science, math and technology. Andrés wanted to attend a week-long IMSA camp this summer, but hit a stumbling block because he has type 1 diabetes.

**Andrés, who was diagnosed with diabetes in 2010, lives a happy, normal life.**

He also happens to wear an insulin pump and a continuous glucose monitor (CGM). He is well-versed in his diabetes care, but due to his age, does need help at times. That is because, when he experiences high or low blood glucose, his judgment can be affected. Andrés has attended other summer camps in the past. For example, someone would contact Andrés's mother, Adriana, during the day to update her about his blood glucose numbers and, together, they would decide if his insulin treatment needed to be adjusted. This system worked very well and the camp directors supported it.

### Based on his family's previous camp experience, Andrés expected to attend the IMSA camp.

This was particularly true since IMSA's regular camp program (run during the school year) did fully accommodate students with diabetes. But after researching the summer camp, Adriana learned that a registered nurse would only be available until noon each day. When she asked about diabetes care in the afternoons, she was told by a few of the camp directors that they would not offer any options for afternoon care. They did not propose anything to ease Adriana's concerns. So, Adriana wondered who would be there for Andrés after the camp nurse left at noon each day – and if he could even attend at all.

### Adriana was frustrated. And because the situation seemed unfair, she told the camp directors that she would contact the American Diabetes Association and the local media.

She spoke with one of the Association's legal advocates, who shared specific information about the anti-discrimination laws that applied under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Under the law, *the IMSA camp needed to offer accommodations so that Andrés could attend.* Adriana wrote a letter to the camp that spelled out this information. She also reached out to her local media about the issue. A local television station ran a comprehensive interview of Andrés and Adriana. The segment got a lot of attention, especially because the reporter himself had first-hand knowledge of type 1 diabetes.

### What happened?

As a result of Adriana's efforts – as guided by the American Diabetes Association – the IMSA camp reached out to coordinate the management of Andrés's diabetes care. The camp's staff nurse, as well as the teachers who will have Andrés in their classes, will be trained on his diabetes care. After the nurse leaves each day, the trained classroom teachers will be available. Adriana has a lot of praise for staff at the American Diabetes Association who helped Andrés. "They provided the expert support and direction I needed. The Association gave me superior information and guidance about what to do – both from its national and local staff. Andrés is thrilled to attend this summer. Thank you."

The American Diabetes Association's *Safe at School*® Campaign Helps Children Who Have Diabetes



The American Diabetes Association leads the effort to prevent and eliminate discrimination against people who have diabetes at school, at work and in other parts of daily life.



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