

Safe at School:
Safety and Fairness for
Children with Diabetes



Safety and Fairness for Children with Diabetes

Families of children with diabetes know that diabetes must be managed 24/7 in order for children to thrive and to avoid potentially life-threatening complications.

That includes the many hours their children spend at school, on field trips and in extra-curricular activities.

Some families of children with diabetes have confidence that when they kiss their child goodbye in the morning that the school is ready to provide the diabetes care that their child needs.

Other families worry that their child won't have access to good diabetes management and that their child will be excluded

from activities or have to take an exam when blood glucose levels are plummeting.

The American Diabetes Association's **Safe at School Campaign** is dedicated to

making sure all children with diabetes are medically safe at school and have the same educational opportunities as their classmates.

We do this by developing the tools needed to provide diabetes care at school, and by helping families and school personnel to develop plans to prevent problems from occurring. When problems do occur, we have a team of dedicated lawyers, health care professionals, and other advocates ready to find solutions.



Safe at School Statement of Principles

At its core, effective school-based diabetes management requires three things:

1 All school staff members who have responsibility for a child with diabetes should receive training that provides a basic understanding of the disease and the child's needs, how to identify medical emergencies, and which school staff members to contact with questions or in case of an emergency.

2 The school nurse holds the primary role of coordinating, monitoring, and supervising the care of a student with diabetes. However, in addition to any full- or part-time school nurse, a small group of school staff members should receive training from a qualified health care professional in routine and emergency diabetes care so

that a staff member is always available for younger or less-experienced students who require assistance with their diabetes management (e.g., administering insulin, checking their blood glucose, choosing appropriate food) and for all children with diabetes in case of an emergency (including administration of glucagon). These staff members should be school personnel who have volunteered to do these tasks and do not need to be health care professionals.

3 Children possessing the necessary skills and maturity to do so should be permitted to self-manage their disease in the classroom or wherever they are in conjunction with

a school-related activity. Such self-management should include monitoring blood glucose and responding to blood glucose levels with needed food and medication while utilizing appropriate safety protocols.

These principles are based on recommendations from the diabetes health care community* and form the cornerstone of effective school diabetes care.

**These principles have been endorsed by:*

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists
- American Association of Diabetes Educators
- American Diabetes Association
- American Dietetic Association
- Children with Diabetes
- Disability Rights Education Defense Fund
- Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
- Lawson Wilkins Pediatric Endocrine Society
- Pediatric Endocrine Nursing Society



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A Team Effort

"The unlicensed school personnel I have trained using the Association's training modules have demonstrated the knowledge and confidence to perform diabetes care tasks at school."

-Leah Wyckoff, RN, MS, BSN,

Effective diabetes management at school and during school-related activities requires a team approach including the family, the child's diabetes health care provider, and school personnel. Every team member plays a vital role in ensuring a safe and positive learning environment.

We know that understanding diabetes, and how it is managed is the first step to preventing discrimination.

And because knowledge is the first step to fairness, the **Safe at School Campaign** provides comprehensive resources to help parents and school personnel work together to develop a safe plan for diabetes care in the

school setting. These materials range from sample forms for doctor orders and educational plans to video and training modules that teach school staff about diabetes.



Leah Wyckoff, RN, MS, BSN
School Nurse Consultant
Douglas Co. School District
Castle Rock, Colorado

The **Safe at School Campaign** recognizes the vital role that the school nurse plays as the primary coordinator and provider of care at school and a key goal of **Safe at School** is to provide the school nurse with the resources he or she needs.

The team also includes the Association's expert staff and network of dedicated volunteers who can provide individual assistance, both to prevent discrimination and to take action when it occurs.

Fighting Discrimination

The **Safe at School Campaign**, is ready to help children who face discrimination at school because of their diabetes. Our winning team of passionate volunteers and staff is there:

- To help families each month work through individual problems, families of kids like Connor.

- To tackle challenges – like when two of the largest day care chains in the country refused to admit children with diabetes. That is, until the Association filed a lawsuit that brought an end to exclusive policies.

- To change laws and policies when they stand in the way of good diabetes management as we've done through the passage of state diabetes school legislation and through state-wide changes in regulations.

Using the protections provided by federal and state laws combined with best practices as determined by the diabetes health care professional community, we can help put diabetes care back on a safe track.

Connor C.,
age 6



The **Safe at School Campaign** utilizes a four-step process of education, negotiation, litigation, and legislation to keep children with diabetes safe at school.



- **Educate:** To overcome fear and ignorance about diabetes and legal protections

- **Negotiate:** With our sample written plans and guidance from our expert team
- **Litigate:** When education and negotiation channels have been exhausted
- **Legislate:** When current laws and policies do not provide needed protections

"I am so thankful to the American Diabetes Association for helping me negotiate a 504 plan for my son."

-Amy C., Connor's mother

The **Safe at School Campaign** provides the know-how and resources to pro-actively ensure a smooth transition from home to school and is ready to help overcome any obstacles that might stand in the way.

- Comprehensive written materials and downloadable sample care plans
- Training modules and video for school personnel
- Advocacy materials and workshops for parents
- Train-the-trainer workshops for health care professionals
- Expert staff and a network of committed volunteer attorneys, health care professionals, and other trained advocates who are ready to help find solutions to individual school diabetes care problems
- Workshops for parents and school personnel administered in your local community through several vehicles including the Association's Family LinkSM program



For More Information:

If you need resources to help with back-to-school preparation call

1-800-DIABETES (342-2383)

and ask for a school discrimination packet
or visit **diabetes.org/SafeatSchool**.

If your child is experiencing discrimination at school ask for a discrimination assistance form so that you can speak with a Legal Advocate about your situation.

Other Resources for the Family:

- Planet D: **diabetes.org/planetD**
- Family LinkSM: **diabetes.org/families**

Stop Ignorance, Stop Discrimination, Stop Diabetes

To join the Stop DiabetesSM movement,

call **1-888-DIABETES (342-2383)**

or visit **stopdiabetes.com/one**