



A guide for speaking to families about type 1 diabetes camp

Thank you for your support and engagement in spreading the word about the value of type 1 diabetes camps! For the kids you work with, these camps can unlock a world of fun and learning.

But we understand that parents may have questions. And your guidance will be invaluable! That's why we created this guide to help you answer some of the questions parents may have about type 1 diabetes camps. To help parents find a diabetes camp near them, visit www.diabetescamps.org/find-a-camp.



What are type 1 diabetes camps?

Living with diabetes isn't easy, especially for a child or a teen. There's much to learn for both kids and parents to get prepared for the future. But they don't have to do it alone—and neither do their parents.

At diabetes camps, all kids can come together and grow in a safe, helpful environment. They can learn age-appropriate skills to manage their diabetes, find friends and support that will last a lifetime, gain confidence and independence, and have some fun in a place where diabetes doesn't have to be a barrier!

At camp, diabetes doesn't make kids feel different. Camp is a place where they can just be kids—and learn how to manage their condition at the same time. Because every child with diabetes deserves to feel like they belong.



What are the benefits of going to a diabetes camp?

Kids love summer camp. Kids with diabetes are no exception.

At type 1 diabetes camp, kids can find:

- **Community** where they can meet other people living with diabetes from all backgrounds, learn from their peers, and find friendships that last a lifetime
- **Adventures** where they can have fun, learn, and build their confidence—where diabetes doesn't have to be a barrier
- **Management tips and training** to help set themselves up for success with diabetes in the future
- **Professional support** from diabetes educators to provide one-on-one support

Diabetes camps can be a transformative experience for kids of all ages, and their families too. The skills they learn will be invaluable, and they'll have the chance to make amazing memories.



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How much do diabetes camps cost?

Most camps charge registration and program fees. And most camps charge fees that are far below their actual costs so that camp can be affordable. For low-income households or those experiencing financial stress, most camps also offer scholarships to ensure that all children and teens living with diabetes have access to diabetes camps.



Is there any financial assistance available to help with the costs?

If parents are interested in a diabetes camp, cost doesn't have to be a barrier. Most diabetes camps have programs to help lower the costs—some even fully cover the camp fees. If parents find a diabetes camp that they're interested in for their child, they can call or email that camp to better understand the financial options they have available.



I'm interested in sending my child to a type 1 diabetes camp. How do I choose one that's right for me and for them?

All type 1 diabetes camps are different. Some have different strengths that may make a parent more excited about them over others.

The best way for a parent to compare camps is to look at the specific set up and offerings of each camp.

Some things they may want to consider in their search are:

- What kinds of education will kids get for managing their diabetes?
- What kind of experts are onsite to help teach kids about diabetes management?
- What does a typical day look like for kids at diabetes camp?
- What financial assistance is available, and who is eligible for it?
- Is there any transportation assistance or support available to help a child get to diabetes camp?
- What types of food are served for the kids at diabetes camp?
- Are there any opportunities available to meet other kids, parents, or camp staff before diabetes camp starts?



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What kinds of diabetes management skills will my child learn at camp?

All type 1 diabetes camps are set up to balance fun and activities with some practical learning, so kids can improve their diabetes management skills.

Some of the skills they may learn at camp are:

- Rotating sites for injections, pumps, and continuous glucose monitors (CGMs)
- Drawing up insulin and filling insulin pump cartridges
- Recognizing their own low blood glucose levels
- Understanding insulin to carb ratios
- Giving their own injections and inserting their own pump and CGM devices
- Checking for ketones

The staff at camps are well trained to provide age-appropriate education, so that all kids are gaining some valuable skills that they can continue to use and build on for the rest of their lives.



What other kinds of activities will my kids be doing at camp?

Every camp is different! Some last just for a weekend, and others can be a week or longer. But according to the American Diabetes Association, every child who attended a type 1 diabetes camp got hands-on experience in improving their diabetes management skills, made long-term connections with other kids with diabetes, and got at least 4 hours of physical activity per day (if they were able).

Some of these fun activities at camp include:

- Hiking, swimming, paddle boarding, kayaking/canoeing
- Arts and crafts, music, drama
- Basketball, soccer, football, and fun on fields and courts
- Hang-out time with new friends
- Evening programs
- Adventure camps and specialty programs like sailing and ski camp
- Lots more!

The best way to find out what a kid might experience at an individual camp is to call them and talk about the programs they offer.





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How do I know my kids will be safe at camp?

The thought of sending your kid away overnight can be scary for any parent—and when their child has a chronic condition, it can feel every scarier. But sending kids to type 1 diabetes camp comes with built-in peace of mind.

Diabetes camps are run by experts in managing diabetes—and in training kids to take on age-appropriate care.

Some ways that diabetes camps work to keep kids safe are:

- **Creating an environment** designed for healthy management of diabetes
- **Having medical experts and educators** available to provide care
- **Ensuring all camp staff are fully trained** in diabetes management—in fact, many counselors have diabetes themselves
- **Working together with kids** to make sure they feel supported, both physically and emotionally

If a parent asks you a question that's not covered in this guide, please don't hesitate to reach out to DECA for more information about how to provide an answer. You can reach a DECA team member by emailing info@diabetescamps.org.

We thank you for your support in making sure that every child with diabetes feels like they have a place to belong!

