

# Taking Diabetes to School...

Information for School Administrators & Education Professionals

**Provide a supportive learning environment for students with diabetes.** Treat these students the same as other students except to respond to medical needs. Respect the student's confidentiality and right to privacy, and reinforce the expectation that other school personnel will do the same.

**Identify and train all staff members who have responsibility for the student with diabetes.** Include health staff, teachers, paras, substitutes, coaches, support staff, bus drivers, and administrators as appropriate in your school community. Training for these personnel is based on the student's IHP (Individualized Healthcare Plan) or Diabetes Action Plan and assigned responsibilities for diabetes care. Some will need training in comprehensive cares for the child with diabetes; others will need a focus on recognizing and responding to low blood sugar. A primary or lead school caregiver at school (with backup) should be identified. Don't overlook communication strategies to involve substitutes. The team, including a parent, should meet at least annually to review the student's IHP or diabetes action plan and demonstrate skill competencies related to assigned responsibilities.

**All members of the child's school health team must learn to recognize signs of low and high blood sugar, and understand the appropriate actions to take.** Teachers and other members of the school health team may be asked to provide glucose for treatment of low blood sugar. Some student IHP's or diabetes action plans include injection of glucagon for low blood sugar emergencies. Written direction for the specific student are required to give a glucagon injection. School personnel must be prepared to identify and respond to emergencies.

**Access to food, fluids, restroom, and assistance from school health personnel or other designated staff must not be restricted at any time for the student with diabetes.**

**Support and facilitate communication between parents/guardians of students with diabetes, medical providers, and the school team.** Encourage parents/guardians to keep emergency contact information current. Talk regularly about dosage and treatment changes.

**Blood glucose testing in locations other than the health room is permissible, if**

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Carefully planned, and controls are in place to assure safety of the child and others. Communication strategies to report testing results, and other actions, should be detailed in the student's IHP as appropriate for the student's needs. The student needs to be aware of blood-borne pathogen practices and needs to have a sharps container available wherever blood glucose testing is done.

**Young children, students newly diagnosed, and students with diabetes and other special health care needs, may require the assistance of a licensed nurse at school.**

Not every child with diabetes will require a nurse at school at all times. However, only a Registered Nurse (RN) is credentialed in Nebraska to make the delegation decision regarding the delegation of duties to an unlicensed person.

**Students may carry sources of glucose for self-treatment** with parental and physician consent and assistance in planning from the school nurse. A student cannot be required to self-manage his or her diabetes. The student's IHP or diabetes action plan will identify areas where the student is independent and those where assistance is

needed. Degree of independence may evolve over time.

**Students may self-manage diabetes with:**

- Signed physician authorization for self-management of diabetes at school.
- Current written medical management plan.
- Parent authorization for self-management of diabetes at school.

School personnel are still responsible for the safety of the student who self-manages his/her diabetes.

**Plan for school-sponsored activities (field trips, athletics, etc.) to fully include the student with diabetes.** School staff accompanying the student with diabetes to activities off school premises must be familiar with the student's IHP or diabetes action plan. Assure means are available to access emergency medical care if needed.

References:

Karsting, Kathy RN, MPH (2010) Taking Diabetes to School...

## Diabetes Resources For School Administrators & Education Professionals

### Highly Recommended & Free Resources:

National diabetes Education Program.  
Diabetes Resources for Schools and Youth  
(2012) <http://ndep.nih.gov/hcp-businesses-and-schools/Schools.aspx>

Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation  
[www.jdrf.org](http://www.jdrf.org)

American Diabetes Association:  
[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) and  
[www.childrenwithdiabetes.com](http://www.childrenwithdiabetes.com) (a site for families)

American Association of Diabetes Educators. <http://tde.sagepub.com>

Resources of the Nebraska Diabetes Prevention and Control Program at the Department of Health and Human Services:  
[http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/diabetes\\_index.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/diabetes_index.aspx)

Resources of the Nebraska Department of Education Nutrition Services Program.  
Contact:  
[Sharon.L.Davis@nebraska.gov](mailto:Sharon.L.Davis@nebraska.gov) or see website at:  
<http://www.education.ne.gov/NS/index.html>

### From the School Health Program & Free:

- Sample individualized healthcare plans for the school nurse.
- Professional resources on evidence-based best practices for the management of diabetes in children and youth at school.
- Examples of sample school policies and teaching tools to assist in preparing non-nursing school personnel respond to the needs of a child with diabetes.

Resources on Nebraska regulations governing the practice of nursing, and information for school administrators, school health professionals and others on Delegation Decisions. See:

- [http://www.sos.ne.gov/rules-and-regs/regsearch/Rules/Health\\_and\\_Human\\_Services\\_System/Title-172/Chapter-099.pdf](http://www.sos.ne.gov/rules-and-regs/regsearch/Rules/Health_and_Human_Services_System/Title-172/Chapter-099.pdf) or
- [http://www.center4nursing.com/documents/DelegationmoduleRN\\_REV1.pdf](http://www.center4nursing.com/documents/DelegationmoduleRN_REV1.pdf)

Sample form (Form FH-25) for self-management of diabetes per Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-225, to accompany the student's individualized health care plan. Available: <http://local.hhss.local/FORMS/Home.aspx>

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