

# Case Studies

*...diabetes in the real world*

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# Case Study: Supporting a High School Student Struggling with Type 1 Diabetes – Jordan's Story

## Background

Name: Jordan

Age: 16 years old

Grade: 10th Grade

Diagnosis: Type 1 Diabetes, diagnosed at age 10

Jordan is a high school sophomore who has lived with Type 1 Diabetes for six years. Recently, his diabetes management has become more inconsistent, with frequent high and low glucose episodes reported both at home and at school. His academic performance and attendance have also declined, raising concern from both parents and school staff.

## Main Challenges

- He is reluctant to use his insulin pump or check his CGM in front of peers
- He frequently skips lunch or eats unplanned snacks, leading to fluctuating glucose levels.
- Jordan has missed several classes and tests due to diabetes-related issues or feeling unwell.
- He is showing signs of burnout and emotional distress related to his chronic condition

## Case Study: Managing Type 1 Diabetes in Kindergarten – Emily’s Story

### Background

Name: Emily

Age: 5 years old

Grade: Kindergarten

Diagnosis: Type 1 Diabetes, diagnosed 3 months before school started

Emily is an energetic, outgoing child preparing to start kindergarten in a public school. Her recent Type 1 Diabetes diagnosis raised concerns about how her condition would be managed during school hours. She is on multiple daily injections with a continuous glucose monitor.

### Main Challenges

- Emily is too young to manage her diabetes on her own and teachers and staff are unfamiliar with T1D care.
- No full-time school nurse is available and meal time insulin dosing needs supervision.
- Physical activity affects her blood sugar levels.
- Emotional well-being and social inclusion are important.

# Case Study: Addressing Stigma and Support for Type 2 Diabetes in High School – Malik's Story

## Background

Name: Malik

Age: 16 years old

Grade: 11th Grade (High School)

Diagnosis: Type 2 Diabetes, diagnosed at age 14 (2 years ago)

Malik is a bright and thoughtful high school junior who enjoys music, creative writing, and hanging out with his close-knit group of friends. He was diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes at 14 and has been managing his condition with oral medication, meal-time insulin, dietary changes, and exercise recommendations. Malik recognizes he is in a large body, and his weight has become a source of emotional stress and self-consciousness.

At school, Malik often avoids taking his medication on time because he doesn't want to be noticed or judged. He also skips meals or overeats depending on his mood or social pressures. Malik is aware that his diabetes requires consistent management, but struggles with motivation, stigma, and the emotional toll of being visibly different from his peers.

## Main Challenges

- Malik struggles with body image and fears being judged when taking medication in front of peers.
- Inconsistent medication adherence leads to blood sugar fluctuations and low energy.
- He avoids school lunchrooms or physical activity due to embarrassment or fear of being teased. He experiences low self esteem which results in emotional eating, affecting the management of his diabetes.
- Teachers and staff are unsure how to support him without making him feel singled.
- Peer pressure and misinformation about Type 2 Diabetes leads to internalized shame.

## Case Study: Supporting Emerging Independence with Type 1 Diabetes – Lucas’s Story

### Background

Name: Lucas

Age: 12 years old

Grade: 7th Grade (Junior High)

Diagnosis: Type 1 Diabetes, diagnosed at age 9 (3 years ago)

Lucas is an active and social 7th grader who enjoys sports, gaming, and spending time with friends. As he enters adolescence, Lucas is increasingly eager to manage his diabetes on his own—especially at school. While he has a strong foundational understanding of his condition, he sometimes forgets to check his blood sugar or dose insulin when distracted or embarrassed. This creates tension between his desire for autonomy and his need for continued support.

### Main Challenges

- Lucas wants more privacy and independence in managing his diabetes, but emotional ups and downs of adolescence make consistent care more difficult.
- Peer influence and body image are starting to impact his food choices and insulin timing. He occasionally skips checks or doses to avoid feeling “different” in front of peers.
- His parents and school staff are concerned about safety, especially during sports or P.E.
- School staff are unsure when to step in versus when to let Lucas manage.

# Thank You

