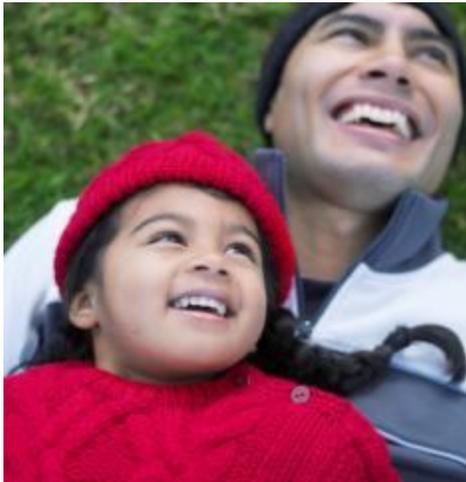


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IMPROVING LIVES. CURING TYPE 1 DIABETES. **T1D**



# Parents & Caregivers: Sharing Life with a T1D – Sibling Focus

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# Overview

- Purpose
- Child Development and Sibling Adjustment
- Research on families and siblings
- Tools and Tips

# Why is this **Important?**

- Diabetes takes a team approach!
- Emotional reactions – not if, but when



# Child Development and Sibling Adjustment

- ❑ Preschoolers
- ❑ School age children
- ❑ Adolescents

# Preschool Development

- Learn and discover
- Desire for control
- Schedule and structure are important
- Energy!

# Preschooler Adjustment

- Ever changing emotions
- Communication challenges
- May develop jealousy or attention seeking behavior



# Helpful Hints:

## Preschool Children

- Try not to allow diabetes to become the primary source of attention
- Involve sibling(s) in choices to increase sense of control
- Use reward systems (e.g. sticker charts)
- Special individual activities with each child

# School Age Development

## Ages 6 to 10

- Increased time away from caregiver(s)
- Noticing differences among peers
  - Fear of being different
  - Teasing/questioning may occur
- All about me
- Issues of “fairness”



# Helpful Hints:

## School Age Children

- Engage in frequent family discussions and family problem solving
- Identify roles for each family member, giving siblings some control over decisions
- Talk specifically about social situations
  - How siblings will handle teasing or questioning
- Support different ways of coping for each child

# Adolescent Development

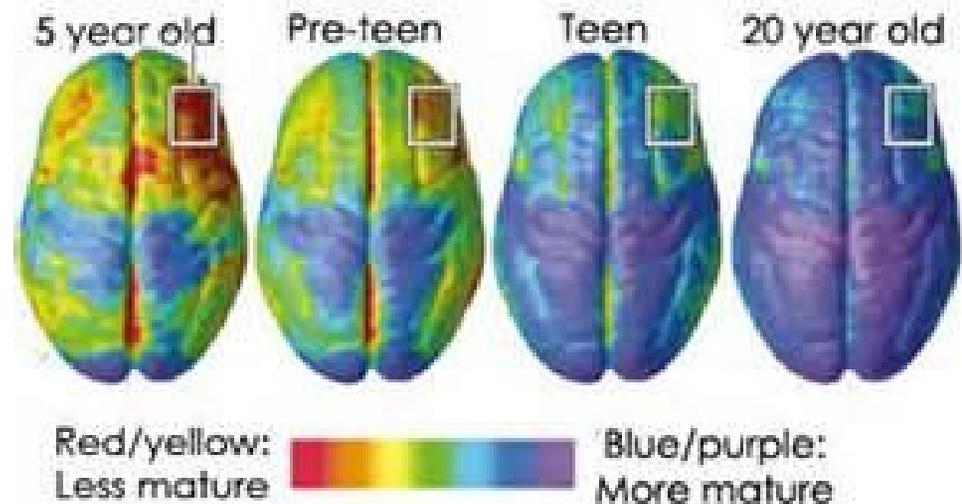
Early: 11-14 yrs. Late: 14-17 yrs.

- Ambivalence about independence
- Development of self-esteem and identity
- Puberty
- May demonstrate
  - mood/behavior swings
  - risky behaviors



# Adolescent Brain Development

- Prefrontal cortex is last to develop
  - Planning ahead
  - Impulse control
  - Decision making
  - Goal setting
  - Emotion regulation



# Adolescent Adjustment

- Strengths
  - Increased problem solving skills
  - Ability to understand siblings health needs
- Challenges
  - Desire to be similar to peers - less involvement in family events
  - Erratic schedules
  - Sense of invulnerability
  - Managing emotions
  - Difficult taking perspective of others

# Helpful Hints: Adolescents

- Avoid putting too much on siblings
- In-person family discussions
- Make a family calendar
- Check-in on emotions and stressors regularly



# Recently Diagnosed with T1D



# Common Sibling Responses to Diagnosis

- Worry
  - “Will I get diabetes too?”
  - “Will my family forget about me?”
- Feelings of being overwhelmed
  - “No one has time for me”
- Embarrassment
- Sadness and grief
- Feeling different than peers
- Guilt
  - “Did my brother get diabetes because I was mad at him?”
  - “Or because he did something wrong?”
- Frustration with changes in the family

# Signs of Depression

- Irritability or anger
- Continuous feelings of sadness
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleep
- Physical complaints (such as stomachaches, headaches) without medical cause
- Increased fatigue/low energy
- Loss of interest in activities
- Thoughts of death/suicide
- Difficulty paying attention
- Feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Reduced ability to function at home, school or with friends
- Social withdrawal

# Research Findings

- Family conflict
- Positive Interactions
- Sibling adjustment

# Family Conflict and Diabetes

- Diabetes-focused family conflict is associated with:
  - Worse adherence
  - Worse metabolic control
  - Worse quality of life
  - Depressive symptoms
- Teamwork and shared goals are important!

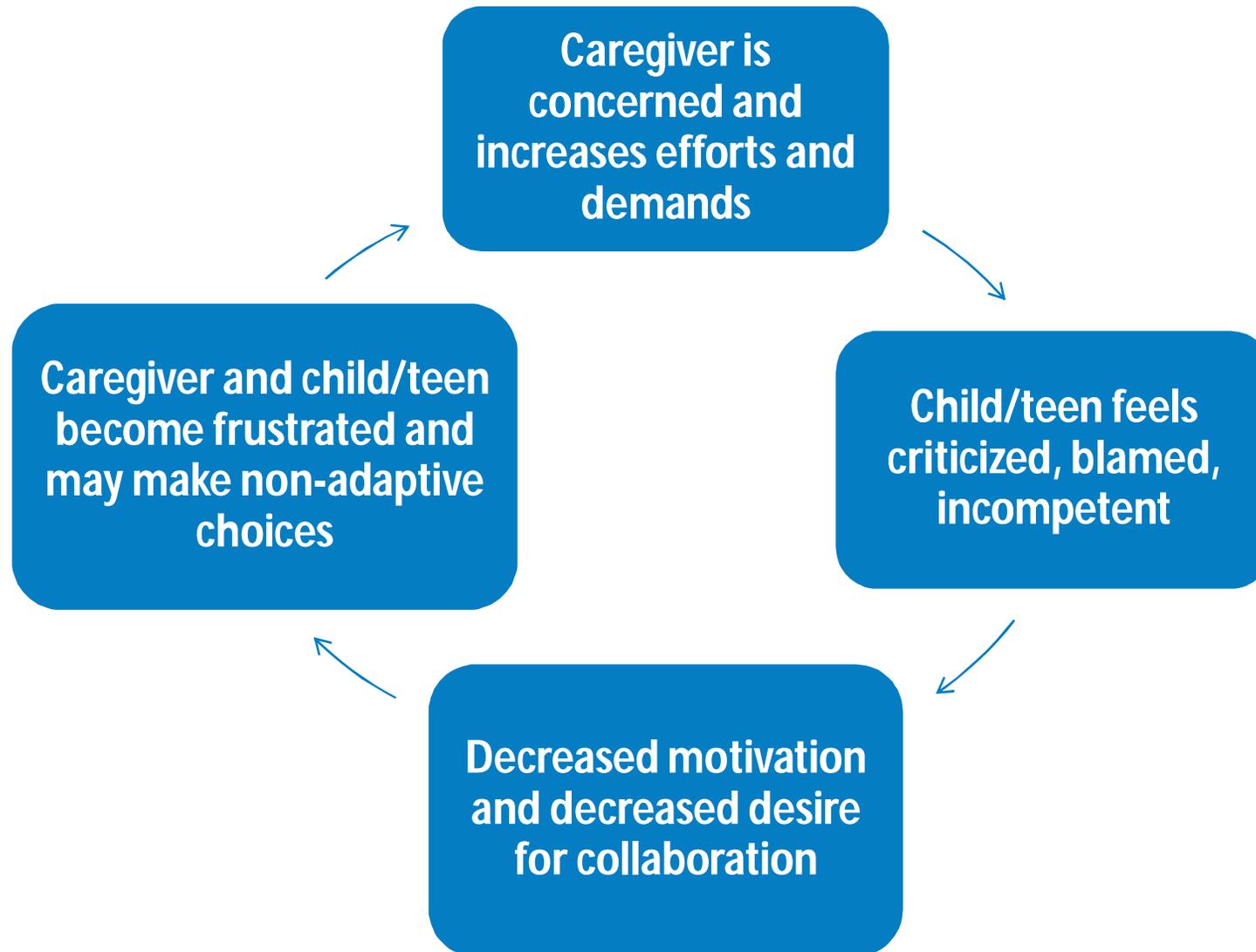


# Positive Family Interactions and Diabetes

- Better adherence and metabolic control associated with:
  - Parent involvement
  - Parent acceptance, communication, and encouragement
  - Higher quality parent-child relationships
- Better child/teen adjustment associated with:
  - Family optimism



# The Cycle of Miscarried Helping

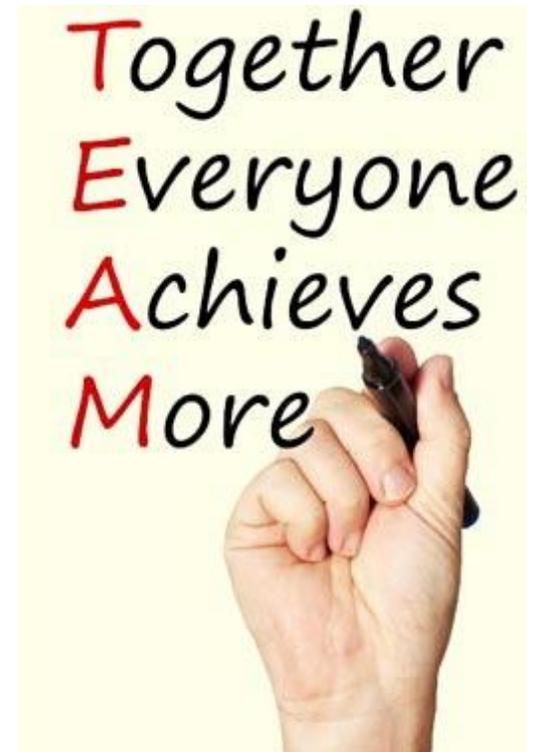


# Sibling Adjustment to Chronic Illness

- Siblings show slightly more symptoms than normative peers.
  - Parent reports of symptoms are more negative than child self-reports
  - Chronic illnesses, such as diabetes that require daily cares are related to poorer sibling adjustment
- Positive effects such as higher social maturity
- Factors related to adjustment in siblings of T1DM
  - Older age at Dx; parental stress, adjustment of patient, parental distress, sibling perception on T1DM

# Questions to Consider

- How do you communicate?
  - How do you problem solve together?
  - What steps do you take to resolve disagreements?
  - What roles and responsibilities do family members have?
- \* Think about how answers may change as children grow and develop...



# Tips & Tools

- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Strong Thoughts

# Family Communication

- Create an open environment to talk about diabetes
- Involve all members of the family
- Enlist peers for support



# Empowering Questions

1. What part of having a sibling with diabetes is most difficult?
2. How does that (situation child describes) make you feel?
3. How would this situation have to change for you to feel better about it?
4. How important is it to you for this situation to improve?
5. What are some steps you could take to improve this situation?

# Communication Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Calmly focus on the problem	Yell, name call, swear
Take turns	Lecture
Stay in the here and now	Bring up past failures
Be honest	Lie about feelings or behaviors
Talk about your thoughts and feelings	Refuse to speak
Use "I" statements	Blame
Listen and re-state to ensure understanding	Ignore
Wait until the other person is finished	Interrupt

# Family Problem Solving

- Provides structure for emotionally charged situation
- Changes focus from “someone’s problem” to a problem that exists between people
- Can involve all family members
- Don’t have to agree, but process will facilitate negotiation

# Problem Solving Steps

## 1. Problem definition

- What is the problem?
- Focus on one problem and don't bring up the past

## 2. Set a goal

- What would you like to happen?
- Make sure it is clear and achievable

## 3. Brainstorm ways to accomplish goal

- How are we going to get it done?
- Take turns listening ways to accomplish goal
- Anything goes!

# Problem Solving Steps Continued

## 4. Evaluation

- Is this a good idea?
- Each family member rates each solution as positive (+) or negative (-)
- Choose one of the suggestions that had the most +'s

## 5. Action plan

- What is going to happen?
- Write down a plan for monitoring progress
- Ensure every family member has a role

## 6. Revision of goal

- What happened?
- After trial period, evaluate success or failure and problem solve again as needed

# Problem Solving Example

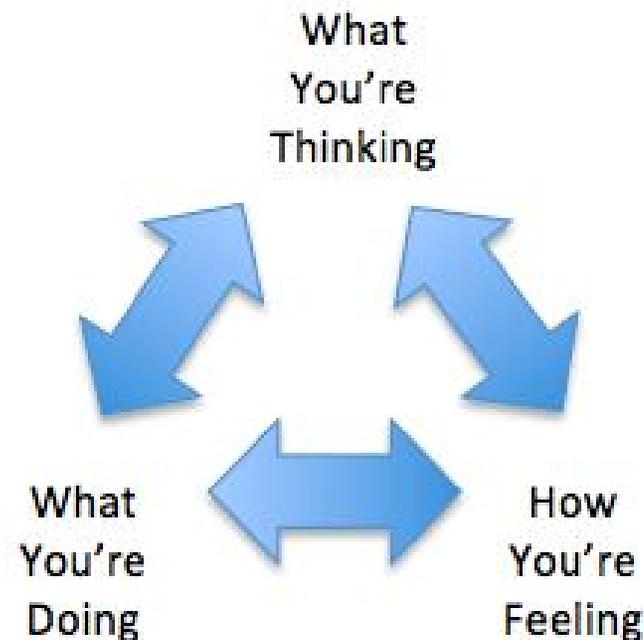
Problem definition: Johnny (T1D) gets mad when sister Suzie gets to “eat whatever she wants, whenever she wants”

Goal: Reduced arguments between Johnny and Suzie (less than one per week)

	Ways to Accomplish Goal:	M	D	J	S
1	Everyone eats the same foods for snacks/meals	-	-	-	-
2	Low carb snacks available for “anytime eating”	+	+	+	+
3	\$1 in family fun jar for every day Johnny and Susie get along well	+	+	+	+
4	Everyone eats at the same times	+	+	+	-
5	Hire a personal chef to make individual meals/snacks	-	-	+	+

# Strong Thoughts

- Our thoughts about a situation impact our feelings and behavior
- Often involve thinking something isn't fair
- Involve a belief that there is no solution



# Softening Strong Thoughts

- Will reduce the strength/severity of emotions experienced and will oftentimes lead to behavior changes
- Softening a thought/belief is a small change in the thought not a polar opposite change
  - “Diabetes is the worst thing in the world”
  - “Diabetes isn’t fun but it is treatable”

# How to Soften a Thought

- “What was your first thought (to the situation)?”
- “How do you feel?”
- “What do you do?”
- “What happens?”

# Questions?

## Sibling Property Rules

1. If I like it, it's mine.
2. If I'm holding it, it's mine.
3. If I can take it from you, it's mine.
4. If I had it a little while ago, it's mine.
5. If I'm chewing something up, all the pieces are mine.
6. If it's mine, it must never appear to be yours anyway.
7. If it just looks like mine, it's mine.
8. If I saw it first, it's mine.
9. If you are playing with something and you put it down, it automatically becomes mine.
10. If it's broken, it's yours.