

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

A sampling of more than 300 stories from families of kids with diabetes in Ontario schools

...When my daughter was in JK, I was called into the principal's office and told that she would no longer be able to attend school until she was old enough to take care of her diabetes. The principal suggested coming back in grade 1 or 2. I said that I would make myself available to come in to test her blood sugar, but the principal told me that she was an 'out-of-control diabetic' and a 'risk'. She'd never even had a severe low or high while in school...!

...When my daughter was first diagnosed in Grade 2, she had a teacher tell her that she had to check her blood sugars in the washroom. Once there, the only place to set the meter down was on top of the garbage can, which was knocked over by another student, causing all her testing supplies to fall into the garbage. The teacher felt the rest of the class was at risk of AIDS if my child tested her blood sugar in the classroom.

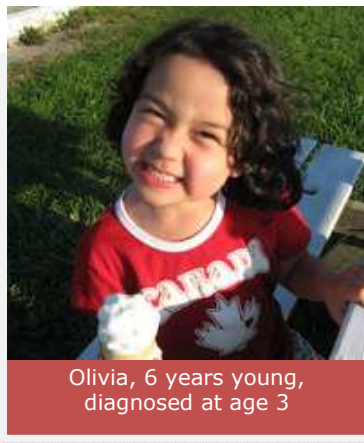
...I was told by CCAC that my daughter was "allowed" only *one* blood glucose test and injection by a nurse per school day. The rest, my daughter would be responsible for herself – *at four years old!!*

...I heard from a classroom assistant that she walked by my son's class one day and saw him with his head down. [He was having a 'low']. The teacher just ignored it (she told me he needed to get more sleep at night). The TA intervened and got my son juice. Another day, our caregiver went to the school at the end of the day only to find my son lying down in the sandbox – again, low blood sugar.

...There is a serious lack of help in schools... [on days] when I can't get a nurse in to monitor my son's medical needs, he simply can't go to school, which is a violation of his fundamental right to an education

...We had 3 events in which my daughter went 'low' and school staff would not give her juice until they reached me by phone, because they had been told by the VP and school board Supervisor that they were "not allowed to use, read or interpret her [blood glucose] meter. They were not permitted to determine that 2.2 was less than 4.0 (the guideline I provided) and would therefore not give her juice."

... During our first meeting, the school administration suggested our 5-year-old daughter belonged at a special school if she needed medical assistance ...One of the biggest obstacles we faced was that the school board was unwilling to help and was able to hide behind the complete lack of legislation or policy for children with diabetes in Ontario schools...



Olivia, 6 years young,
diagnosed at age 3

...As a diabetes educator, I am concerned about schools' responsibility for the safety of children with diabetes. More attention is given to children with peanut allergies and asthma. Somehow diabetes is handled differently. Each school is different and we need consistent procedures for all that ensure the safety of these children.

...While in JK, my son went 'low' one morning and was sent to the office at 9:30 am. He was left slumped in a chair until the CCAC nurse arrived at the school at 10:20 am (10 minutes early for her 10:30 appt). *His blood sugar was 1.8 mmol/L!!*

...Our school system(s) does not have the checks and balances in place to ensure that the children with diabetes and most especially those under 12-14 years of age, have the support, supervision and care needed that they are given the best opportunity to do well at school while not risking problems with their diabetes." – *Dr. Denis Daneman, Paediatrician-in-Chief - The Hospital for Sick Children*