Dealing with the “Real Highs and Lows” of Diabetes in Youth

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#1 - Mobilize Social Support

Good family, friends, and classmates can save more lives than . . . seatbelts, broccoli, and colonoscopies combined.

The Power of Support

- Framingham Heart Study
  - Links to health and health behaviors
- Sheldon Cohen, Ph. D.
  - Direct links to health
- Barbara Anderson, Ph. D.
  - Negative impact on health behaviors

The Grievance Story

- Grievance
- Personalize
- Tell the Story
- and Tell the Story
- and Tell the Story
- ...Fatigue Social Support

#2 – Behavior is the Goal

Weight Management = Weight Loss?
Low Fat = Low Cholesterol?
Taking Insulin = Normal Sugars?
Behavior is the most important drug in healthcare.

#3 – Talk the Talk

Psycholinguistics: The words we use shape the way we think, which drives the way we behave.
Language of Diabetes

- Bad Blood Sugars
- Sneaking
- Cheating
- Doesn’t Care
- Pokes
- Diabetic

- Testing
- Control
- Suffering
- Afflicted
- Compliance

Good, Bad, and Ugly

- Blood Sugar = Info
- A1c ≠ Adherence
- Target A1c ≠ Celebration
- No BAD sugars
- Blood sugar = Celebration
#4 – Feed the Elephant

The emotional brain is powerful and if you don’t take care of it, it will crush you.

Elephant and Rider

- Jonathan Haidt
- *The Happiness Hypothesis*
- Emotional Brain and the Rational Brain
- Elephant and Rider
- Rider is analytical
- Elephant gets things done
- Rider delays gratification
- Elephant goes for the quick payoff
#5 – Celebrate Successes

It is easy for diabetes to become punishing . . . it’s important to celebrate the small wins.

Keep it Simple, and Effective

- Reinforce anything you can
- Punishment doesn’t work
- No natural cues
- Plan a vacation
- Helping is about support
- Basecamp on the climb
Diabetes for Life

- Reinforce behaviors NOT numbers
- Avoid the grievance story
- Healthy sense of self
- Remember the challenge
- Move towards embracing diabetes

Thank You

80% of success is showing up

- Woody Allen -