Mother Daughter Communication

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Road Map

- Brief overview of why communication is important
- Learning basic strategies to improve communication
- Practice makes perfect
Family Findings

• Optimal diabetes management and lower A1c values related to:
  – Parents remaining involved in diabetes care
  – Shared responsibility throughout adolescence
  – Low levels of diabetes-specific family conflict
  – Better family communication
Communicate Effectively

**Strategies:**

1. Engage in Active Listening
2. Empathy—we all have a different goal
3. Ask about other things before diabetes
4. Getting our point across: I messages
5. Use a “matter-of-fact” style

Supported by studies from Harris, Jaser, Anderson, Wiebe, Ellis, and Cameron
Active Listening

• What do we mean when we say *Active Listening*?
  – Undivided attention
  – Body and behavioral cues of listening
  – Let person speak through an entire thought
  – After, try to summarize and check if you got it

• Watch 2 interactions and point out differences
Increase Empathy

- At least 2 people in all communication
- May have different goals
- This can mean it feels like you are talking two different languages
- To help, we work on increasing our empathy
  - Understanding where the other is coming from
Exercise

• Everyone write down anonymously:
  1. Your main diabetes goal
  2. What you think your (mother or daughter’s) main diabetes goal is

• Raise your hand when done and we will collect into jars
The Whole Person

• Sometimes diabetes overshadows everything
• This is normal! Comes from love and worry
• May feel like all you talk about is diabetes
• A rule of thumb, always start a conversation with “how are you?” or “how was your day”
I versus You statements

• When we do talk about diabetes, important how we talk about it
• “You” statements increase feelings of blame
• “I” statements simply state a problem
• What is the difference between these two scenes? (we role-play)
  – How might Diana be feeling?
  – How might Jen be feeling?
Together with your parent we would like you to role-play this scenario:

Just came home from school at 3 pm BG is 385 & there is no bolus in the pump history since 7 am and no BG test.

• Daughters practice “you” statements asking mom’s about diabetes
• Mom’s—write down how you feel
• Then switch roles, so mom’s ask about diabetes, but practice using “I” statements
• Daughter’s—write down how you feel
Strategies specific to diabetes:

1. Think of blood sugars as information
2. Do not react (as hard as it sounds)
3. Increase likelihood diabetes tasks happen again by positive reinforcement (thanking the check)
Summary

• Open communication is important for forming positive and healthy relationships between parents and teens.

• Communication can influence diabetes management and outcomes.

• We can all improve our communication by building our communication skills.
Thank you.
Questions? Comments?
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