



Kids With Diabetes at School

October 2025

The Issue

Children living with diabetes deserve consistent, safe, and equitable care in every school across Canada. Right now, that is not the reality. Across provinces/territories — and even between schools in the same jurisdiction — support for students with diabetes is fragmented and unreliable.

Parents are left to navigate a patchwork system with no guarantee that their child will receive the necessary care during the school day. In too many cases, this leads to situations where children's health and safety are compromised, and their ability to fully participate in learning is restricted. The burden falls disproportionately on families, educators, and children — many of whom are too young to manage medical tasks on their own.

While many students with diabetes manage independently, others require trained staff to support essential care activities, such as blood glucose monitoring and insulin administration. Without clear, province/territorial-wide standards, these students are left vulnerable.

Diabetes Canada is calling on provincial/territorial governments to act. We are urging each province/territory to mandate consistent school-based standards of care that ensure no child's safety or education is put at risk because of where they live or go to school.

A Provincial/Territorial responsibility that can't be ignored

Provinces/Territories need a mandatory standard of care for students living with diabetes that aligns with Diabetes Canada's Guidelines for the Care of Students Living with Diabetes at School. To date, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and British Columbia have mandated provincial standards that are aligned with Diabetes Canada's guidelines. However, the other provinces fall short. Recommendations for governments:

1. Implement a mandatory standard of care policy that aligns with Diabetes Canada's guidelines to ensure students' diabetes management needs are adequately supported and that policies are being implemented equitably across schools.
2. Implement policy that requires schools, parents/caregivers and health care professionals to work together to develop an individual care plan (ICP) that clearly addresses both an emergency prevention & response plan and a daily diabetes management plan for each student with diabetes.
3. Ensure the Daily Diabetes Management Plan specifies the education required for school personnel; a designated safe space for students to complete glucose monitoring and administer insulin — including the adult support and/or supervision they require.
4. Permit students managing their diabetes to carry a cellphone or smartwatch to receive important diabetes management data from medical devices.

What we've heard



We were told by the principal to bring our daughter back to school when she can manage her diabetes on her own."



In Grade 5 we were told our son is no longer 'qualified' for EA support. With his continued high blood sugars, we were also told that if the school's last appeal to our school board for help went unanswered, we should think about pulling our son from his friends and school to homeschool him 'for his health'. I have never felt so defeated as I was then."



We had 3 events at which my daughter went 'low' and school staff would not give her juice until they reached me by phone, because the VP decided that they were not allowed to use, read or interpret her blood glucose readings. 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."

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Call to Action

The path forward demands immediate provincial and territorial action to close the gaps in care for students living with diabetes. While Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and British Columbia have mandated standards aligned with Diabetes Canada's Guidelines for the Care of Students Living with Diabetes at School, the majority of provinces and territories continue to fall behind. Thousands of children throughout Canada are vulnerable to preventable medical emergencies, unequal access to education, and systemic inequities that no government should accept.

Diabetes Canada calls on all governments to act now by implementing mandatory standards of care that ensure every student with diabetes has an individualized care plan, daily management supports, and clear emergency protocols in place. Schools must be equipped and accountable, personnel must be trained, and students must have access to the tools and technology required to manage their health safely; anything less puts children's health and safety at risk and undermines their right to a fair and inclusive education. Governments must not delay—equity, safety, and the well-being of students demand immediate action.

For more information, please contact:

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