



# Advocates for Justice and Education, Inc.

The Parent Training and Information Center for the District of Columbia

## Fact Sheet: Rights of Students with Diabetes

Diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases in children and adolescents. About 208,000 people younger than 20 years old have diagnosed diabetes (type 1 or type 2).<sup>i</sup> A person with diabetes must manage their illness at all times, including during the school day for school-age children. School staff including nurses and teachers can work with the student and their parent to manage diabetes. This support can include assisting a student to administer medications, checking blood sugar levels, choosing healthy foods options and engaging in physical activity.

Federal laws protect students with diabetes from discrimination by their school. These laws shield students with diabetes from unfair treatment by requiring schools to provide proper care to keep students healthy and provide the necessary support to ensure that students are able to participate in class and school activities. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires schools to provide a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities.

In 2012, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) signed a Resolution Agreement with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) stemming from a complaint filed to ensure children with diabetes are safe at school. The agreement requires that all children with diabetes receive adequate diabetes-related care at school, provided by a Diabetes Care Provider. Among other requirements, it requires that DCPS designates and train at least two full-time Diabetes Care Providers in each school attended by one or more students with diabetes to provide these students with the vital care they need.

All eligible students attending school in the District are also entitled to special education and related services at no cost to their parents or guardians. These services are offered through a 504 Plan or an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An Individualized Health Plan (IHP) may also be developed to ensure that a child with complex health needs receives proper care at school. Some examples of accommodations for a student with diabetes are:

- Making academic adjustments for classroom time missed for medical appointments, testing, or because of periods of high or low blood sugar;
- Allowing child to eat whenever and wherever necessary, including eating lunch at an appropriate time with enough time to finish eating;
- Taking extra trips to the bathroom or water fountain.

For assistance with obtaining proper supports for a child with diabetes, contact AJE at (202) 678-8060.

Additional Resource: <http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/parents-and-kids/>

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**Children with  
Special Needs,  
need Parents  
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Skills!**

<sup>i</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Diabetes Statistics Report, 2012.