

Newsletter

Parent support group

August 2006

Dear All,

Hope you all had a great summer, where did it go?

Our last meeting in June generated a lot of discussion as we talked about new developments in the management of diabetes and inhaled insulin.

OUR NEXT MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE ON WEDNESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2006

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THE DIABETES CENTRE, WEST SUFFOLK HOSPITAL FROM 19.00 – 21.00HRS

Guest Speaker: Dr Mike Blows (Child Adolescent Psychiatrist)

An excellent speaker who has a keen interest in Diabetes and the affects of chronic illness on families.

Please do come along as following the talk there will be plenty of time to chat and mix with all the other parents.

RSVP by 04 September 2006, using any of the methods shown:

Phone 01284 713241 or write to

Diabetes Nurses

Diabetes Centre

West Suffolk Hospital

Hardwick Lane

Bury St Edmunds

Suffolk

IP33 2QZ or E-MAIL linda.whipp@wsh.nhs.uk

If there is a topic you would like to discuss at future meetings then please let us know.

DIABETIC WEEKEND

One of our families recently attended one of the Diabetes UK family weekends and has written about how much they enjoyed it and how useful it was. Every year the diabetes nurses send out the Diabetes UK holiday information, so please do look out for it Jan/Feb and do consider attending one.

The Houston family would like to share with you their account of this years' weekend away:

As the majority of families we have considered the weekends, which Diabetes UK run but thought that this was not for us! Well, if you are one of these people, I would strongly advise you to reconsider. Our son was diagnosed with insulin dependent diabetes when he was two and he is now nine, he also has a genuine fear of needles and this was stopping him from developing socially. Although our house is always filled with his friends, it became difficult as he has a twelve year old sister who also likes to have friends around. Our son also started to dread going on school trips because either myself or my husband had to accompany him and like any normal child of his age, would prefer to have some freedom from their parents. So, taking this all into consideration we thought that we should participate in a weekend away for his benefit.

We spoke to our diabetes nurse and as ever she pointed us in the right direction and applied for a place. We found out that we were accepted and although apprehensive (thinking that we would have to attend talks all day) decided that we had to go through with it for our children's sake. We learned the brother/sister of the diabetic child would also benefit as they would meet others in the same situation as themselves. To be honest I did feel guilty, as our daughter never really complains, she just accepts her brother's mood swings.

When we arrived we were welcomed by members of the Diabetes UK team, who then introduced us to the other families and the staff who would be looking after us. The staff comprised of people who have diabetes or have members of their family who are. Everyone was split up into groups (children into age groups and then split into diabetics and non diabetics); the adults were also split into groups, allowing you to talk openly and freely.

The best part of the weekend for my husband and myself was to see my son able to do his own injections and seeing how proud he was. Also, meeting with other parents who have come across similar problems and for my daughter to be able to express her feelings in confidence as all the groups worked in accordance with confidentiality. Also, the staff that have diabetes understand the anxiety of injecting yourself and offer guidance and reassurance to the child. The injection would take place in an allocated room and if your child was not able to do it, then that was OK. Our main focus was to reassure our son about his injections and guess what, on the first day he needed assistance but on the following days he became confident and self reliant, this was a tearful, very proud moment. I personally feel that when other children start school, they go through a detachment period but a diabetic child still relies on their parents for help. It is hard to think that I am not needed as much and it is something as parents we need to deal with and the weekend helped me through this process, working together with other parents. We learnt so much and if I write it all down it would turn into a novel. If in doubt, just remember it is for your child.

All I can say is go for it, as it has added independence to my child's life.

Some parents have very kindly offered their phone numbers to be circulated for other parents.

Gillian & Simon Millyard	01359 242475 (Teenage son and 11 year old daughter)
Elaine Sirrell	01284 767612 (Teenage son)
Joanne Blackman	01638 717806 (12 year old and 3 year old)

**Many thanks
Diabetes Nurses**