



Making Mental Health a Priority

SURVIVING & **THRIVING**

In the Age of Covid

Providing Mental Health Support Programs and Transition Resources for today's youth living with diabetes.

2022 Community Report

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER AND CHAIR

Barbara Pasternak



Dear Family and Friends,

As **Diabetes Awareness Month** is quickly approaching, we at DHF proudly celebrate the resilience of our transitioning youth living with diabetes with the help of much needed programs delivered to the diabetes community.

For 24 years, Diabetes Hope Foundation has provided the financial, emotional, and peer mentoring resources for today's youth living with diabetes. None of this would be possible without the support of our donors, our Board of Directors, our Scholarship Advisory Committee, healthcare partners and most of all our dedicated alumni, who continually pay it forward for those who follow in their footsteps.

"Surviving and Thriving" during COVID-19 these past 3 years has been challenge for everyone. From how we work, to how our children are educated, to how we interact and support each other, to how we advocate for the mental health and safety of ourselves and our loved ones. We know it's a stressful time right now as we all adjust to the new norm.

DHF is committed to continue to pursue their missions amidst immense challenges. Our focus remains the same and we be will be there every step of the way.

Our healthcare partners have played an integral role in ensuring that our programs and initiatives reach the diabetes community when services and access to support is otherwise not available to them.

With our 2023 Scholarship applications now open, we look forward to new year as Diabetes Hope Foundation will be celebrating a milestone 25th Anniversary of our signature **Scholarship Program**.

We are thrilled to announce the upcoming launch of our new transition **MOBILE APP** and updates to our existing transition guide as well as the relaunch of our **Hope Connects** mentorship program for university diabetes clubs across the country.

As we look back over the years, DHF has helped thousands of youth throughout their transitional years and it has prompted us to also look ahead at the future strategic planning and direction of the Foundation.

Our goal is to expand and grow our mental health programming in the immediate future especially since mental health and diabetes have become a focal point for DHF as the COVID crisis has exacerbated and heightened the need for support programs not available to these youth and their families.

We also remain committed to assisting youth who struggle coping with a confusing and fragmented service system through mentorship programming, awareness building, and further education.

Our heartfelt thanks to all our valuable partners and healthcare teams for believing in what we do and for helping us to make a difference in the lives of today's transitioning youth living with diabetes.

Our kids are our future and your help is needed now more than ever! We invite you to take a few moments to visit our website www.diabeteshopefoundation.com and consider supporting the work that we do. TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER AND BETTER!

Wishing you all health and happiness in the coming year.

Barbara Pasternak MSM

A handwritten signature of Barbara Pasternak in black ink, written in a cursive style.

MEET OUR *Team*

Board of Directors

BARBARA PASTERNAK
Founder & Chair

Peter Atkins (Vice Chair)
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Maliha Khatri (Treasurer)

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Joan Canavan
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Joe Pasternak
Dr. Angelo Simone
Ted J. Supelov
Dr. Julio Szmuilowicz

Scholarship Advisory Committee

DR. ANGELO SIMONE (Chair)

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Peter Atkins, Amanda Coschi, Sean Donnelly, Karen Higginson,
Alanna Landry, Elaine Lester, Alannah MacLean,
Matt Pacchione, Dr. Amish Parikh, Barbara Pasternak,
Riona Petticrew, Ravjot Samra, Anna Southall-Millward,
Jessica Southall-Millward, Mikhail Stepanov, Mark Yacoub





Thank You!

To our Sponsors, Donors and Volunteers.

- DHF has Supported over **5,500** families of children and youth living with diabetes.
- Awarded **852** scholarships to transitioning young adults living with diabetes in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.
- Partnered with **over 70** pediatric diabetes healthcare centres in **7** provinces to develop community health programs and improve access to diabetes care.
- Created an alumni network of **550** mentor and mentees across **42** post-secondary institutions in Canada.
- Funded health benefits and supplies for over **300** families in Canada through the Medical Assistance Program (MAP).
- Sponsored **166** at-risk children and youth living with diabetes to attend Summer Sports Camps at York University, **233** teens to attend our At-Risk Youth Retreats, and **212** at-risk First Nations teens to attend the "Living the Good Life" Aboriginal Youth Retreats.
- Developed a Transition Resource guide and supplemental recipe guide to support transitioning teens across the country. Recommended by the Ministry of Health's Ontario Pediatric Diabetes Network, the guide provides secondary students with information about their rights/benefits as a student with diabetes. The recipe guide provides easy and nutritional meals for students living on campus.
- Developed and delivered over **20** Parent & Teen Pre-Transition Workshops/Webinars to support **585** transitioning teens and their families in Mississauga, Ottawa, Markham, Hamilton, London and Windsor.
- Collaborated with **28** diabetes and mental health access centres, as well as DHF Alumni, to develop a new Peer Support model to support youth living with diabetes.
- Successfully delivered **24 Wellness Wednesday Webinars** in 2020/2021 aimed at providing support to the diabetes community during the COVID pandemic, reaching over 30,000 viewers.
- New in 2022, developed "**Let's Talk About It**" **Parents speaking to Parents** to share their experience with other parents of T1D Youth.



Congratulations!

Ontario Scholarship Recipients



National Scholarship Recipients





Scholarship/Mentorship

Since 1999, 852 scholarships have been awarded across Canada to support excellence in post-secondary education and provide transition support. With the support of our donors and community partners, the **39 new recipients** were welcomed to the DHF Alumni family in 2021 and awarded scholarships for their post-secondary education.

[The Diabetes Hope scholarship program](#) was established to recognize youth in our community who have excelled in their academic achievements; demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and volunteerism in the community; and possess exemplary diabetes management practices. The program highlights the personal triumphs of young adults who face the many responsibilities and challenges associated with having a chronic disease.

Each year, scholarship recipients are matched with a DHF Alumni Mentor with like interests. The Mentorship Programs acts as a safety net to support youth during their transition to fill in the gaps and missing links during their move away from home, their primary caregivers, and pediatric healthcare. Through peer role modeling, mentoring, and peer-to-peer interactions, Mentors aim to inspire young adults with diabetes to achieve better long-term health outcomes.

Recognizing that so many youth outside of the DHF Alumni network could benefit from our Mentorship program, we have rebranded the program as [HOPE CONNECTS](#) to include all post-secondary students living with type 1 or 2 diabetes as they embark on their post-secondary journeys and transition to adult diabetes care. HOPE Connects matches first year post-secondary students with a mentor from Diabetes Hope Foundation's alumni database of over 800 young adults living with diabetes across Canada. Through our program, any first year type 1 and type 2 students can participate before, during or after their transition.



Mentorship Program

for Post-Secondary Students living with Diabetes

HOPE connects

Having a mentor is a great way to become connected to other young adults living with diabetes just like you. Together, you can focus on academic success, personal growth and gain support during your transition to adult diabetes care.

HOPE Connects offers first and second year students the opportunity:

- To be matched with a knowledgeable upper-year mentor from DHF's alumni's network of 852 type 1 youths living across Canada.
- To receive academic and peer social support from their knowledgeable Mentor.
- To register and be matched with a mentor before, during or after your transition to college/university and adult diabetes care.

Students are paired with other students who are in a similar academic programs and/or living in their area to match them with the skills needed to help during their transition period.

After being put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are excited to announce that we are relaunching our HOPE Connects peer mentorship program for students at campuses across Canada.

HOPE Connects offers all first- and second-year students living with diabetes the opportunity to connect with one of our trained mentors as they navigate their transition to post-secondary school and the adult health care system.

Through HOPE Connects, mentees get help to focus on their academic success and personal growth and receive ongoing support from someone who is also living with diabetes.

This year, we have paired 31 youth with our experienced mentors, and we are reaching out across the country to connect more students to the supports available through DHF.

We're in this together.
We're here for you.



Transition Resources

Recommended by the Ministry of Health’s Ontario Pediatric Diabetes Network, our “Guide for the Successful Transition to College & University” provides secondary students with information about their rights/benefits as well as accessibility options as a student with diabetes.

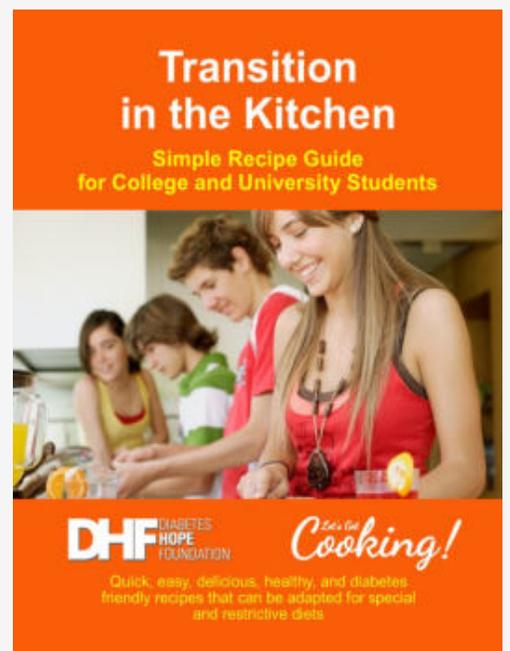
The guide assists students in finding the closest diabetes and accessibility programs and includes tips/insights from the foundation’s own alumni to assist them in their transition to post-secondary education and adult diabetes care. A total of 190+ accredited Canadian colleges and universities were reviewed and published in one single comprehensive 300 page guide.

Recognizing the need for providing a tool for students to take charge of their nutritional needs and requirements, Diabetes Hope Foundation, along with their alumni spearheaded a



2022 Edition
"Guide for Successful
TRANSITION
To College & University"
DHF DIABETES HOPE FOUNDATION

supplementary guide to accompany our "Guide for Successful Transition to College and University" to provide youth in transition with easy, healthy recipes and tips for managing their diet and diabetes while living away from home and on campus. All recipes in the guide have been tested and approved by a registered dietitian, and a fellow Type 1 DHF Alumni living with diabetes and celiac disease.



Transition
in the Kitchen
Simple Recipe Guide
for College and University Students
DHF DIABETES HOPE FOUNDATION *Let's Get Cooking!*
Quick, easy, delicious, healthy, and diabetes friendly recipes that can be adapted for special and restrictive diets

[CLICK HERE](#)

**FREE
DOWNLOAD**

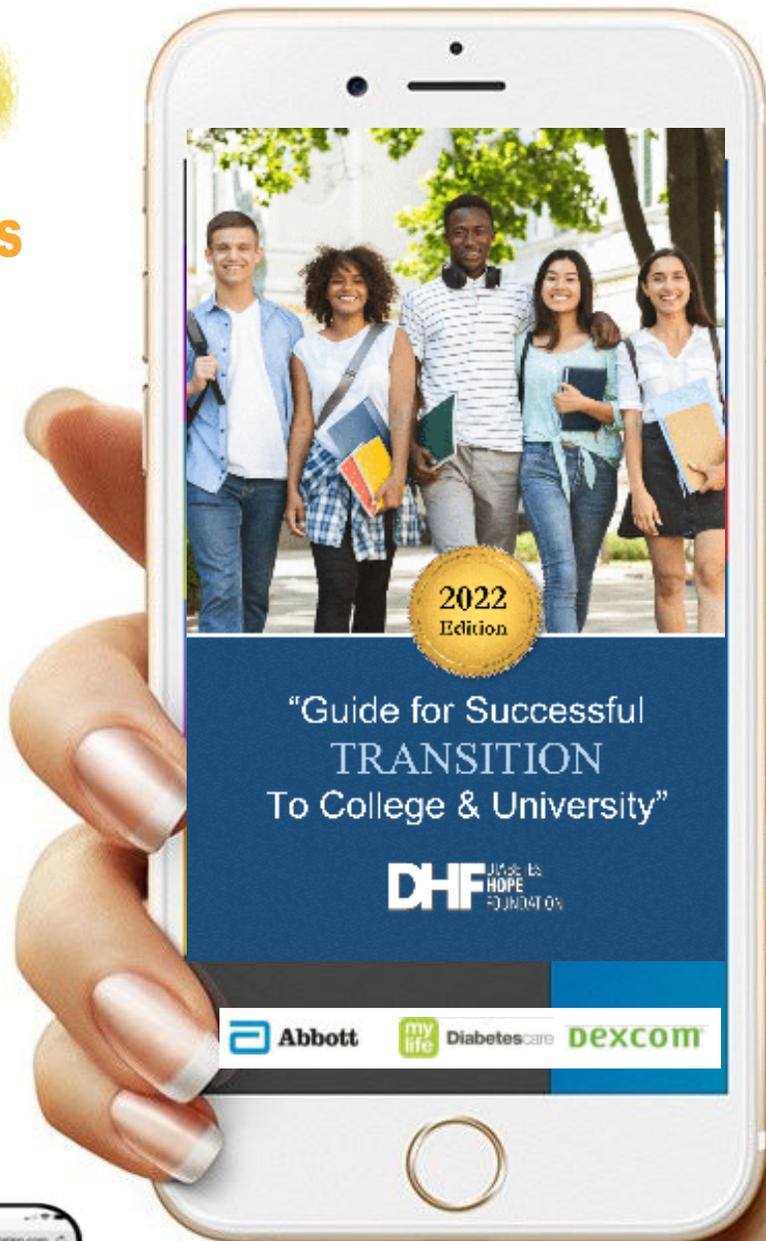
[CLICK HERE](#)

Introducing

Diabetes Hope Foundation's

NEW!

TRANSITION TO POST-SECONDARY RESOURCE MOBILE APP



[VIEW FREE DEMO](#)

[Get the App](#)

Free Download for iOS & Android

Transition resources to take with
on your post-secondary journey!



Let's talk about Mental Health

In any given year, one in five people in Canada experiences a mental health problem or illness, with a cost to the economy of well in excess of \$50 billion (Mental Health Commission of Canada). Within the diabetes population, this rate increases to one in three just in Ontario alone (Institute of Clinical Evaluative Sciences, 2012). With everybody feeling the stress of COVID-19, the greater likelihood of mood disorder and mental health issue risks surrounding the virus, vulnerable populations living with a chronic disease are feeling extra anxious. The added restrictions to an already daunting daily regimen and management of their condition can be overwhelming.

Youth with T1D are at increased risk for depression, anxiety disorder, and eating disorder diagnoses. Youth with type 1 diabetes are also at risk for subclinical levels of diabetes distress and anxiety. These mental/behavioral health comorbidities of diabetes are associated with poor adherence to treatment and poor glycemic control, thus increasing the risk for serious short and long-term physical complications, which can result in blindness, amputations, stroke, cognitive decline, decreased quality of life, as well as premature death. When mental health comorbidities of diabetes are not diagnosed and treated, the financial cost to society and health care systems is catastrophic, and the human suffering that results is profound.

Because of the daily demand for self-management behaviors, the concept of behavioral health is especially appropriate when considering the psychological aspects of type 1 diabetes. Behavioral health was defined as promoting a philosophy of health that stresses individual responsibility in the maintenance of health and the prevention of illness. Mental/behavioral health challenges confront people and families with type 1 diabetes, irrespective of age, educational level, or socioeconomic status. These behavioral/mental health challenges are associated with poor adherence to treatment and poor glycemic control, thus increasing the risk for serious short and long-term physical complications.

With an increased psychological distress among patients with diabetes during their transitional years and living through a pandemic, not only does put their physical and mental health at risk, it also immensely affects the family unit especially their parents and caregivers. The need for mental health access and support for patients with diabetes as well as their families is at an all time high and need the support to care for their mental health in order to achieve healthy physical outcomes in managing their disease.

The largest barrier to care in Ontario are the long wait times for accessing child and youth mental health services (Children's Mental Health Ontario, 2015). Young people in Ontario are waiting up to a year to access mental health services, and there are currently 12,000 kids waiting for services in the province. While waiting for services, many youth end up in crisis in the emergency room or get lost in the system without further engagement from the referral agency or the mental health agency.

There are not enough resources in our healthcare system to support the complex care of youth with diabetes who are living with mental health challenges. Community based, mental health support models have been recommended by Ontario's Mental Health Policy and the Mental Health Commission as ideal alternative care programs to reduce the burden on the province's formal mental health, medical and social services.

DON'T SUGAR COAT IT!

Ontario Universities Diabetes Conference

MENTAL HEALTH AND DIABETES

NOV 26

4:00 to 6:00 PM

zoom
Webinar



Social event for Diabetes Clubs in Ontario Universities to connect and share club missions, experiences, achievements and support networks.



Connect → Share → Support



PEER SUPPORT

In 2016, DHF developed a new Peer Mental Healthcare Model for youth living with diabetes and mental health challenges. Through this project, DHF completed a scan of existing mental health services and resources for children and youth in Ontario; identified gaps in mental healthcare and barriers to access; and developed youth-led solutions to support youth living with concurrent chronic illnesses in the province.

This initiative helps children and youth who are facing barriers develop strong emotional and social skills through the Quality of Life indicators by improving the mental health outcomes.

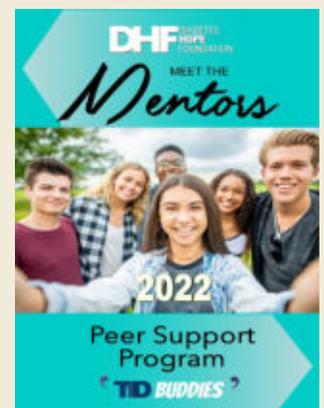
The program matches teens who have diabetes, ages 13 to 18, with a mentor to provide them with social and emotional support while they are transitioning or waiting to access diabetes and other pediatric healthcare services.

Our mentors are DHF Alumni or Type 1 Adults, ages 21-35 who have experience working with youth populations and are committed to sharing their personal and lived experiences to offer peer support for youth with diabetes who need social and emotional support during periods of transition and stress.

This spring 12 new alumni mentors successfully completed police reference checks for working with youth populations, 12-hours of Mental Health First Aid Training (certified by Canadian Mental Health Commission), and two full days of additional training (Compassionate Fatigue, Emotional Intelligence, and Leadership Training).

Youth complete an [online application](#) the Program Coordinator makes a virtual introduction between the mentor and mentee and from there, the mentor facilitates communication through email eventually meeting virtually via Zoom (a free program to download).

[DOWNLOAD BROCHURE HERE](#)



Let's talk
about it

DHF DIABETES
HOPE
FOUNDATION

PARENTS
speaking to
PARENTS

Sponsored By



AUBREY & MARLA DAN
FOUNDATION



Webinars

In November 2021, DHF launched its new “Let’s Talk About It” webinars offering emotional support and practical tips from diabetes clinicians and fellow parents who are coping with a youth living with type 1 diabetes. Parents can connect with other parents of youth with diabetes, share their stories and struggles, and talk about the mental health stresses that the Covid pandemic has caused in the family unit. Helping to know you’re not alone and that someone else “*gets it*”, the webinars are designed to bring individual clinic parents together to talk about their own struggles of the dealing with the challenges of this disease, and provides support to alleviate their fears and anxieties through casual interaction and conversation with other parents. An introduction to the Foundation’s programs and resources for today’s youth with T1D is also discussed. Webinar content is tailored to the individual clinic needs and concerns.



Kingston Health
Sciences Centre



Connect → Share → Support

UPCOMING EVENTS



2022

2023



SCHOLARSHIPS



ONLINE APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN!
www.dhfscholarship.com

Application Deadline March 6, 2023
Selection and Winners Announced April 30, 2023



DON'T SUGAR COAT IT!



2nd Annual "DON'T SUGAR COAT IT"
Ontario Universities Diabetes Conference

November 26, 2022 - 4pm
Zoom Webinar Event



ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION



25TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT
and Scholarship Awards

MAY 28TH, 2023
ISABEL BADER THEATRE - Toronto, Ontario



**26TH ANNUAL
GOLF TOURNAMENT**



26h Anniversary "Swing of Hope" Golf Event
**In support of DHF community programs for today's
transitioning youth living with diabetes.**

JUNE 2023
DATE AND LOCATION TBD

THANK YOU

With the help of our dedicated sponsors, donors, staff, volunteers, committees and board members, DHF continues to invest in programs aimed at helping transitioning youth with diabetes live healthier, longer, and more fulfilled lives.

Many thanks to all our donors and especially our community partners:



FAMILY of FUNDS

Scholarships

Norman K. Atkins Memorial, Canavan Family Fund,
Jeremy & Judith Freedman Family Foundation, Gerson & Hubley Family Fund,
Laura Eileen Higginson Memorial, Marlene Perkins Memorial, Sigulim Family



They Need Your Support



Now More Than Ever!



Help Give Hope

www.diabeteshopefoundation.com



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