

# Talking with your Teen: Navigating the Highs and Lows



## COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Offering feedback and direction is a necessary part of parenting, but it can also open the door for misunderstandings and conflict. Here are some tips to consider when approaching important conversations about diabetes management with adolescents and young adults:

1	<b>Pause before you give feedback</b>	<b>Ask yourself...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What's my goal with this feedback? Is it a complaint?</li> <li>• Is it productive and necessary? What would happen if I said nothing?</li> <li>• What is the best way to frame it so it doesn't</li> </ul>
2	<b>Try serving up a 'feedback sandwich'</b>	Bookend constructive criticism with positive feedback, including praise, compliments, and acknowledgements of previous successes and current efforts..
3	<b>Practice active listening</b>	Listen without interrupting and focus on what is said rather than how you will respond. Paraphrase what is shared to both seek clarification and demonstrate that you value their perspective and want to understand better.
4	<b>Ask open-ended questions</b>	Avoid 'yes' and 'no' questions to invite your child to share more about their thoughts and feelings. eg. <i>"How are you feeling?"</i> rather than <i>"Are you feeling okay?"</i>
5	<b>Encourage independence</b>	Give your child space and freedom to make their own decisions, and be there if they need help dealing with the outcome. This will show that you trust them and increase their self-confidence.
6	<b>Model desired behaviour</b>	Modelling desired behaviour creates consistency and a shared sense of responsibility. Promote accountability by being accountable.
7	<b>Ask for permission</b>	Acknowledge the burden discussing T1D can have on your child. To foster collaboration, check-in with them about the timing of conversations and the topics before starting (unless it is an emergency situation). eg. <i>"I have some information that could be helpful. How open are you to hearing it?"</i>



**Remember: You want your child to feel like they are the hero of their story, with you as their sidekick.**