

Using Positive Language

How we talk about diabetes influences how young people think, feel, their identity, ability to care for diabetes and their engagement with professionals and their care.

The language that we use can have an impact on how children and young people with diabetes see themselves.

‘Good’ or ‘bad’ numbers can be translated into ‘good’ or ‘bad’ person.

Similarly, being referred to as ‘Diabetic’ can become a rejected part of their identity if young people are struggling with feeling different. Negative language has a higher likelihood of disengaging young people from their diabetes care.

All children and young people will have personal preferences about how they would like their diabetes to be discussed.

‘Person with diabetes’	Instead of	‘Diabetic’
‘Lives with’	Instead of	‘Suffers from’
‘Checks glucose levels’	Instead of	‘Tests glucose levels’
‘In and out of range’	Instead of	‘Good/Bad numbers’
‘Could’	Instead of	‘Should’
‘Did not/Has not’	Instead of	‘Failed to’
‘Self Care/ Management’	Instead of	‘Control/ Compliance/ Adherence’
‘What do we need to do?’	Instead of	‘Why are your bloods ‘X’?’

Our actions are equally as important as the words that we use. We are working to limit the amount that diabetes interrupts daily life. Parents can often support this by prioritising checking in with how their child is feeling before focusing on Diabetes.