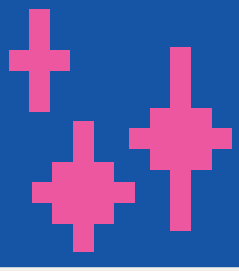
the diabetes link



the trusted national voice for every young adult with diabetes

The Diabetes Link is the only national nonprofit built exclusively for young adults living with all types of diabetes.


you
belong
here.

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mission, vision + values

Our mission – which drives each of us, every day – is to empower all young adults with diabetes by providing access to the peer support, connections, and expert resources they need to thrive.

Our vision is of a future where all young adults are equipped and inspired to live confidently and courageously with diabetes.

Our values define how we show up, collaborate, make decisions, and stay grounded in our mission to support young adults with diabetes.

values

caring + balance

having fun while doing good

curiosity + listening

accountability + trust

investing in inclusion

it’s okay to make mistakes



executive summary



Every young adult deserves the chance to thrive, not just survive, while managing diabetes. Yet this critical stage of life can be fraught with challenges. Changing dynamics in the formative relationships and social support structures of childhood can contribute to emotional overwhelm. The transition to college, trade school, or the workforce often creates gaps in care and insurance coverage and contributes to cognitive overload and poor health outcomes. The Diabetes Link is the **only organization exclusively focused on young adults living with diabetes,** addressing these challenges with the whole person in mind.

We exist so that **no young adult living with diabetes has to face these transitions alone.** We do this by providing community, clinically validated guidance, and culturally relevant resources.

Our Approach:

- Meet young adults where they are to build strong peer networks
- Deliver guidance, tools, and programs that are **accessible, equitable, and tailored** to diverse experiences
- Support families, caregivers, and clinicians to foster trust and confidence in their support of young adults
- Measure and improve impact, ensuring continuous refinement that strengthens outcomes

By supporting The Diabetes Link, you **become part of a community** that is transforming what it means to live with diabetes. Together, we can create a world where young adults have the knowledge and community they need to live their best life, knowing that their diagnosis is just one part of their story, not the whole story.

what problem does the diabetes link address?



the transition

1

This is a stage of life defined by transition: leaving home, starting school or a first job, and building independence. Managing diabetes through all of it looks nothing like managing it as a kid with parents nearby, or as an adult with a settled routine.

That in-between is where we live.

the hidden load

2

Explaining diabetes again and again, to every new roommate, professor, manager, and coworker. Finding new doctors and handling insurance, prescriptions, and supplies alone for the first time. Making hundreds of small health decisions a day while treatment options keep changing. Carrying what no one sees: diabetes distress, burnout, disordered eating, depression, and anxiety, all clinically linked to managing the condition.

same condition, different odds

3

Coverage gaps, rising costs, uneven resources. Outcomes depend on more than medical care: zip code, income, language, culture, education, and who's in your corner.

what it actually costs

4

Missed semesters. Stalled careers. Higher risk of preventable complications. More strain on families.

the adults are having to guess, too

5

Parents, caregivers, and clinicians want to support a young adult's independence but have no playbook for it. The social and emotional side of this stage often catches them off guard.

where the link is today

There's no single path through young adulthood. Young adults connect with The Link through college chapters, local meetups, and online communities. Wherever they are in life, **they find people who get it.**

on campus

"If I end up in the hospital one more time, I'll probably withdraw from my lab. There are only 4 absences allowed, and I've missed class about twice a week for 3-4 weeks now because of my diabetes.

I think one thing I would say that helped get me through part of this was the support I had from my school's Diabetes Link club. Especially the president. He would literally sit on a call for hours with me and offer his own personal experience and advice.

I've come to the conclusion that I have truly found my people and the right student club for me that supports me compared to the other clubs I was in."



in-person meetups

seven events

six unique cities

170+ attendees



online

- 1,350+ members in our private online community
- 34K+ followers on our social media channels
- 2M impressions on social media in 2026

closing the gap

The Diabetes Link exists to ensure **no young adult living with diabetes falls through the cracks.**

Our Programs Deliver:

1. **Community:** Inclusive peer connection where living with diabetes is inherently understood.

2. **Clarity:** Clinically vetted and generationally fluent resources that young adults actually use, including how to handle healthcare or navigate relationships.

3. **Bridges:** Scaffolding for young adults that connects and engages their caregivers and clinicians, so support doesn't end with us.

We contribute to better health outcomes as well as academic and career success by supporting young adults to thrive without limitations.





what makes the diabetes link unique

BUILT EXCLUSIVELY FOR YOUNG ADULTS

The Diabetes Link was founded by a college student living with diabetes. That lived experience still shapes everything we do. No other organization is focused solely on young adults with diabetes and the full range of what this stage of life throws at them.

SIGNAL OVER NOISE

There's no shortage of diabetes information. What's missing is information that speaks to young adults. We take clinically sound guidance and make it culturally and generationally fluent, so it fits the way young adults live, talk, and make decisions.

CONFIDENCE, NOT PERFECTION

Our tools for daily management swap shame and perfectionism for clarity and self-advocacy. Peer connection takes on the stigma head-on. And we hold space for the conversations young adults may not feel ready to have with family or their care team.

WE KNOW THIS LIFE STAGE

Years of working directly with young adults have shown us how differently diabetes plays out depending on diagnosis, access, identity, and circumstance. That knowledge shapes every program we build. We're the link between clinical guidance and real life.

SUPPORT FOR THE PEOPLE AROUND THEM

Parents, caregivers, and clinicians need help too. The Link turns what we hear from young adults into practical guidance for the people supporting them, building trust and easing fear on both sides.

your potential impact

To meet young adults where they are and ensure no one

falls through the gaps.

The Diabetes Link partners with and seeks support from those who share our vision.

what we will achieve with your support:

- **Expand our reach across campuses, trade schools, and beyond:** Strengthen peer mentorship and community support so young adults can navigate academics and advocate for themselves.
- **Transition to work life:** Foster alumni networks that establish professional pathways in the diabetes industry and advise young adults on what to look for — and look out for — when evaluating employers, benefits, and workplace accommodations.
- **Tailor guidance to reflect diverse needs and real-life circumstances:** Equip all young adults, regardless of geography or socio-economics, with tools and information that reflect their lived experiences, enabling informed decisions about care, technology, and daily diabetes management.
- **Support families, caregivers, and clinicians:** Provide community and resources to build trust, confidence, and continuity as young adults build independence.
- **Deliver scalable, measurable programs:** Use data-driven insights to refine interventions, track outcomes, and continuously improve relevance, engagement, and effectiveness.



Your contribution allows us to expand our programs, strengthen community connections, and ensure that independence with diabetes is achievable for every young adult.

“Being surrounded by The Link community has changed the way I think about what is possible for my own life.”



Andrew Serrano
Former Diabetes Link chapter leader and NextGen Fellow

andrew's story

"After connecting with The Diabetes Link, I became much more comfortable sharing my story. I have lived with diabetes for almost my entire life, but that did not mean I always knew how to talk about it. Before, I sometimes struggled with how much to share or whether people would really understand what I was trying to explain.

The Diabetes Link gave me opportunities to tell my story and helped me realize that there was value in doing so. Over time, I became more confident talking about the difficult parts of living with diabetes alongside the experiences that have shaped who I am. I learned that sharing my story could help someone else feel understood, start a conversation, or even advocate for change.

Now, I feel much more comfortable owning my experiences and letting people see how diabetes has shaped my life.

After so many years of managing diabetes, it was really meaningful to realize that I could still learn new things simply by being around other people living through some of the same experiences. That kind of connection was something I did not have before The Diabetes Link. The Diabetes Link showed me just how big and diverse the diabetes community really is. It has brought people into my life from completely different backgrounds and with experiences that I probably never would have encountered otherwise. Yet diabetes gave us this immediate point of connection.

Being surrounded by The Link community has also changed the way I think about what is possible for my own life.

I have met people doing things I never knew existed and people who have taken their experiences with diabetes in directions I never would have imagined. Seeing that has made me believe in myself more.

I think much less about what diabetes should prevent me from doing and much more about what I actually want to do. The Diabetes Link has helped me realize that I do not need to place limits on myself before I have even had the chance to try."

the diabetes link community chatroom

❤️

I know that I'm new here but I just got diagnosed with t2 diabetes and I'm terrified out of my mind of getting sick and going to the hospital because of diabetes. It sucks because I'm still young and I feel alone in this, I don't have any friends who relate to me about this, I feel like if I eat something specific it'll hurt me, I'm trying to change everything but it's so hard to change knowing I'm scared of these changes.

Hey, I was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes 6 months ago and I remember being absolutely terrified at first. It feels overwhelming in the beginning, but it does get easier as you learn what works for your body.

You're definitely not alone in this and honestly, the fact that you're already trying to make changes is a really good sign. Be patient with yourself :) you've got time to figure this out!

🙌❤️

We're here for you and please know that change won't happen overnight. Things will not be 100% perfect on this journey either, please show yourself grace. I was diagnosed at 14 and felt every emotion you're feeling, but it will get better once you get into the swing of what works for you!

haven's story

I truly felt like I found a community that understands me. It was hard to find other young adults with T2D and The Diabetes Link helped me! I have met amazing people with T1D and T2D who have been amazing to connect with. I've learned about other people's stories and it's helped me with my own diagnosis.

A moment I can recall is when I first joined the Discord and saw everyone's stories. It made me feel connected and less alone. I saw that other people had a DKA experience just like me and struggled a lot with their diagnosis. I am grateful for The Diabetes Link and the community that it brings!

The Diabetes Link helped me learn that my diabetes diagnosis does not define me and it made community possible for me in my life. It helped me to see my diabetes as a new beginning rather than a dead end.



Haven Donald
Diabetes Link
Community Member

chapter leaders

"My passion for The Diabetes Link grew from being inspired as an ally by the impact diabetes had on people around me, which led me to serve as president. We built a welcoming and supportive community where students with diabetes and those without could come together to learn, share experiences, and advocate for one another. I hope the chapter continues to grow on grounds as an inclusive space that stays active, expands its impact, spreads awareness, and remains a place where anyone can join, feel supported, and make a difference!"

Hilda Joseph, University of Virginia chapter President

"Being part of The Diabetes Link and starting a chapter was one of the greatest opportunities that I had during my undergrad. Having the chance to bring together a new community at Marquette University gave me such an insight into how I want to shape my future in the diabetes field, and how I want to further help contribute to the wonderful causes The Diabetes Link supports."

Niko Rios, Marquette University chapter President

"I have been with Diabetics of Clark since my first day of classes, my first year; this chapter has been a central part of my college experience. DOC and the Diabetes Link reignited my childhood dream to be a diabetes educator for kids and to outwardly advocate, always. I'm forever grateful for this chapter, organization, and for the first time, finding my pride and identity within diabetes."

Abbie McCormick, Clark chapter President

"I'm forever grateful for this chapter, organization, and **for the first time**, finding my pride and identity within diabetes."



why now



We must increase our impact because the need is growing, and the safety net is thinning.

More young adults are living with diabetes every year. Today, nearly 800,000 Americans ages 18 to 30 have diabetes. By 2030, nearly a million young adults will be living with diabetes.

Coverage is getting harder to keep. In expansion states, new 2027 rules add paperwork and more frequent renewals. In non-expansion states, many young adults lose Medicaid at 19. At 26, aging off a parent's plan means much higher marketplace premiums.

your support	your reach
$10,000	Supports 100 young adults in our online peer community for a year.
$25,000	Powers Off to College for one back-to-school season.
$100,000	Sustains 30 campus chapters for a year.

a transformative investment

Every donation directly strengthens the critical infrastructure, programs, and people who make The Diabetes Link the trusted resource young adults and their families rely on. From peer mentorship programs and culture-forward education to multi-audience outreach and strategic partnerships, your contribution ensures impact.

Measurable Outcomes:

- **Improved confidence** and independence in managing diabetes
- **Greater continuity** of care during transitions
- **Strengthened emotional** and mental well-being
- **Reduced inequities** in access to information and peer support
- **Increased reach and retention** of young adults in programs

Join Us in Making a Difference

Your support of The Diabetes Link is an investment in the potential of today's young adults. Together, we are transforming what it means to live with diabetes.

Contact dev@thediabeteslink.org



your support shapes a future where all young adults are equipped and inspired to live confidently and courageously with diabetes.

THE DIABETES LINK

thediabeteslink.org