

Age Groups	Developmental Characteristics	Approach/Distraction Techniques
Toddlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curiosity • Developing speech and gross motor skills • Resistance to logic and negotiations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May want to “help” but they do not have the skills or understanding to help with the diabetes management tasks • Need to be consistently approached in a no-nonsense manner; care should be quick and matter-of-fact • Soothing voices, favorite toy or blanket, comfort hold, hugs and kisses, and praise for cooperation
Preschoolers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magical thinkers • Short attention span • Fear loss of control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May attribute illness or painful procedures to behavior — need reassurance, hugs and kisses, and praise • Use short, simple explanations • Allow them to wash hands, choose chair to sit in
School-Age Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to be involved in their care • Able to understand cause and effect – concrete thinkers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow them to have some responsibility — write down their blood sugar and increase responsibility as appropriate • Make a game of carbohydrate counting to begin to take responsibility for foods
Adolescents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggle with independence • Body image and peers most important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a conversation regarding all aspects of diabetes management and be ready to step in when needed • Encourage questions, remain honest and non-judgmental