

Happy Spring T1D Families!

As the weather gets warmer, I find myself throwing on jeans and a tee shirt almost everyday day. To be honest, I'm OBSESSED with graphic tees. On any given day you might see me sporting a shirt relating to coffee, good vibes, friendship, book lovers, tacos, you name it! I love the way a graphic tee can give others a glimpse of what I'm thinking. My all-time favorite shirt says *You Are All the Good Things*. I like to wear it on rough diabetes days because it reminds me that I'm doing the best I can. As a fellow T1D parent, I bet you can relate.

When our daughter Addie, was first diagnosed with Type One Diabetes she was in Kindergarten. Her classmates and teachers were incredibly supportive. Naturally, they had a lot of questions. We should have made Addie a tee shirt that read "Got a question? GOOGLE IT!" While she wanted the support of her friends and family, she did NOT want to talk about it. Addie had no interest in being the poster child for T1D! While as parents, we understood the natural curiosity of her peers and appreciated their willingness to ask questions, it was actually very challenging for Addie. She began to shut down, and we knew we needed a new approach.

There was a moment when everything changed for Addie. We were at swim lessons and in a very calm voice Addie said to me, "That girl has a pod on her leg." It was such a moment of clarity! Addie needed to SEE other kids who understood what it was like to live with T1D each and every moment of every day! After that, we started looking for signs of T1D around us and sure enough, we found them! Our family began to notice pumps, CGMs and other devices at the lake, in the grocery store and even on TV shows.

Once we realized how much Addie would benefit from being around others in the T1D community, we decided to sign up for the One Walk. Our first year, we walked with just our family. Seeing all the groups in matching tee shirts, showing support for loved ones, completely changed Addie's outlook. And the feeling of being around people who understood without explanation was AMAZING – snacks, juice boxes, water, endless supplies everywhere and no one asking questions! Addie loved it and we were so happy for her.

For the 2019 JDRF One Walk, Addie has invited her friends to join her! With each year, we see Addie growing in confidence and being more willing to accept the support of others in her journey. She still doesn't want to answer questions, but she will let her friends watch her do a site change and she loves to check her friends' blood sugar!

JDRF One Walk reminds Addie that diabetes doesn't define her. Addie doesn't want to be "the kid with T1D" and at the One Walk, she's not. She's just one of many incredibly brave kids who have some awesome talents and gifts to share with the world! Thanks to JDRF this world will soon be one without Type One Diabetes! I hope you will join Addie at this year's One Walk as we come together to raise funds for a cure!

Sincerely,  
Katie McManus

PS Look for Addie and friends in our camouflage "Addie's Army" shirts ... because you know we love a great graphic tee! 😊