

# BEHIND A LEADING DIABETES FOUNDATION'S REBRAND

JDRF takes on the name Breakthrough T1D as it dispels the notion that only children are diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes

By Phoebe Bain.

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JDRF has a new name.

Credit: Breakthrough T1D

For JDRF, a leading organization funding Type 1 diabetes research, it was time for a change—specifically a name change. The group was known as Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation before shortening to the acronym in 2012. Now, it's moving further away from the “juvenile” moniker with its new name, Breakthrough T1D.

“What we’ve learned over the years is that Type 1 diabetes is not just juvenile diabetes—about 50% of people are diagnosed as adults,” said Pam Morrisroe, the organization’s chief marketing officer, adding that JDRF was a “bit of a misnomer.”

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The rebranding, handled by Siegel+Gale, will be unveiled today at the organization’s annual “government day” conference today in Washington. It will be supported with a campaign that includes paid media, including influencer and digital marketing.

Curing type one diabetes isn't a matter of, if it's a matter of when breakthroughs are

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“People were not really recognizing what the name (JDRF) meant,” said Siegel+Gale Strategy Director Carolyn Griffin. It was confusing, both to people with Type 1 diabetes and those who are not familiar with T1D, such as potential donors, she continued.

The group was founded in 1970 by a group of parents whose children had Type 1 diabetes, which refers to the condition in which the pancreas stops producing insulin. According to the Mayo Clinic, the peak ages in which Type 1 appears are between ages 4-7 and 10-14, but the clinic on its website notes that “Type 1 diabetes can appear at any age.”

JDRF on its website states that “an equal number of children and adults are diagnosed every day—approximately 110 people per day.” Hollywood icon Mary Tyler Moore was diagnosed at age 33 and went on to become JDRF’s most well-known supporters.

The organization reported a 15% increase in revenue for fiscal 2023 to \$224.3 million, including \$80.5 million from donations and \$103.2 million from events—and noted that “to move as many cures and advanced therapies forward as quickly as possible, we must raise more funds.”

The JDRF team “had a hunch that their name wasn’t serving them,” Griffin said.

Before formally recommending the name change, the agency conducted quantitative research and had conversations with people involved with the foundation’s work. Ultimately the agency and organization considered about 1,000 new names, and “more than half got knocked out through the initial trademark search,” Morrisroe said.

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The name “Breakthrough T1D” quickly rose to the top of the team’s list for a few reasons, Griffin said, one being that the word “breakthrough” was already in JDRF’s mission statement, “accelerating life-changing breakthroughs to cure, prevent and treat T1D and its complications.”

“Anybody can have a breakthrough. It’s not just scientists, right? I might have a breakthrough, you might have a breakthrough. It’s really that it’s a powerful, emotional moment,” she said.

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“When we were looking at our shortlist of names, we were thinking, ‘this is the name that has both the strongest quant results—it resonates with the people we’re trying to reach—but it also has the most creative potential,’” Griffin said.

The name is “something that we can build our story around, we can express through visual language, we can do so much with this word. And it can mean so much to the people that we’re really trying to reach,” she added.