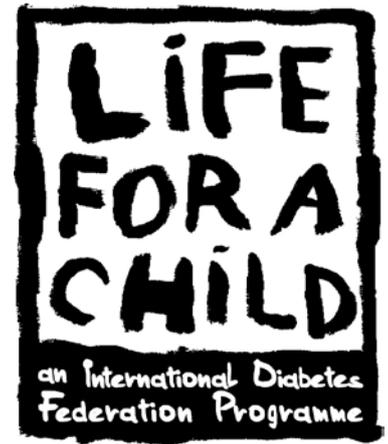


## IDF LIFE FOR A CHILD EDUCATION BULLETIN #12 - SOCIAL MEDIA

Dear Colleagues,

Social media is an everyday part of our lives wherever we may live. Mobile phones are popular all over the world!

While social media is great for all of us to catch up with friends and what they are doing, it is also a very useful tool for young people with diabetes to connect with others going through the rollercoaster that is diabetes: the highs and lows – both of which can come along even when you think you have managed your diabetes beautifully; self-esteem issues; self-doubt; bullying and teasing; food insecurity; cultural differences; fears about the future; school; job security; marriage; having children and financial problems. All these can make the child or young person with diabetes feel isolated, powerless and different from their peers.



Joining others on social media can reduce this feeling of being alone and introduce young people to each other and build long-lasting friendships.

Social media can also be used by health professionals to keep in contact with young people and families regarding diabetes management.

*Many of the countries supported by LFAC have social media groups:*

**Tanzania:** The Tanzania Youth Alliance connect with each other via WhatsApp and share photos through Facebook.

**Mexico:** In Acapulco, WhatsApp is used by health care providers to connect with young people to make insulin dose adjustments.

**Sri Lanka:** The Diabetes Association of Sri Lanka has a Facebook page to share tips for healthy eating, local stories, diabetes care, diabetes in the news, and to send encouraging and supportive messages.

**Bolivia:** Diabetes Bolivia uses What's App

- Staff and volunteers connect with young people in Sucre, Santa Cruz and La Paz to encourage them and provide support

**Ecuador:**

- Fundación Diabetes Juvenil del Ecuador (FDJE) has an organisational Facebook page sharing information about diabetes management. It is also used to share information, stories and photos of their annual camps.
- Fundación Apriendiendo a Vivir con Diabetes (FUVIDA) has an organisational Facebook page sharing stories, photos, news articles, events, and information about diabetes management.

**Nigeria:** The Nigerian Diabetes Online Community Blog is used for:

- Monthly chats – online conversation – a recent session was dedicated to children living with diabetes in Africa
- Highlighting diabetes in the news, diabetes care, events, stories, conferences, latest research, World Diabetes Day; Essay Competition

We know that many more of the countries we support must have these types of support groups. Do share them with us – we would love to hear from you!

