

PLAYING THRU

CHRIS DUDLEY FOUNDATION MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER

Overcoming Camp Nerves

First-year Camper & Parent Share their Advice on Camp Nerves

Summer camp registration season is in full swing! Are you considering sending your child to camp for the first time? This can be a daunting, nerve-wracking step for parents and campers alike. We took some time to catch up with a family who was hesitant to attend the Chris Dudley Basketball Camp for the first time, and hear about how their perspective changed after a week at camp.

12-year-old, Emma had been living with Type 1 diabetes for 1 1/2 years before her parents signed her up for CDBC. Emma's parents, Rachel and Jay, were determined to keep her life as close to "normal" as possible. Emma had been playing basketball for 7 years and her parents didn't want that to change after her T1D diagnosis. At one of her first endocrinology appointments, the doctor told Emma's family about the basketball camp specifically created for children with Type 1 diabetes. After signing up Emma for camp, the nerves set in. "We were so nervous because we had never been away from Emma for more than just overnight slumber parties, and since her diagnosis those overnight sleepovers made us really nervous." Emma's mom, Rachel expressed. As camp got closer, Emma was nervous as well. **"I was nervous coming to camp for the first time because I am a shy person and it is hard for me to talk to people I don't know."**



When Emma and her parents traveled from California to Oregon for camp, the anticipation was met with the thorough check-in process of CDBC. **"Before camp started I worried about her diabetes management, but after check-in at camp I felt very confident that the staff had everything covered and were completely dialed in with everything necessary to manage Emma's diabetes throughout the week."**, said Rachel.



Though her parents missed her throughout the week, they hoped she was having a good time and meeting new friends. Upon the last day of camp, they picked up a daughter who was sad to be leaving camp. Emma had gained new friends, knowledge about how to manage her diabetes while playing basketball, tips and tricks that she learned from both her peers and the staff, and a real sense of belonging. **"She made a lot of great connections and she became part of a whole new family. A family that lives Type 1 Diabetes every day just like her. After camp she was definitely more assertive about her own diabetes management. She took a lot of what the doctors at camp advised her about and put it into practice after camp. Those connections are a big part of why she didn't hesitate for second when we asked her if she wanted to go again the next year. She gave us a very emphatic "YES!" - said Rachel.**

When asking Emma what she loved about camp and what helped calm her nerves, she also shares her love of the relationships she made with other kids and adults with T1D during her week at camp, **"It was cool to be like everyone else. Everyone at camp is special in their own way, but Type 1 made us all the same. I would love to come back to camp because I have so many friends there now!"**

Emma and her mom Rachel shared their advice for first time camp families in hopes that other kids with Type 1 diabetes will get to experience what they did!

Rachel's Advice: "Even though the camp has a large basketball component to it, it is not all about basketball. From my perspective, it was about coming together and being a part of club with a strong family vibe. The emotional connections that are made among campers, counselors and staff is indescribable. As a parent, I am so grateful for the Chris Dudley Basketball Camp; because for my daughter it means she is a part of something truly special.

Emma's Advice: "I would tell a first time camper that they don't have to be nervous because we are at camp to support them and to get to know them and become their friends!"

