



TYPE 1 DIABETES
FAMILY CENTRE



THE JOY REPORT



TYPE 1 DIABETES

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease triggered by a combination of genetic and environmental factors, and is not related to lifestyle choices. With dramatic onset and a strong association with serious long-term health complications, diagnosis has a profound impact on both the person and their loved ones. **Type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented and does not have a cure.** It can happen to anyone.

The incidence of type 1 diabetes has nearly tripled in the past 30 years, and the numbers are continuing to rise. More than 120,000 Australians live with the disease, and 9 more are diagnosed every day.

People with type 1 diabetes, young and old, do not live ordinary lives. **People with type 1 must inject or pump the hormone insulin into their bodies every day to regulate their blood glucose levels, in order to stay alive.**

Living with type 1 diabetes is a full-time balancing act, requiring round-the-clock attention to avoid acute, life-threatening hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose levels) or the long-term damage done by hyperglycaemia (high blood glucose). Blood glucose levels must be constantly monitored either with finger prick blood tests or continuous glucose monitors and insulin doses must be carefully calculated based upon food intake, activity and stress levels, and tens of other variables.

Unlike many other conditions where medical practitioners make dose decisions for their patients, people with type 1 diabetes must manage their medication themselves. The pressure of complex insulin dose calculations, constant self-monitoring and the possibility of serious consequences for a miscalculation can take a serious toll. The need for a service that educates, connects and supports people with type 1 diabetes has never been so compelling.

The Family Centre makes a difference, every day.



A WORD FROM OUR BOARD AND CEO

Due to the commitment and generosity of our community of donors and the dedication of our Board and team, the Family Centre made powerful and far-reaching impact in the 2019/2020 financial year. We have continued our vital work serving families with children with type 1 diabetes, and we also offer life-changing peer support, clinical care and education to our rapidly-growing community of adults with type 1. This year, we continued to broaden our services beyond the traditional medical model to create a dynamic, whole-of-life service based on our unique holistic model of care, which combines **information and inspiration, peer and psychosocial support, clinical care, and awareness and advocacy**. Our Board and team, most of whom are personally impacted by type 1, are deeply committed to our mission to connect, support and inspire the type 1 diabetes community of Western Australia.

CONNECT

At the Family Centre, **we believe that authentic peer support is fundamental to quality care**. This year, we continued to build powerful local support networks for our families, bringing over 1000 attendees together through three camps and 35 face-to-face education and community events. We also expanded our digital support, connecting more than 1500 families around-the-clock through the Family Centre's dynamic online communities, which have over 6,000 engagements each month. Together, our online community members have over 18,000 years of lived experience; they are a lifeline for information exchange, encouragement and empathy. They are especially important for people newly-diagnosed with type 1, who, without the Family Centre, would receive little psychosocial or peer support.

This year, our team worked closely with volunteers to launch three new sub-communities: our Diabetes Dads' group, which we launched in partnership with The Fathering Project, our Type 1 Mums' Group for mothers and mothers-to-be who have type 1, and our Playgroup, for toddlers with type 1 and their parents. We created these groups in response to specific needs articulated by our families, to ensure that fathers, new mothers, and parents of toddlers with type 1 get targeted help.

SUPPORT

True patient-centred healthcare helps people with type 1 to thrive; it's what we do best through our unique combination of one-on-one diabetes education, dietetics and psychology services, small-group education and online programs. **Our clinic results eclipse national averages:** 71% of the Family Centre's clinic patients with reported HbA1cs (a test of average blood glucose levels over three months) meet vital long-term glucose management targets, compared with a national average of only 15%, significantly reducing their risk of long-term health complications. **We are proud of our community and the role we have played in its successes.**

In July 2019, we launched Cyber Carbs, our first online education program. For the first time in Australia, patients and healthcare professionals alike can access vital carbohydrate-counting training through an interactive online course. Accurately counting the grams of carbohydrates in foods and calculating insulin doses appropriately are critical skills that are proven to help people with type 1 to achieve positive health outcomes. **Cyber Carbs has had remarkable impact**, with participants showing a 36% increase in accurate carbohydrate counting and insulin dose calculations post-completion, giving them the knowledge, skills and tools they need to manage their diabetes effectively. It is the first of a suite of digital education initiatives the Family Centre is working on to ensure people with type 1 have access to quality health information, wherever they are in Australia.

Just as every person is different, so is every diabetes regimen. We believe that generic education is not enough, and we are the only organisation in Australia to offer training programs for schools and babysitters that are individually tailored to each child's needs. This year, we trained 510 school teachers and babysitters through our programs, and our evaluation showed **that participants' confidence to care for children with type 1 more than doubled.**

Most importantly, our compassionate and knowledgeable team offers daily face-to-face, telephone and online support to the type 1 community. As the go-to organisation for people with type 1 in Western Australia, this year our team gave over 1100 hours of direct community support, counselling families and individuals through challenges, solving problems and helping them navigate difficult diabetes dilemmas.

INSPIRE

Managing type 1 requires courage, motivation and resilience. At the Family Centre, we strive to lift, encourage and inspire our community, and **we walk our talk**. This year, our CEO Bec Johnson, who was diagnosed with type 1 in 2001, completed solo swims to Rottnest and from Perth to Fremantle and raised \$85,000 for the Family Centre. The campaign, called 'Life Without Limits', showed kids and adults alike that a life with type 1 diabetes can be a life without limits – and that giving back to our community is vital. We're weaving this motto into our future work, and celebrating every member of our community who lives beyond the risks and challenges of type 1 diabetes.

A YEAR TO REMEMBER

The Family Centre team responded quickly to the COVID-19 crisis: we rapidly moved our clinical services to telehealth, scaled up communication and monitoring in our online communities to cope with the increased demand for accurate information, and transformed our face-to-face activities into a series of well-attended online events and programs. **We successfully kept our community connected, supported and inspired during a difficult and uncertain time.**

However, the Family Centre operates independently of government funding, and COVID-19 has seriously impacted our bottom line. The Board has worked hard to shore up the Family Centre's future, this year launching our corpus fund, the Future Fund, in order to build financial sustainability over the long-term, and welcoming our new Partnerships and Philanthropy Manager Meg Croucher to our team. **It will take time for the Family Centre to recover from the impact the pandemic has had on the organisation's capacity to raise vital funds**, and we welcome new partnerships and support.

VISIONARY SERVICE

At the end of this financial year our founding Chair, Jeff Newman OAM, will retire from his role at the Family Centre after 10 years of dedication, service and visionary leadership. Jeff will always be recognised as a Family Centre Visionary; **his dedication, hard work and inspiration have impacted hundreds of families**. The Family Centre Board, team and community sincerely thank him for his profound commitment to improving the lives of those with type 1.

FUTURE-FOCUSED

Where to now? The Family Centre must navigate new waters into next year, but we do so with a committed Board and team, a community that deeply values us, and donors who understand the powerful impact their support has on people's lives. And so we will move forward carefully but confidently, and continue our mission to connect, support and inspire the type 1 community of Western Australia.





TYPE 1 DIABETES FAMILY CENTRE VISIONARIES

The Family Centre's Visionaries have changed our community in powerful ways. Visionaries have made a vital and lasting impact upon the type 1 diabetes community with their foresight, leadership and generosity and their contributions have enabled the Family Centre to build its facility, services and community to support hundreds of families and individuals to thrive with type 1. Their patronage is at the very heart of the Family Centre, and we thank them for their visionary support of our organisation.

In this, the Family Centre's inaugural Joy Report, we recognise our Founding Chair, Mr Jeff Newman OAM, as a Family Centre Visionary, for his dedication and commitment to the type 1 community in Western Australia.


JEFF NEWMAN, OAM

Jeff's vision for a bright future for every child impacted by type 1 diabetes has guided the Family Centre since its inception.

When his niece was diagnosed with type 1 at age 17, almost 20 years ago, Jeff witnessed firsthand the profound impact a diagnosis of type 1 has not only on the person diagnosed, but on family members, too.

Well-known for his extraordinary contribution to Western Australian kids as 'Mr Telethon', Jeff quickly recognised the compelling need for better care for children with type 1 diabetes and their families at a community level. He worked tirelessly to rally support for the Family Centre concept, securing the support of the Family Centre's founding sponsors Telethon, Lotterywest and the Western Australian State Government (who contributed our land and construction costs), and he has helped build important partnerships that last to this day.

Jeff's leadership, dedication and generosity have enabled the Family Centre to establish its unique and effective model of diabetes care – the first service of its kind in Australia. During his time as our Chair, Jeff made a profound impact. He leaves a lasting legacy: a thriving community of hundreds of families who are connected, supported and inspired by the Family Centre.





OUR IMPACT 2019-2020

71% OF OUR CLINIC PATIENTS HAVE **OPTIMAL** LONG-TERM **BLOOD GLUCOSE MANAGEMENT***  COMPARED WITH A NATIONAL AVERAGE OF **15%**

*reported HbA1c

802

DIABETES EDUCATION,
DIETETICS AND
PSYCHOLOGY
APPOINTMENTS

114

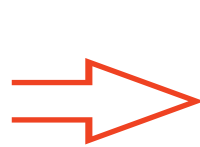
PATIENTS ACCESSED
NEW INSULIN PUMP AND
GLUCOSE MONITORING
TECHNOLOGY

102

PATIENTS ACCESSED
VITAL LONG-TERM
GLUCOSE
MONITORING TESTS

532

PARTICIPANTS
IN OUR ONLINE
CARBOHYDRATE
COUNTING PROGRAM,
CYBER CARBS



36%



INCREASE IN CARBOHYDRATE COUNTING
AND INSULIN DOSE **ACCURACY** POST-COURSE

421

SCHOOL STAFF
TRAINED
TO MANAGE
TYPE 1



89

BABYSITTERS
TRAINED
TO CARE FOR A
CHILD WITH TYPE 1

3

PUBLICATIONS
IN PEER-REVIEWED
LITERATURE

FAMILY CENTRE TEAM MEMBERS
SIT ON



9

INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL
AND STATE WORKING GROUPS
RELATED TO DIABETES CARE

510

ATTENDEES AT **10**
SCHOOL HOLIDAY
EVENTS FOR OUR TRIBE

101

CAMPERS AT **3** AWESOME CAMPS



335

ATTENDEES AT **10**
ADULT EDUCATION
AND SOCIAL EVENTS

AVERAGE NET
PROMOTER
SCORE OF

93%

FOR FAMILY CENTRE
EVENTS AND
ACTIVITIES

6200

ONLINE COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENTS PER MONTH

12000+

ENGAGEMENTS PER MONTH DURING **COVID-19**



5600+

FOLLOWERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

10

ONLINE COMMUNITY
EVENTS DURING
COVID-19



1116

HOURS OF FACE-TO-FACE,
PHONE AND ONLINE COMMUNITY
SUPPORT DELIVERED



"It helps us feel confident that we are keeping Lara healthy, safe and feeling well."

Lara Moseley

When Lara, became constantly thirsty and started having 'accidents' at age 4 after being toilet trained for two years, Lara's parents, Corrine and Scott, knew that something was wrong.

Like many others, Lara's journey to diagnosis was not straightforward. Over several months, Lara became increasingly unwell as her family took her to doctors and specialists. Finally, Lara and her family received the diagnosis that changed their lives forever. They will never forget the day when their doctor rang:

"I'm really sorry but Lara has type 1 diabetes. Please get her to the hospital as soon as you can, they are expecting you."

Lara's family was relieved to finally know what was going on, but **learning their lively young daughter had a lifelong medical condition was overwhelming.**

"There was so much to learn all at once. Scott and I tried to take it all in and at the same time, we were trying to explain things to Lara. Lara was so little, she didn't understand what was happening."

Prior to Lara's diagnosis, her family had planned to move to Perth from Sydney. Discovering the Type 1 Diabetes Family Centre when they arrived in September 2017 was exactly what the Moseley family needed.

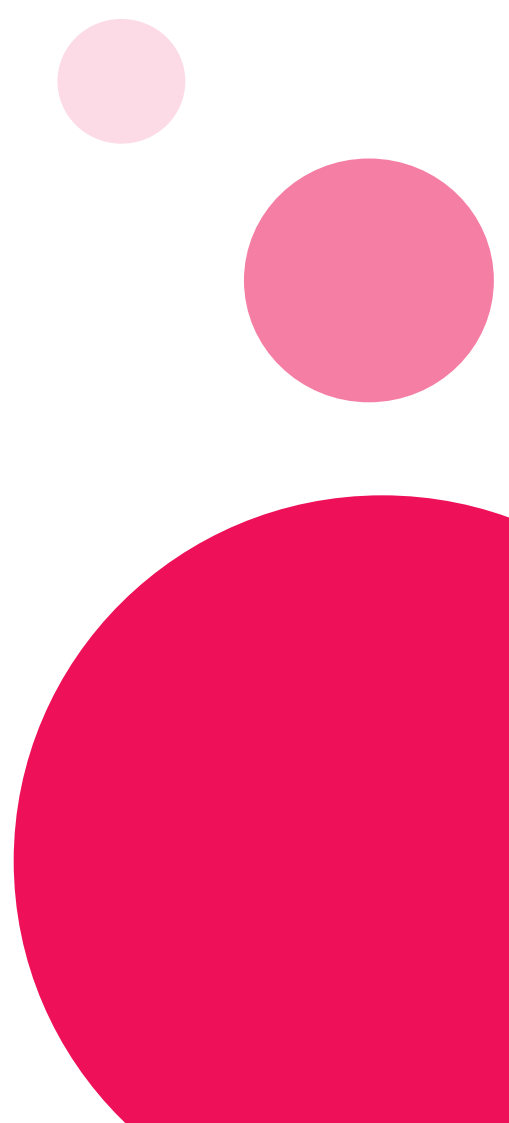
"There's nothing else like it in all of Australia. The Family Centre understands that every child with type 1 is different. **The individualised help it offers is what makes the Family Centre so valuable."**

Three months after arriving in Perth, Lara moved from fingerprick blood tests to a continuous glucose monitor, and she transitioned from injections to an insulin pump soon after that. Through Lara's new devices, her parents could see her blood glucose levels continuously for the first time, and **"We were horrified at just how high Lara's blood glucose levels were."**

Lara and her family met with the Family Centre's diabetes educator and dietitian, and have never looked back. "Having access to clinical expertise and being able to talk to someone means that we can make changes to Lara's diet safely and we were taught how to adjust insulin doses accordingly. It helps us feel confident that we are keeping Lara healthy, safe and feeling well."

Through a combination of the clinical advice they accessed at the Family Centre, round-the-clock support from the Family Centre's Online Parents' Community, and a lot of hard work, Lara's parents have managed to keep Lara's average glucose level in the optimal range for over two years. With well-managed levels, Lara is not just able to enjoy a happy and healthy childhood – she's also reducing her risk of serious health complications over the long-term.

Lara feels safe, and says she can now go for hours without even thinking about diabetes – although her mum and dad are always vigilant on her behalf. Now age 7, Lara is taking a big bite out of life every day. She loves the friends she's met through the Family Centre, and says **"If you have diabetes and the Family Centre, you will never feel alone."**





THE POWER OF INDIVIDUALISED SUPPORT

Ashlee Baily

"It was devastating to be diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. I had always prioritised my health, I exercised six days a week, had a great diet and respected my body. I felt my body had let me down, and I didn't understand why I had been dealt this hand."

In 2016, at age 30, Ashlee Baily's energy levels plummeted and her eyes would fill with tears at the thought of having to face a full day at work. Ashlee had blamed her exhaustion and weight loss on her new gym challenge and heavy workload, but when her eyes became sore and sensitive to light and her Mum told her she'd 'lost her spark', Ashlee realised it was serious.

When Ashlee was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, she was given a script for insulin and a 10-minute consultation with a nurse to learn how to inject insulin. After that, she was on her own.

"It was so full-on and there really wasn't anyone for me to talk to. I felt so alone."

For the first two years of her diabetes journey, Ashlee received minimal support. Relying on trial and error to figure out how much insulin to dose herself with, Ashlee often experienced hypoglycaemia, which left her disorientated and frightened.

When Ashlee discovered the Type 1 Diabetes Family Centre, she couldn't believe how much information and support was available.

"I needed education and connection that was individualised to me, and the Family Centre delivered."

Ashlee quickly booked in for the Flex-IT (flexible insulin therapy) program at the Family Centre.

"I was so impressed that Flex-IT ran on Saturdays, so I didn't need to take time off work to access diabetes education like I'd had to in the past. The program was different because it didn't tell me what to do – **it gave me the ability to reflect on my own management and adjust my regimen myself.** It was exactly what I needed, and I came away feeling energised and ready to build on all that I had learned."

Alongside experiencing individualised diabetes education at the Family Centre, Ashlee joined the Family Centre's online community for adults.

"I was blown away by the quantity and quality of the information being shared - it was true peer support, like nothing I had ever seen before." I love that I can ask questions and I never feel silly or judged.

When I was diagnosed I was really worried that I was going to lose the life I loved. **In the early days, all I heard was what I shouldn't or couldn't do because I had diabetes. The Family Centre changed that."**



"I was blown away by the quantity and quality of the information being shared - it was true peer support, like nothing I had ever seen before."

"I am healthier
now than before
I was diagnosed."



Kim with her granddaughter

Kim Jamieson

Kim Jamieson was diagnosed with type 1 at age 48. A chance meeting with a member of the Family Centre community ten years later changed her life.

"I was on a family holiday in Monkey Mia, about to eat dinner with my insulin pen in my hand, when a woman approached me and asked if I had type 1 diabetes. Hundreds of kilometres from Perth, a total stranger who also lived with diabetes had made a point of coming over to tell me about the Type 1 Diabetes Family Centre. She told me that it would change my life, and she was right."

For ten years, Kim had felt desperate and lost about type 1. She had read everything she could find about diabetes management and was following a GP plan to the letter, but it wasn't working for her.

"My blood glucose levels were all over the place and I was tired of feeling physically and mentally defeated. Then my son reminded me about the suggestion from the stranger in Monkey Mia."

Kim booked in to see the Family Centre's dietitian and diabetes educator, Amy Rush. She instantly noticed the Family Centre's no-judgement philosophy; **"I didn't feel ashamed about how I was managing my diabetes at the Family Centre. The team's approach gave me the confidence to be totally open and honest."**

With advice and support from the Family Centre's clinic and community, Kim's average blood glucose level (her HbA1c) dropped from a dangerous 11.6% into the optimal range within 12 months, improving Kim's quality of life and reducing her risk of developing diabetes complications like blindness, kidney disease and nerve damage.

"I couldn't believe it when my levels stabilised. Having consistently good levels helps me to not only feel physically well, **it helps me to feel empowered, like I am in control - and that is a great feeling.**

The Family Centre has helped me realise that there is a difference between just surviving with type 1 and thriving with type 1. I am healthier now than before I was diagnosed, than I have ever been in my life! I credit this to the support, education and advice that I have received from the Family Centre.

Like the stranger in Monkey Mia, **I now tell everyone how the Family Centre has changed my life."**

A vertical strip on the left side of the page features a background of green grass. Overlaid on this background is the word 'YOY' in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters, positioned vertically.

BUILDING COMMUNITY ACROSS BORDERS

Katie Thivener

When Katie Thivener started her journey towards becoming a diabetes educator, she researched centres around the world looking for innovation and leadership in diabetes management. Katie works as a Patient Navigator at the Barbara Davis Centre in Colorado, one of the largest diabetes centres in the USA. She found the Type 1 Diabetes Family Centre through the InsulinNation article, 'It takes a Tribe: A new model of type 1 diabetes care in Australia,' and felt an instant connection to something special.

"Living with type 1 myself, I know first-hand how hard it is. I'm passionate about going beyond clinical care and really improving quality of life for kids with type 1 diabetes. When I read the article I saw that the team at the Family Centre had the same drive and values as I do, and I needed to know more."

For Katie, meeting two of the Family Centre team members at a nutrition conference in Denver felt like the stars had aligned. "I was blown away by their overwhelming passion for community and connection. I wanted more than anything to have the opportunity to travel to Western Australia to experience the Family Centre's programs."

Katie arranged to complete her practicum at the Family Centre in January 2020. During her time at the Family Centre, Katie noticed that **no matter where you live, diabetes hits families hard**, and means navigating complex systems, pressure on relationships and finances, and dealing with the emotional toll of managing the disease. She believes that the common thread is the importance of caretakers— the parents and primary carers of children with type 1. The caretaker's role is crucial to a child's health, and they must be supported."

Katie spent the first week of her visit on Family Camp. "Seeing the connection the families made showed me that building community through programs like camps changes people's lives in ways that medical devices cannot. **We learn so much from each other by sharing lived experiences.**"

Diabetes camps are common in the USA, but for children, rather than whole families. Katie saw the value of bringing families together through Family Camps, and how powerful and necessary support for parents and siblings of children with type 1 really is.

"Camp gave the families the chance to share their stories, experiences, struggles and triumphs. The adaptability the parents showed as we moved from activity to activity during the action-packed days, carefully managing basal rates and planning ahead for food and activity, was remarkable. I deeply admired their strength, smarts, and resilience, and the way they learned from each other."


During her time at the Family Centre, Katie also experienced a Teen Gatho, a Kids in the Kitchen Workshop, Babysitters' Training and Schools Education, and she remains an active guest member of our online communities to this day.

"I will forever be grateful for my time with the Family Centre. **You build community in a world where we need connection more than ever.**"



Katie, seated centre, at the Family Centre's Family Camp

**"The caretaker's
role is crucial to a
child's health, and
they must be
supported."**

A photograph of a man and a young boy standing together and giving thumbs up. The man, on the left, has short brown hair, wears glasses, and a blue polo shirt with a 'Next Wave' logo. The boy, on the right, has short brown hair and wears a light blue button-down shirt. They are both smiling. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A red circular graphic in the top right corner contains white text.

**"Life with diabetes
is not easy, but with
the support that the
Family Centre
provides we are
learning to thrive,
together."**

Jonathan and Morgan (L-R)

Jonathan and Morgan Wray

"The early days were really isolating. I didn't know anyone else with type 1, let alone anybody that was as active as I was. I found it a real struggle to research ways of managing diabetes with the lifestyle I wanted to lead."

Eight months after his diagnosis with type 1 diabetes in 2009, Jonathan moved to Western Australia. Keeping his condition a secret helped him avoid the monotony of "having to explain it over and over again," but it also isolated Jonathan, who "didn't really have anyone to share the experience with."

Jonathan discovered the Family Centre when he read about the Family Centre's work to open up access to the sport of SCUBA diving for Australians with type 1 diabetes in the newspaper.

"I discovered a whole community of people that I could learn from and share information and resources with. If I am struggling with something or have a question about diabetes **I can guarantee that someone from the Family Centre community has been through the same thing or will have information to help me out. It's a godsend!**"

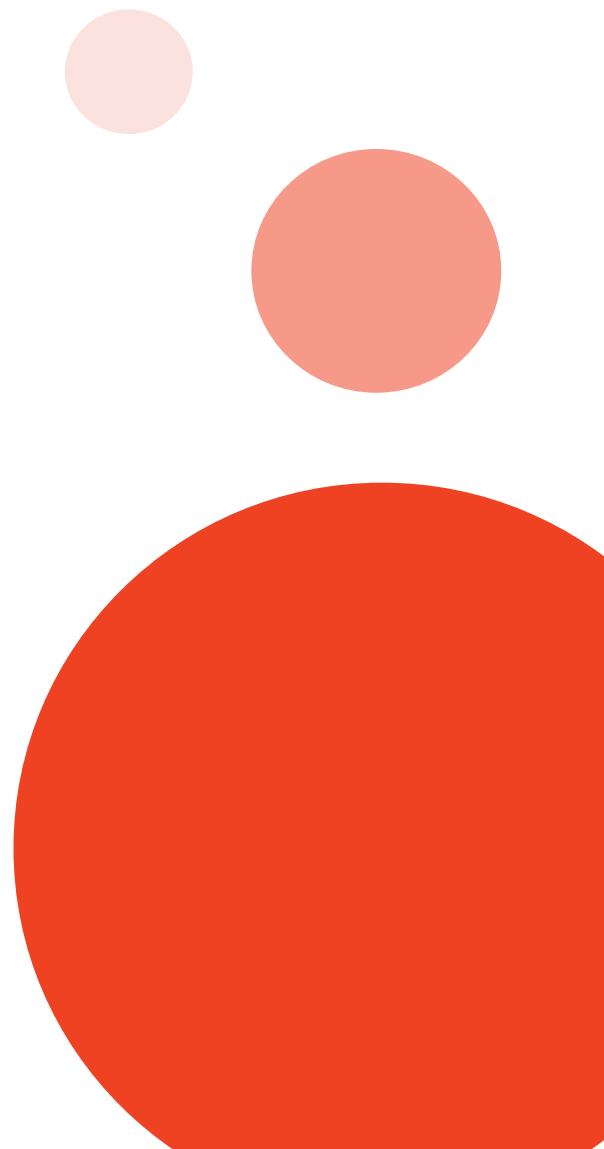
Jonathan's son Morgan was diagnosed with type 1 seven years later at age six. "His diagnosis hit me harder than my own, and initially both my wife Sasha and I really struggled with it."

Jonathan was already connected to the Family Centre's community of adults living with type 1, but when Morgan was diagnosed he and Sasha needed a different kind of support. They found instant connection with the Family Centre's community for parents, which helped them in their new role as mum and dad to a child with type 1.

"Type 1 diabetes in a child is very different to diabetes in an adult. Everything - from the habits we must develop, the ability to do complex dose calculations, and the dexterity to manage needles and devices and the way we behave around food - is different for a kid. The Type 1 Diabetes Family Centre team and in particular their online communities have been invaluable to us. We need to manage Morgan's diabetes at every moment through school, mealtimes, sleepovers and playdates. **Everything requires logistics and planning, and practical help has always been very close at hand.**"

Since Morgan's diagnosis, Jonathan no longer hides his diabetes.

"Morgan and I are 'diabuddies'. Although his diagnosis was hard to take, it has helped me grow and become more confident."





FOR THE FIRST TIME, SOMEONE LISTENED TO ME

Roisin Doherty

A weekend coffee with a Family Centre team member has set Roisin Doherty, 20, on a new path to positive diabetes self-management.

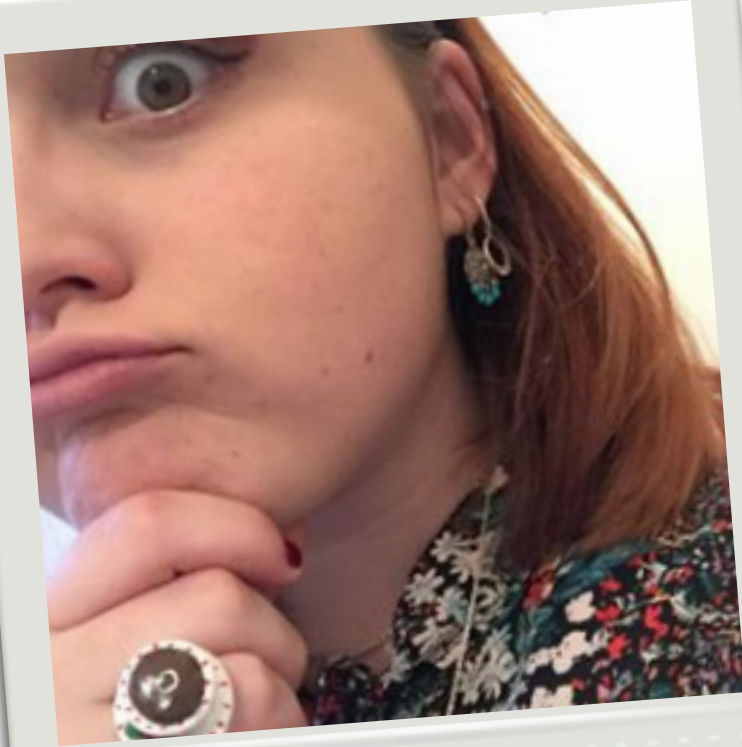
Adolescence is challenging even without diabetes. The extra responsibilities, tasks and attention required to manage **type 1 often leaves young adults with type 1 feeling overwhelmed.** The pressure of keeping it all together, feelings of being different, and the constant need to monitor and manage blood glucose levels can cause severe distress, called 'diabetes burnout.'

"I was 4 years old when I was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. I have been struggling with diabetes burnout since my early teens and it has taken such a toll on my spirit and health. **I was sick of being sick, I felt completely trapped and defeated.**"

Only 8% of Australians Roisin's age reach vital clinical targets for optimal diabetes management, increasing the risk of long-term health complications. Peer support can help relieve the stressors of living with type 1, connecting people to knowledge and experiences, helping them to access and navigate clinical care, and provide crucial social and emotional support.

"Talking with the team at the Family Centre made me realise that there are people who understand what I'm going through, and encouraged me to see the Family Centre's diabetes educator and to join the Family Centre's community. **It's been my lifesaver.** For the first time in 15 years I felt that someone listened to me, believed in me and didn't judge me. I was so relieved, I cried.

I now have practical advice and strategies that I can follow every day. I know I'm heading in the right direction now and feel blessed to have the Family Centre in my corner."



"For the first time in 15 years I felt that someone listened to me, believed in me and didn't judge me. I was so relieved, I cried."



**"The Family Centre
has its priorities right.
They keep people
connected, safe and
healthy, and make
a real difference every day
for people with type 1."**

Kyle, holding
selfie stick, and
his family

Kyle Masterman

In 2000, at age 17, Kyle Masterman's diagnosis changed his life forever.

"It was exhausting and overwhelming, there was just so much to take in."

Kyle lived without a support network for 15 years. He was alone and isolated, and struggled to find the confidence to change the way he managed his diabetes. As an active young man, managing his blood glucose levels during sports was a serious challenge for him. Constant low and high blood glucose levels brought on by training and racing left him feeling frustrated and defeated.

In 2015, at a fundraising ride for diabetes in the Barossa Valley, Kyle met the parents of a little girl with type 1 who insisted he connect with the Family Centre.

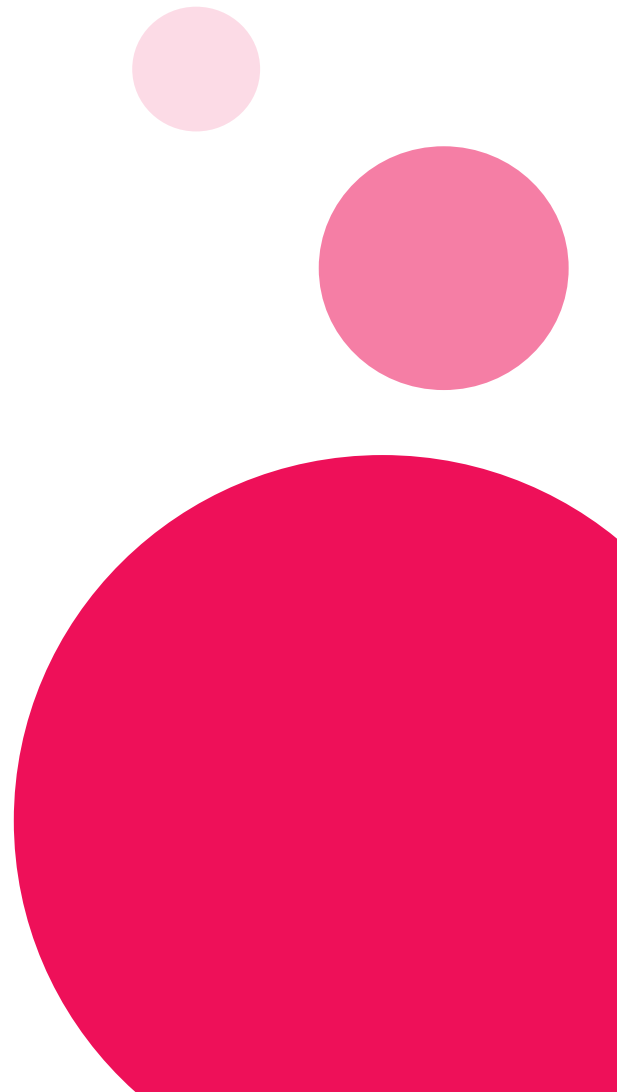
"I messaged Bec, the Family Centre's CEO, and we chatted about the Family Centre, which had only just opened. She was sporty too, and she got what I was going through. **We just clicked.**"

Through his connection with the Family Centre's community and clinic, Kyle has transformed his diabetes management regimen and his health; he now expertly manages his low-carbohydrate nutrition strategy, wears a DIY hybrid-closed-loop insulin delivery system (a 'Loop' system), and races multi-day stage races on his mountain bike with great success. Last year, he inspired the Family Centre community by riding the full length of the challenging Munda Biddi mountain bike trail - a massive 1051 kilometres - in only ten days, an achievement he was invited to speak about at the national AMSL Diabetes Sports and Exercise Camp at the Australian Institute of Sport.

"I did diabetes solo for 15 years, I know how hard it is. **Connection is key with type 1**, not only for new information about how to manage the disease well, but also for the mental side of it. I find managing my mental health just as hard as trying to keep my blood sugar levels under control, **and the community has helped me so much.** That's why I am so passionate about supporting the Family Centre."

Kyle now plays a vital leadership role in the Family Centre community, as a mentor to people who have just been diagnosed, ensuring that they are not alone like he was.

"The Family Centre has its priorities right. They keep people connected, safe and healthy, and make a real difference every day for people with type 1."



Bec Johnson

When she was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in 2001, the Family Centre's CEO Bec Johnson was immediately confronted by the serious risks associated with her new, life-threatening condition. But Bec has never let barriers stand in her way; 19 years and 42,000 injections of insulin later, Bec is **not only living without limits – she's leading by example in every way.**

"I believe that if I ask others to give back to the Family Centre, I must give back myself, and so every year I create a personal fundraiser for the Family Centre. I love swimming in the ocean more than anything. My previous solo Rottnest Channel crossings together raised over \$44,000, but this year I wanted to do something really big."

The Life Without Limits campaign was more than big: a 19.7 kilometre Rottnest Channel Solo, a 25 kilometre Port to Pub Ultramarathon, and a 39.4 kilometre double crossing of the Rottnest Channel, with a fundraising goal of \$85,000. An immense commitment for any swimmer, Life Without Limits was a truly colossal challenge for a person living with type 1 diabetes.

"The training program was intense. I clocked up tens of kilometres every week in the pool, ocean and river, and spent my evenings in the gym. I built on my experience with previous marathon swims to figure out how to manage my blood glucose levels through rough ocean conditions, cold exposure, and extreme fatigue. It was tough, but there were magical moments, too: playful encounters with dolphins and seals, pre-dawn swimming under stars, the feeling of true satisfaction when a carefully planned diabetes management strategy worked well on a long training swim. But most of all, I loved that the campaign's message resonated with so many people in our community."

Major Supporters and community donors were quick to get behind Life Without Limits, which developed a strong following on social media through Bec's posts and race reports. A campaign highlight was the cover story feature in the Sunday Times Magazine's International Women's Day edition, which showed the Western Australian community at large that **with the right support, people with type 1 diabetes can achieve big dreams.**

"My diagnosis with diabetes was the hardest thing I have ever faced. The day-to-day management of diabetes is unrelenting and its complexity can feel exhausting. When I was younger, the possibility of developing devastating diabetes complications or being incapacitated by hypoglycaemia gave me regular nightmares. It took a long time for me to face type 1 diabetes with the confidence I have today."

Life Without Limits captures the lessons Bec has learned throughout her life with type 1: that its daily challenges build resilience, that facing its risks creates courage, and that barriers are meant to be broken down.

"Knowing that my swims gave a mum of a toddler with type 1 a feeling of hope that her baby could grow up to be fit and strong, a young man the inspiration to get back into the sport he loved before his diagnosis, and a dad the opportunity to openly share his experience of type 1 for the first time through people he met through the campaign was phenomenal."

After a successful Rottnest Channel Solo crossing in February in a time of 6 hours and 43 minutes, the COVID-19 pandemic hit Western Australia. Bec's second swim, the Port to Pub Ultramarathon, was cancelled due to the restrictions placed on large gatherings. Bec nonetheless swam an ultramarathon, coming up with an alternative 22-kilometre course from Perth to Fremantle in the Swan River, which she completed solo on March 22 in 6 hours and 53 minutes. Bec's final swim is on hold at the time of writing due to restrictions placed on channel crossings - **but the spirit of Life Without Limits lives on every day at the Family Centre.**

Alongside inspirational mentors, the Family Centre's work is underpinned by a belief that authentic peer connections, quality education and empathetic clinical care are the powerful combination that can help people with type 1 to truly thrive.

"Life Without Limits stands for hope, courage and giving back. It was an unbelievable team effort and an unforgettable experience. My sincere thanks to every one of Life Without Limits' Major Supporters and community donors for their generosity, and to the volunteer team who crewed, paddled, and supported me in every way. **The funds raised will go towards programs that will make real impact.**"

"Life Without Limits stands for hope, courage and giving back"



Bec, second from left with Life Without Limits supporters

The Type 1 Diabetes Family Centre is grateful to have received generous financial support from the following individuals and organisations, who have made cumulative gifts of \$10,000 and above over the last two financial years.

**FAMILY
CENTRE
VISIONARY**

Jeff Newman OAM

**FOUNDING
SPONSORS**

Channel 7
Telethon Trust

Lotterywest

The WA State
Government

**FAMILY CENTRE
HEROES**

\$150,000 +

AHG Automotive
Arc Infrastructure

The Horgan Family and Leeuwin Estate

**FAMILY CENTRE
INNOVATORS**

\$100,000 - \$149,999

Bendat Family Foundation
Bowen Foundation
Mineral Resources

Rick and Victoria Malone
The Towner Family and Flametree Wines

**FAMILY CENTRE
LEGENDS**

\$50,000 - \$99,999

North Perth Community Bank
Primewest Centrepont Shopping Centre
St. George Foundation

**FAMILY CENTRE
BUILDERS**

\$10,000 - \$49,999

Bob Bollen and Benz Industries Pty Ltd
Bunnings Group Limited
Cannings Purple
Leeuwin Estate Charitable Foundation Trust
Optimal Pharmacy
Regent Motor Group
RockaDex Diabetes Supplies
Telethon Community Cinemas



FAMILY CENTRE COMMUNITY FUNDRAISERS

We would like to sincerely acknowledge and thank every company, family and individual that has supported the Family Centre through donations, financial and in-kind, and community fundraising events. Your support has made a significant impact upon the lives of people with type 1 diabetes.

FAMILY CENTRE COMMUNITY FUNDRAISERS SPOTLIGHT

We would like to express special thanks to the following community fundraisers for supporting the Family Centre over multiple years.

Paua Rose Netball Club Charity Cup proudly supported by Swick Mining Services

For your support of the Family Centre over consecutive years at your annual charity netball cup, raising over \$36,000.

Automotive Holdings Group and Staff

For your support of the Family Centre over the past two years at your community fundraising events, the AHG Track Trek and the AHG Charity Walk, which raised over \$65,000.

Bec Johnson

Bec, the Family Centre's CEO, has continued in her mission to prove that a life with type 1 is a 'Life Without Limits,' raising more than \$130,000 through her three solo swims to Rottnest Island.

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

You are an important part of our future.

The Family Centre receives no government funding. We do what we do with sincere thanks to the community and corporate supporters who believe in us and are committed to our cause.

Whether you financially support a program, service or new initiative, or contribute to the Family Centre's Future Fund, you can be assured that **your gift will make an impact.**

Work with us and change lives.

We value you – your collaboration, your financial support and your friendship.

We welcome any questions you may have and warmly invite you to see the Family Centre for yourself. Please do not hesitate to contact us at any time.

Meg Croucher

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