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The Grodmans and Kramers unite to fire up support for diabetes research

When 10-year-old Tyler Kramer came home after finding out he had type 1 diabetes, there were a few things on his mind, like going to soccer practice. Adjusting to the new routine required by his recent diagnosis was a challenge. But that same evening his classmate Adam Grodman, also diabetic, called him up to offer advice and commiserate. It was a sweet gesture that helped cement a friendship and bring the Grodmans and Kramers closer together.

It also indirectly planted the seed for D.R.E.A.M. (Diabetes Research & Education Advocates of Michigan), a public organization conceived earlier this year by both families to fund research and educational projects to discover a cure for diabetes. It merges both families' extensive fundraising efforts to deliver and direct research support to doctors, like those at the University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital.

Karyn and Scott Grodman began raising money for diabetes research shortly after discovering their 15-month-old son Jared had diabetes in February 1994. Returning from the hospital frustrated, Scott felt compelled to take action.

"We're going to give our kid insulin shots the rest of his life and this is what we're doing?" he says. "This just isn't enough."

By the spring, they'd organized an impromptu Jared's Run for the Cure and raised \$500. When their next son, Adam, born in July 1995, was also diagnosed with diabetes, it increased their resolve. They started organizing an annual Fun Run, started the Grodman Cure Foundation in

1999 and raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for diabetes research.

When Peri and Evan Kramer discovered that their son had diabetes, they immediately wanted to get involved. Evan's siblings had diabetes and they had struggled with the lack of awareness of the condition while growing up.

"We're going to tell everyone about diabetes and we're going to talk about it all that we can," says Evan. "We made it our mission that Tyler wasn't going to be in the same situation my siblings were."

The Kramers began participating in the American Diabetes Association's Tour de Cure bike ride shortly after Tyler's diagnosis. Sporting yellow Team Tyler T-Shirts, last year, Tyler formed a team of 56 bike riders, was the top individual fundraiser in Michigan and served as the Tour's Youth Ambassador.

The common purpose and dedication of both families have made them ideal partners. D.R.E.A.M. has already given \$5,000 to University of Michigan for lab equipment and recently made a \$100,000 donation to further pediatric diabetes research. A series of fundraising events, including a wine-tasting event at It's a Matter of Taste restaurant in Commerce Township in October, will continue their mission of raising money and awareness at every level.

In fact, earlier this year, a boy in

Tyler's neighborhood was diagnosed with diabetes. Not surprisingly, Tyler was quickly on the phone discussing diabetes management.

- TOUR DE FORCE**
- The families of diabetes patients
 - Jared and Adam Grodman and Tyler Kramer have teamed up to raise money for diabetes research and education.

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Support

Help fund diabetes research at UMHS by making a donation. Visit www.med.umich.edu/mott/help/1help.html for details. For more information and to support the D.R.E.A.M. foundation, visit www.dreamforacure.com.