

Doing It All

A positive, uplifting children's book stresses normalcy for kids with type 1 diabetes.

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Contributing Writer

Jacob Kleiman is a regular 8-year-old boy who hangs out with friends, plays sports and happens to have diabetes. His mom, Deanna Kleiman, wrote *Jacob's Journey: Living with Type 1 Diabetes* (2012, self-published) to let other kids and even adults know that about him and other kids living with the illness.



Jacob Kleiman

"I decided to share Jacob's story to help educate other families who may have or know a diabetic child; and also for people who just want to learn more about the disease and how it affects children," said Kleiman of Oak Park.

"Mostly I wanted people to know that children with type 1 diabetes can live a normal, healthy life and do things that any other child can do."

Jacob's Journey, written in language easy to understand for children ages 4-10, is told as if narrated by Jacob, who describes the "journey" to control his illness.

The 22-page educational, paperback book lets readers know the symptoms of type 1 diabetes (previously known as juvenile diabetes) and what is involved in its treatment, describing finger pokes before meals to test Jacob's blood sugar levels and insulin injections after.

"At first I cried every time someone poked my finger to test my blood," Jacob said in the book. "I was only 2 years old. But then I got used to it and pretty soon it didn't hurt at all." By age 2, Jacob was poking his own finger and by age 4 he gave himself injections. He now has an insulin pump attached to his body to administer the insulin and eliminate the shots.

Denise G. Pentescu, senior outreach manager for the Southeast Michigan and Northwest Ohio chapter of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (jdrf.org), Metro Detroit in Southfield, refers

to *Jacob's Journey* as "an enduring sweet book explaining in easy-to-understand language the care and support a child with type 1 diabetes needs."

Peri Kramer of West Bloomfield, the parent of a son with type 1 diabetes, and co-founder of Diabetes Research and Education Advocates of Michigan (D.R.E.A.M.), with her husband Evan, highly recommends the book. She says it "gives readers an understanding on a child's level of what having diabetes is like ... and helps make diabetes a little less daunting for children and their families."

Family Affair

The book shows Jacob's family's reaction to his diagnosis as well as their support, including how the whole family changed their eating habits for him, and how his extended family and parents learned to administer his injections.

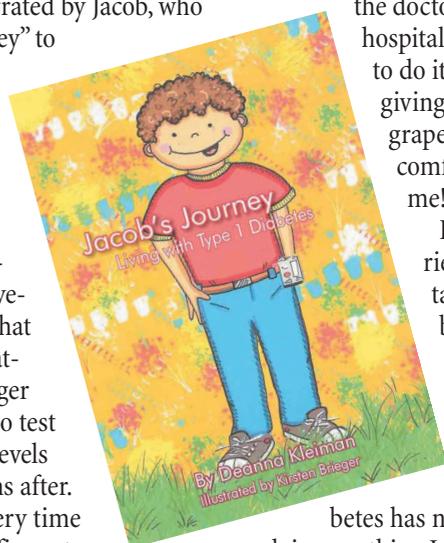
"My mom and dad told me that this scared them very much," Jacob said in the book. "They weren't doctors so they had never given anyone a shot before, and they were afraid they might not figure out the amount of insulin correctly. But the doctors and nurses at the hospital showed my parents how to do it, and they even practiced giving shots on oranges and grapefruits so they would feel comfortable giving them to me!"

Based on his actual experiences, in the book Jacob takes snacks and juice boxes to school and has teachers who help care for him. He wears a bracelet letting others know he is diabetic. "Having type 1 dia-

betes has never stopped me from doing anything I wanted to do," Jacob says in the book. "I love sports and play all of them. My favorite sport is football, but I also like basketball, soccer, baseball and hockey."

Colorful, cartoon images, which, Kleiman said, "attract kids" were illustrated by Kirsten Brieger of Berkley, who also has a diabetic son.

Partial proceeds from the book go to several organizations that work to fund educational projects and research toward a cure for diabetes. In addition to being sold in stores and online for individual use and



David, Deanna, Ira and Jacob Kleiman

Type 1 Diabetes

According to the American Diabetes Association:

- Type 1 diabetes, previously known as juvenile diabetes, is usually diagnosed in children and young adults.
- In type 1 diabetes, the pancreas does not produce insulin, a hormone needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life.
- Insulin is administered by injection or through an insulin pump

• Only 5 percent of people with diabetes have this form of the disease.

• With the help of insulin therapy and other treatments even young children with type 1 diabetes can learn to manage their condition and live long, healthy, happy lives.

• Type 1 diabetes management includes blood glucose control and insulin management, exercise, which help stabilize blood glucose levels, nutrition and support.

as resource materials, Kleiman said she was pleased when "Jacob's endocrinologist and also his pediatrician ordered books for their offices."

Kleiman is also the author of *My Twin Brother* (2010), a children's book about Jacob and his twin brother David, who are going into 4th grade at Akiva Hebrew Day School in Southfield.

With reassurance, the book reminds that "people with diabetes who take care of themselves can live a long, healthy life"

and that although the cause of type 1 diabetes may not be known, there is ongoing research to find its cure.

Every year the Kleimans, including dad, Ira, are joined by family and friends on Team Jacob's Journey at the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Walk, taking place this year on Sunday, Sept. 23, in Warren.

Jacob said he is happy his mom wrote the book and hopes it will help other kids with diabetes and their families. □

Jacob's Journey may be downloaded on Kindle; is available at amazon.com; barnesandnoble.com; The Book Beat, 26010 Greenfield Road, Oak Park; Self Esteem Shop, 32839 Woodward Ave., Royal Oak; Children's Gift Shop at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak. A portion of sales will go to fund diabetes research, education and programming when ordered through these organizations: jdrf.org (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation); dreamforcure.com (D.R.E.A.M.) and dys4kids.org (Diabetes Youth Services in Maumee, Ohio). \$10.95 (may be discounted at some venues).