

PACIFIC DIABETES EDUCATION PROGRAM GUIDEBOOK

A COURSE IN PLANNING DIABETES AWARENESS
AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES



Pacific Diabetes Education Program
A Program of Papa Ola Lōkahi



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The *Pacific Diabetes Education Program Guidebook* was adapted from the *Pacific Diabetes Today Guidebook*, developed in 2001 by the Pacific Diabetes Today Resource Center (PDTRC). PDTRC was established in 1999 as a regional Diabetes Today training center to extend technical leadership and support to the Pacific region. The original PDTRC guidebook was designed to help communities develop, implement, and evaluate diabetes prevention and control initiatives that captured the unique sociocultural perspectives and processes of Hawai'i and the Pacific region. The *Pacific Diabetes Education Program Guidebook* continues the legacy of PDTRC, while focusing on the design, implementation, and evaluation of diabetes awareness and education activities. We thank the former staff of PDTRC and the PDTRC advisory council for their vision and leadership.

We also thank the current staff of PDEP, the PDEP advisory council, and all the individuals and organizations who contributed to the guidebook for giving their time, energy, and feedback to make this project possible. We look forward to the continued development of the *Pacific Diabetes Education Program Guidebook* with collaboration from our partners as we work to prevent and control diabetes in Hawai'i and the Pacific region.



PACIFIC ISLANDERS

WHO WE ARE

We are Pacific Islanders. Our homeland is Moananui—the islands and the ocean seas that surround them. We are referred to as Polynesians and Micronesians. We are Carolinians, Chamorros, Chuukese, Hawaiians, Kosraeans, Marshallese, Palauans, Pohnpeians, Samoans, and Yapese. We are a highly diverse population with diverse historical backgrounds, cultural traditions, and over twenty living traditional languages.



Our story begins with creation in the universe— motion in space and time.

KUMULIPO - "KAWA AKAHI"

(Hawaiian Creation Chant)

O ke au i kahuli wela ka honua

O ke au i kahuli lole ka lani

O ke au i kuaka'iaka ka la

E ho'omalalama i ka malama

O ke au o Makali'i ka po

O ka walewale ho'okumu honua ia

O ke kumu o ka lipo, i lipo ai

O ke kumu o ka po, i po ai

O ka lipolipo, o ka lipolipo

O ka lipo o ka la, o ka lipo o ka po, Po wale ho'i

Hanau ka po

Hanau Kumulipo i ka po, ke kane

Hanau Po'ele i ka po, he wahine

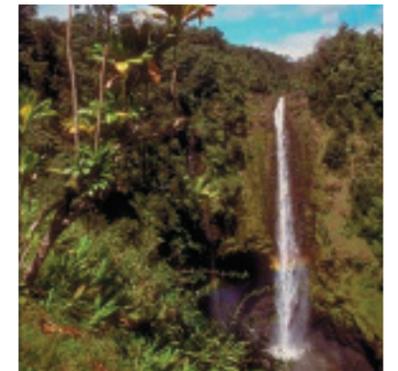
When space turned around, the earth heated
When space turned over, the sky reversed
When the sun appeared standing in the shadows
To cause light to make bright the moon
When the Pleiades are small eyes in the night
From the source in the slime was the earth formed
From the source in the dark was darkness formed
From the source in the night was night formed
From the depths of the darkness, darkness so deep
Darkness of day, darkness of night, of night alone
Did night give birth
Born was Kumulipo in the night, a male
Born was Po'ele in the night, a female

In our creation, darkness becomes light. Sky Father (*Wakea*) and Earth Mother (*Papa*) unite. We are a part and parcel of and related to all things. All the ocean's living creatures and those on land and sky are related (*kinolau*) to one another and cousins to us. We come from the source—the clam, the soil, or the surrounding seas. The natural environment is part of us and we a part of it. Even our rocks carry within them the embodiment of our ancestors, faces from another time.

Our life is geared to the celestial movements of the spider (*ku'uku'u*), the octopus (*fe'e*, *he'e*), the butterfly (*pepe*), the worm (*riki*), and the moon (*masina*).

Our maps are the stars, the ocean currents, and the prevailing winds. The canoe (*wa'a*, *sak-man*) is our transport system. It provides us with safety and gives us a vehicle to traverse the pathways of the seas (*ke ala o ke kai*).

Our chiefs—Malietoa, Kamehameha, Makea, Takau, Abba Thule, Lamari, Linani, and Karakok—remain living legacies to our political past, a past marked by our more recent struggles with stronger political powers from the East and West including Spain, Germany, England, Japan, and the United States. In spite of initial repression and suppression by our colonizers, we remain steadfast to our heritage, which now includes not only our traditional culture but also semblances of these other intervening cultures. We wrestle with how best to incorporate these many semblances into modern societies that make sense to us. Today, we continue to struggle in developing political structures that make sense for us. We are independent countries, terri-





tories, and smaller political divisions within the fabric of larger nations.

We all come from the oral tradition. We are expert at seeing what is not said and understanding what is not read. Our stories and legends contain our history, and we continue to excel in our abilities to speak the truth as we see it. We retain our values that have been shaped by thousands of years of living on islands, interdependent upon one another for survival yet fiercely independent in terms of maintaining our space. Correct process and protocol are important and vital to our daily living.



Our families form the basis of who we are. We value our elders for their knowledge and experiences, remembering that we are but the most recent of generations and have multitudes of elders (*kupuna*) sitting upon our shoulders. We are the sum total of their former lives, and it is from them that we garner strength in times of need. Knowing our genealogy is the means by which we honor those who have come before us.



We do best when we work together. Many hands make the task light. Our ancestors taught us this. Our works speak for themselves. Lelu, Nan Madol, Latte stone construction, and the Taga Quarry, Tia Seu Lupe (star mounds), Kukaniloko, Heiau O Pu'ukohola, Pu'uhonua O Honaunau, and Kiki A Ola are but a few of our elders' legacies. These lessons teach us that the group is more important than the individual. True leadership emerges from the group and includes reciprocity. In order to lead, a leader must provide.

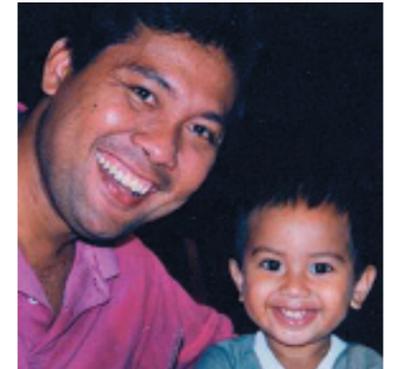


We are spiritual people. We believe in what we believe. We respect and honor our family

guardians and traditional practices, yet we are of this world and call upon today's religions for help and salvation. Our faith gives us hope and our culture gives us strength.

We are a healthy people made weak by behaviors foreign to our culture. Our culture survives through our dances, foods, crafts, traditional healing practices and medicine, relationships and values, spirituality, and languages. But our families have tasted the ill-effects of war and, more recently, nuclear testing. Our traditional sources of sustenance have been broken. Our children are entrenched in Western ways beamed into our communities through "boxes"—radios, movie screens, televisions, and computers. Our *rai*, *udoud*, and *toluk* and our barter systems have been replaced by paper and metal coin. Though we live in changing times, we must find ways to hold fast to our cultural values appropriate for today's living. We must recapture our spirit and remold ourselves in ways that will provide us sustenance for our voyage in this new millennium yet keep us true to who we are. We need to be righteous (*pono*).

In times past, our canoe was small and fashioned for survival on one ocean. Our new canoe must be large enough to carry with it the hopes and dreams of all our people and their families across many oceans. It is still a voyage for survival. For this voyage, we need to be healthy and well. This is our challenge *today*.



WHAT IS DIABETES?

Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose (sugar) for our bodies to use for energy. Our body makes insulin that helps glucose get into our body cells.

When you have diabetes, your body either cannot make enough insulin or cannot use its own insulin very well.

When glucose cannot get into the body cells, it builds up in the blood. Over time, high amounts of sugar in the blood can affect almost every part of the body and cause serious health problems.

SYMPTOMS OF DIABETES

- Being very thirsty.
- Urinating frequently, often at night.
- Having blurry vision from time to time.
- Feeling very weak or tired much of the time.
- Losing weight without trying.
- Having sores that are slow to heal.
- Getting more infections than usual.
- Recurring boils.
- Losing feeling or getting a tingling feeling in the feet.
- Having very dry skin.

These are some of the signs and symptoms of diabetes. People don't have to show all these symptoms to have diabetes. People can also have diabetes with no symptoms.

TYPES OF DIABETES

TYPE 1

About 5 percent of people with diabetes have Type 1 diabetes. These people usually find out they have diabetes when they are children or young adults. People with Type 1 diabetes must inject insulin daily to live because the body makes little or no insulin.

TYPE 2

Most people with diabetes—about 95 percent—have Type 2 diabetes. Most people with Type 2 diabetes have insulin in their body, but the body can't use it very well. Most people with Type 2 diabetes find out about their diabetes after age thirty or forty, but Type 2 diabetes is increasing in our youths and young adults. This early onset of Type 2 diabetes is often mistaken for Type 1 diabetes in the Pacific.

GESTATIONAL DIABETES

This type of diabetes appears in some women when they are pregnant. This type of diabetes is temporary (during pregnancy) but it does increase a woman's chance of getting Type 2 diabetes later in life.

RISK FACTORS FOR DIABETES

WHAT INCREASES YOUR CHANCES OF GETTING DIABETES?

- You have a close relative (parent, brother/sister) with diabetes.
- You are a Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, Asian American, Native American, Latino, or African American.
- You are heavy (obese/overweight).
- You don't do regular physical activity or exercise.
- During previous test(s), you had IFG (high blood sugar) or IGT (your body could not handle sugar well).
- You have high blood pressure.
- You have high cholesterol levels.
- You had diabetes when you were pregnant or you had a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds at birth.

COMPLICATIONS (HEALTH PROBLEMS) FROM DIABETES

WHAT HEALTH PROBLEMS DOES DIABETES CAUSE?

When your blood sugar levels are constantly high, body changes happen. This may result in complications, or other health problems. People with diabetes have a higher risk for:

- Stroke (brain attack)
- Heart attack
- Kidney disease
- Blindness
- Amputations
- Nerve damage
- Teeth and gum disease
- Problems with pregnancy

DIABETES CONTROL

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT DIABETES COMPLICATIONS?

Good diabetes management can help you stay in control of your health. Self-management should include a flexible plan based on:

- Diabetes education
- Healthy eating
- Physical activity (exercise)
- Diabetes foot care
- Eye exams
- Smoking (tobacco) cessation
- Weight issues
- Medication therapy
- Teeth and gum care
- Self-monitoring of blood sugar
- Stress management skills

There is no cure for diabetes, but people with diabetes can live a long and healthy life if they control their diabetes.

GLUCOSE CONTROL

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO CONTROL YOUR GLUCOSE (SUGAR) LEVELS?

One of the most important aspects of diabetes control and preventing complications is controlling your glucose (sugar) levels. Below are some ways to control your glucose levels:

- Healthy eating
- Physical activity (exercise)
- Medication therapy
- Self-monitoring of blood sugar

Remember that controlling your glucose levels is one aspect of controlling your diabetes and preventing diabetes complications. You must consider the other aspects (discussed earlier) for total wellness.

DIABETES IN THE PACIFIC

Diabetes has become an epidemic worldwide, especially in the Pacific. Before we talk about the seriousness of the problem and the number of people affected by diabetes, let's ask ourselves two questions:

1. Why is diabetes such a big problem now, when only two or three generations ago it was not even reported as a health issue on most Pacific Islands?
2. What has caused this dramatic increase?

Let us compare the lives of two typical Pacific Islanders, adult men, one who lived in the 1800s and one who lives in today's modern society. To help with this analysis, two diary entries have been created by Robert Spegal.¹ These entries are fictitious, but portray reasonably typical days in the lives of these two individuals.

As you read the diary entries, think about the following:

What can we say about these two lives? Although we understand how diabetes affects the human body, the exact reasons why an individual develops the disease remains somewhat of a mystery. The risk factors, however, are well known, and they include obesity and a lack of physical activity. Many health professionals believe that stress and substance abuse are also contributors.

Read between the lines of these diaries and try to visualize the lives of these two men. Who is eating a variety of healthy foods in moderate amounts? Who spends the better part of his day in a sitting position? Who is more fully in control of his own well-being and not subject to interruption? Who has the opportunity and disposable resources with which to partake of unhealthy substances? Who is most like you?

13 May 1875, Thursday Morning

For breakfast this morning, the charred fish left over from yesterday's meal tasted great with the preserved breadfruit that our neighbor, Naiomy, shared with us. She dug it up last week, two big bundles that I think had been buried for almost four years. Naiomy is so kind, always sharing the delicious food she makes. She must have appreciated the fish I gave her yesterday. Anyway, it was a good morning meal.

My wife, Rosa, knows how to cook our foods just right; even the leftovers are good. She made our evening meal of fish and pounded bananas yesterday, even though she must have been exhausted after planting over fifty swamp taro roots. Tonight we'll have some of the ripe taro that she harvested. I've got to make sure the younger boy gets enough firewood for her today. He's a good worker but likes to play with the new puppies so much that sometimes he forgets his work.

What a productive fishing trip yesterday! The two boys and I were in the right place at the right time, walking along the reef with our net near the narrow channel just in time to see that big school coming down from the north. We got the net in place and soon had a nice catch, more than twenty-five good sized fish. All of our neighbors enjoyed fresh fish for last night's supper.

The chief is very kind, giving us that kava root in trade for the fish we took to him. It has been a long time since we pounded kava at our house, and there hasn't been a feast since the last full moon. It was strong kava, plenty for Rosa and me. We had plenty of time to pound it and relax before dark, since

¹ Robert Spegal currently serves as a member of PDEP's Advisory Council.

the sun was still high in the sky when the boys and I got back from fishing.

The kava gave me a good sound sleep last night.

What am I going to do today? It's been raining since dawn, hard at times, so it doesn't look like I'll be able to plant yams today; the ground will be too wet and muddy. No problem. There will always be another day without rain sometime soon. I had good success with my yams last year, some of the biggest in the whole village. No sense in rushing the planting and not getting the job done the right way.

I need to decide what else to do today. If it stops raining this morning, maybe I'll pick the ripe breadfruit from the tree down near the stream. Better check to make sure the tree is dry; I don't want to slip, like what happened to Joe the other day. He hadn't climbed very high, but when he fell, his arm slammed against a big jagged rock. The bones in his elbow are all smashed and he is still in a great deal of pain and his arm just hangs; he cannot move it. It's a shame. He will never be a good spear fisherman again. We will all miss eating the turtles he used to catch.

Well, the sky seems to be clearing, so I think that I'll plant some bananas this morning and clean out the weeds by the kava plants on the hillside. After lunch, I'll collect some more rocks for the seawall project and carry them down to the shore. The repair of the wall by the chief's house has to be done before the next high tide. Then we'll see about the breadfruit.

11 May 2000, Thursday Evening

Not enough time for a good breakfast this morning. I boiled some water for a cup of coffee for me and some ramen for the kids. It seems like every time it rains in the morning we all wake up late and have to rush to school and the office. I didn't even have time for my first cigarette until I got in the car. Even the car seemed sleepy; it was hard to start. I need to add a carport to the house. It will protect the car and we won't have to get wet when it's raining.

The kava last night was watered down too much. We must have drunk six bottles between the four of us and then I had two beers for a chaser. We'll have to try a different market tonight, maybe the new place by the river, the one that they were talking about last night. Usually on opening night, the kava is served strong to make a good impression on potential future customers. I wonder if my niece will be able to babysit again.

Sitting at my desk this morning at work, I couldn't decide which project to tackle first. I had finished the first draft of the monthly report yesterday, but getting all of the account files up-to-date was just as important as getting the final draft completed. They're both overdue. Then there are those two letters to the off-island vendors that should have gone out today.

Well, first things first. I got myself a cup of coffee and sent the clerk to get a bag of donuts. Then I settled down, had a smoke, and thought about what to do first. I told the clerk to buy a pack of cigarettes, too. I finished off almost a whole pack at the market last night.

The day really dragged on slowly today; too many interruptions. Sometimes I'd like to take that phone and throw it out the window; it always rings just when I'm trying to concentrate on something important! That call from the regional sales representative just at noontime really bugged me. He

always calls at 11:55 just to make me late for lunch. By the time I got to the restaurant, the buffet table was half empty. I only had three servings of my favorite fried rice and sausages, and no dessert. They totally ran out of ice cream!

At least the afternoon wasn't a total waste. The boss stopped by my desk and told me that we'd probably all be getting a lot of overtime next week to prepare the annual report presentation for the board of directors' meeting next month. Last year's meeting was a great success, but we put in a lot of late hours getting prepared.

When I got home I thought that I'd write this entry right away but I got sidetracked by a really interesting TV show that the kids were watching. At least I thought that it was interesting until I dozed off. The smells from the kitchen brought me back to consciousness just in time for supper.

Now I'm full and want to get today's news written down before we head for the opening of the new kava bar. Seems like this chair is making louder squeaks than it did before; I must be gaining more weight. People say that a big body is a sign of contentment and success, but I have to admit it seems like I'm getting tired carrying all this weight around. Maybe I'll drive to the track after work tomorrow and walk a lap. Who am I kidding? I've been promising myself to get some exercise for weeks. Actually, I think I'm still in pretty good shape.

Now read an essay written by "Aunty Betty" Kawohiokalani Ellis-Jenkins,² in which she describes her personal experience with diabetes. Can you identify with Aunty Betty's thoughts and feelings?

YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Yesterday, I learned about diabetes. Yesterday, I was in the company of hundreds of people with diabetes. I witnessed a child self-administering her insulin. Yesterday, I listened to a war veteran who survived the Vietnam War but was blinded by his diabetes.

For the first time, I had a diabetes foot examination. Yesterday, I felt a fear of diabetes like I have never felt before. I had lunch with a pretty, little girl who was diagnosed with diabetes in high school . . . and she was thin. I thought people with diabetes were obese. Yesterday, I learned that I was not alone: many people have diabetes; all kinds of people have diabetes.

Yesterday, I overheard, "I'm really not diabetic. Thank goodness I'm borderline." I saw a keynote speaker publicly inject himself with insulin before he addressed the masses and marveled at the high technology now available in all sizes, shapes, and colors. That all happened yesterday. There have been other yesterdays but not like this yesterday. Yesterday, I thought back to when my dad was diagnosed with diabetes in the '60s and my mother became an overnight "educated" caregiver where measuring, weighing, calculating, planning, and preparing became second nature.

All this had little or no real meaning to me until *yesterday*. As a family, we had been touched by diabetes—a father, a brother, a cousin, and an aunt—yet I knew too little about its victimizing powers. Because of yesterday, I have a sense of fearful respect for the "silent killer."

Although my "silent killer" disease was ignored, denied, and often placed on the back burner, the mysterious diabetes kept surfacing and yesterday it exploded like the volcano I knew as a child on my home island, Hawai'i.

I know myself *today* to be a Hawaiian woman with diabetes. Today, I know that there is no such thing as "borderline" diabetes. Today, I am

² Aunty Betty served on the Pacific Diabetes Today Resource Center advisory from 1998-2003. She is a Hawaiian woman, elder (*kupuna*), educator, and cultural consultant whose experience extends across the Pacific.

aware of the dangers for my children and my precious *mo'opuna* (grandchildren) and those yet to be born. Today, I look to those around me to support me as I support others to be more aware, sympathetic, and educated about diabetes. Today, I believe that my diabetes care must be part of my total wellness of mind, body, and spirit. Today, I know that as a *kupuna* (Hawaiian elder), I must share cultural concepts of wellness through an ancestral value system.

Today, I know that I must initiate and maintain change and accept the challenges, to journey towards balance and harmony, to reconnect, to be *pono* (correct) with my diabetes. Today, I know that I must make this journey like the *honu* (turtles) that I collect—steady, patient, forward, and deliberate. “*Pu ha*”—only forward, never backward.

