B1-6: The Lived School-Based Experiences of Being an Adolescent with Type 1 Diabetes: A Pilot Study

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**Abstract:**  
**Introduction:** Being an adolescent with type 1 diabetes is challenging because they must deal with usual developmental tasks while also managing this complex disease. School plays a big
role in their lives; however, studies have shown that school-based diabetes care is inadequate. This qualitative pilot study conducted with Heideggerian hermeneutic phenomenological approach, aims to explore the lived experiences of being an adolescent with type 1 diabetes in the school environment in Taiwan. The research question was: “What are the meanings of the lived school-based experiences of adolescents with type 1 diabetes?”

**Method(s):** Purposive sampling was used to recruit two adolescents with type 1 diabetes in Taiwan. Individual, audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant. Interviews were transcribed verbatim. A journal with field notes and reflections was maintained during the study. Data analysis used the hermeneutic circle method supported by NVivo 8.0 software. Peer debriefing was also employed to increase the trustworthiness of this study.

**Results:** The two adolescents’ expressions about their school-lived experiences were interwoven with positive and negative emotions. The topics covered past and current events and future plans. The findings showed a dynamic, learning process. Four themes were uncovered: (a) learning to be the master of their disease; (b) learning to find ways to feel comfortable; (c) learning not to be specialized; and (d) learning not to let others (especially parents) worry about them.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** This pilot study is the foundation for a future larger study. Results suggest that while the adolescents are learning to take more responsibility for their health they still need varied kinds of support from people surrounding them. A supportive environment should be cultivated in school settings to provide them with a safer learning environment.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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