



Diabetes: A Family Matter Participatory Sketching

Overview:

This activity will be useful for support groups, family groups, and other groups of people. It is an activity that involves everyone in the group and provides a way to share what people know, believe, about their personal experiences with diabetes. This is an excellent way to get conversation about the topic of diabetes started and obtain full participation of the group. It allows people to share ideas that are important to them.

Brief Description:

This is an audience-centered and low-cost method to assess individuals' experiences with diabetes. This activity provides a different approach for engaging an audience and including their voices in discussions about diabetes. In this activity, you ask participants questions, but you request the answers in the form of sketches which they draw. The participants will then tell stories about the sketches and how the images relate to their life with diabetes.

This activity could be very private and conducted with a small group of members. Participatory sketching could also be part of a larger community activity, such as a Diabetes Fun Day. Individuals could be invited to participate and enter their sketches along with their stories in a competition which would be voted on by the public or a team of judges. The stories of the sketches could be told before a larger public audience.

Objectives:

1. To increase awareness of diabetes prevention and management
2. To help participants connect with each other and generate relationships with persons managing with diabetes
3. To help individuals understand the impact of diabetes on families.
4. Make diabetes prevention and management more visible.

Participants:

Although this activity is geared toward adults, any age group could be involved. Children could be invited to participate and speak about diabetes from their perspectives. Diabetes, through the eyes of children, should be an eye opening experience for the adults.

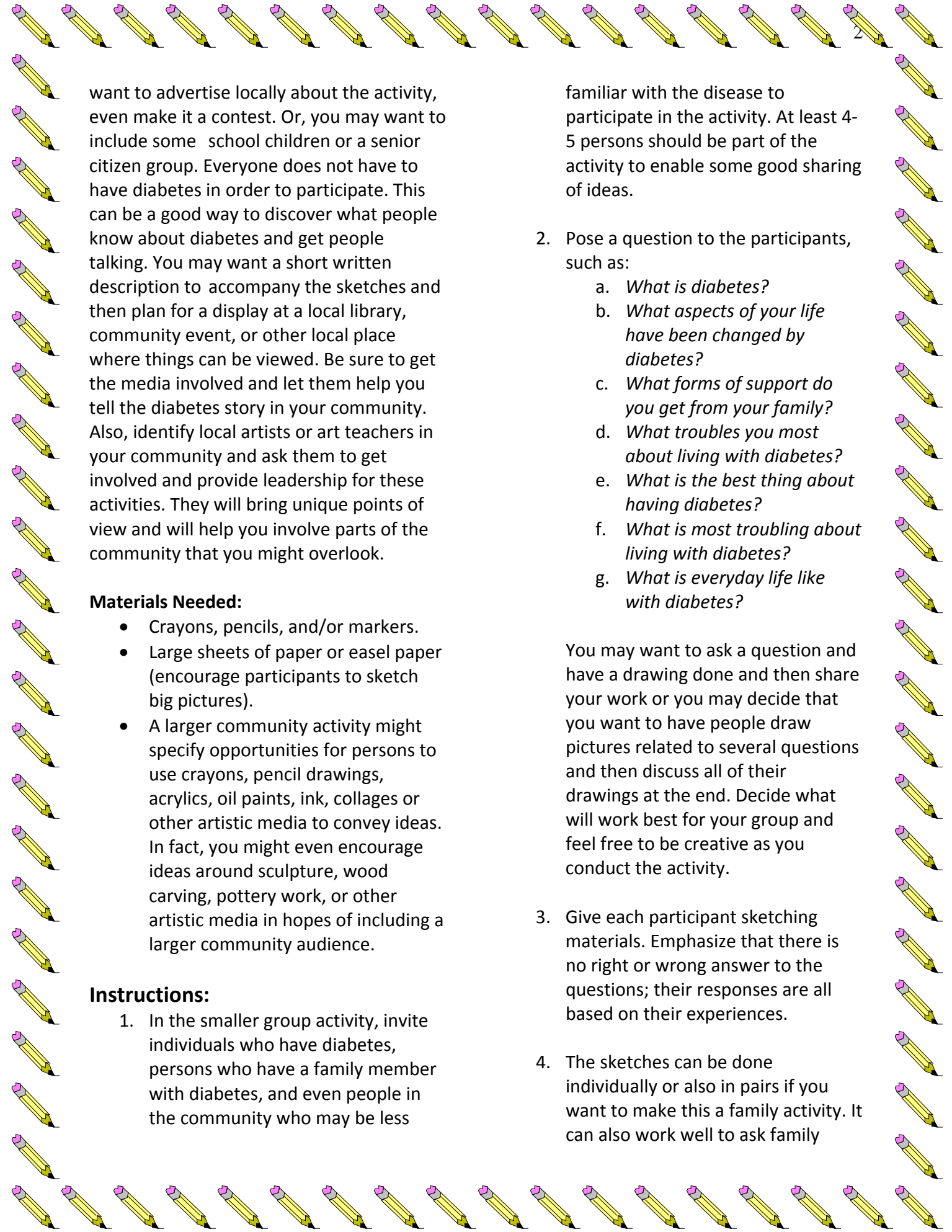
Duration of Activity:

Explanation: 15-20 minutes

Sketching: This can be a few minutes to a full hour. You may want only stick figures to be drawn or you may want to include a series of pictures that depict what goes on within a usual day or you may even want to just highlight all of the important aspects of diabetes.

The discussion: Allow enough time for everyone to share their ideas. The time involved can be lengthened or shortened based upon what you hope to achieve through the group. *The time period will also vary according to the number of participants involved in the activity.*

Longer activity: If you desire to make this part of a community activity or fun day, then you will likely need to approach some things differently. For example, you may



want to advertise locally about the activity, even make it a contest. Or, you may want to include some school children or a senior citizen group. Everyone does not have to have diabetes in order to participate. This can be a good way to discover what people know about diabetes and get people talking. You may want a short written description to accompany the sketches and then plan for a display at a local library, community event, or other local place where things can be viewed. Be sure to get the media involved and let them help you tell the diabetes story in your community. Also, identify local artists or art teachers in your community and ask them to get involved and provide leadership for these activities. They will bring unique points of view and will help you involve parts of the community that you might overlook.

Materials Needed:

- Crayons, pencils, and/or markers.
- Large sheets of paper or easel paper (encourage participants to sketch big pictures).
- A larger community activity might specify opportunities for persons to use crayons, pencil drawings, acrylics, oil paints, ink, collages or other artistic media to convey ideas. In fact, you might even encourage ideas around sculpture, wood carving, pottery work, or other artistic media in hopes of including a larger community audience.

Instructions:

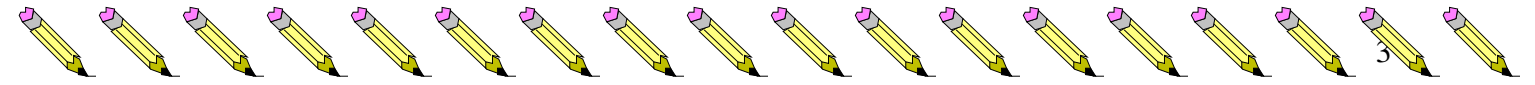
1. In the smaller group activity, invite individuals who have diabetes, persons who have a family member with diabetes, and even people in the community who may be less

familiar with the disease to participate in the activity. At least 4-5 persons should be part of the activity to enable some good sharing of ideas.

2. Pose a question to the participants, such as:
 - a. *What is diabetes?*
 - b. *What aspects of your life have been changed by diabetes?*
 - c. *What forms of support do you get from your family?*
 - d. *What troubles you most about living with diabetes?*
 - e. *What is the best thing about having diabetes?*
 - f. *What is most troubling about living with diabetes?*
 - g. *What is everyday life like with diabetes?*

You may want to ask a question and have a drawing done and then share your work or you may decide that you want to have people draw pictures related to several questions and then discuss all of their drawings at the end. Decide what will work best for your group and feel free to be creative as you conduct the activity.

3. Give each participant sketching materials. Emphasize that there is no right or wrong answer to the questions; their responses are all based on their experiences.
4. The sketches can be done individually or also in pairs if you want to make this a family activity. It can also work well to ask family



members to draw their own pictures and then identify where they agree or see things differently. Working with others for instance, encourages interactions among family members and friends, for instance.

with persons struggling to manage diabetes.

5. After all participants have completed their sketches, ask them narrate the stories behind the sketches. Hopefully this will provide some lively discussion about what is involved in living with diabetes and suggest ways to learn more about the disease and provide social support.

2. This is an easy and convenient way of traveling with and protecting the sketches.

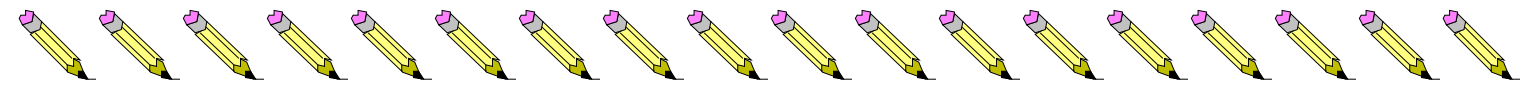
The important thing is to be creative with the idea of participatory sketching, involve as many people as possible, and find fun ways to expand this into your community so that you can make diabetes prevention, diabetes risks, and self-management more visible in your community.

Ways to Extend the Activity:

Exhibitions

1. Ask participants to choose their top sketches. Ask them to write a short story about the sketch, in no more than 100 words, for instance.
2. Frame the sketches.
3. Place the name, county of residence of the sketcher and the short story in frame of the sketch.
4. Organize an exhibition of the sketches e.g. at local community centers, local libraries, local post offices and university libraries.
5. The exhibition could also be used at local fairs and other community events which require information on diabetes

Sketch Albums

1. Place copies of the sketch, names of sketcher, and the short story in an album. This album could be used at local fairs, other community activities or in private conversations
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Final Word:

If you use this **Participatory Sketching Activity**, please be sure to go to the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* website <www.diabetesfamily.net> and share with others what worked and what did not work. A place on the **Communicate Section** of the website will be available for sharing your ideas about this activity.