

# Tips for Engaging DSMES

Provide a Non-judgmental Environment



## About Our Program

We are located in the Gulf Coast of Florida. Our program sees inpatient and outpatient from childhood to adulthood. We see individuals virtually and in person, one-on-one, in classes and in a pediatric clinic. Our main populations served are the elderly, Black and Hispanic individuals.

## Encourage an open conversation.

We must provide an open environment for participants to speak and share their stories. This is easier in one-on-one, but it is possible in group sessions.

Do not ignore the “elephant in the room.” Did the individual just get out of prison? Are they unemployed? Do they live in their car? Do they drink heavily? Do they have depression? Are they afraid of COVID-19? We must ask, we must talk and we must **understand how these issues affect them.**

**Validate their fears and concerns.** Find out if these challenges have changed a behavior and, if so, how?

Socioeconomics is a huge factor and your participants need to feel comfortable talking about it with you. Identify that early and work with them to understand what they can afford to do.

Ultimately, we must **assess what they are willing to do**, not what we want them to do, and that is only possible in an open, non-judgmental environment.



For additional tips, visit  
**[DiabetesEducator.org/EngagingDSMES](https://DiabetesEducator.org/EngagingDSMES).**