

## Family's goal is \$20,000

By Sara Callender  
ECCENTRIC STAFF WRITER

There is no cure for diabetes - yet.

"That's why we're doing this," said Peri Kramer, whose son Tyler, 12, was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes two years ago.

Tyler, a seventh-grader at Clifford Smart Middle School, and his family hope to raise \$20,000 this year for the American Diabetes Association. They're participating in a few upcoming fund-raisers to help reach that goal.

They're organizing a team to ride in the ADA's Tour de Cure bike event, Sunday, June 8, at the Island Lake State Recreation Area in Brighton. The event supports diabetes treatment, education and advocacy.

The Kramers also organized a local bowling fund-raiser to benefit the Tour de Cure - set for 1-4 p.m. Sunday, April 27, at Wonderland Lanes in Commerce Township. The event includes a live band, a euchre tournament and a silent auction featuring restaurant gift certificates, Detroit Pistons memorabilia and signed items from the popular band the Jonas Brothers.

"My friends wrote the manager of the Jonas Brothers and they sent us stuff," Tyler said.

Fees for the bowling tournament are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. Cost includes three games, shoe rental and pizza and pop.

Wonderland Lanes is located at 8265 Richardson Road.

For more information, log onto [www.main.diabetes.org/goto/tylerkramer](http://www.main.diabetes.org/goto/tylerkramer) or call Peri Kramer at (248) 366-1125.

SEVENTH-GRADER WILL RIDE TO BATTLE DISEASE

## 'Team Tyler' tackles diabetes

By Sara Callender  
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Nothing can stop Tyler Kramer from participating in track or soccer, hanging out with friends and doing well in school.

Not even Type 1 diabetes.

"It's something you can live with, it's just kind of an interruption," said Tyler's mom, Peri Kramer. "Some days are more challenging. We deal with it right away. We fix it and we move on. He's got a great attitude about it."

Two years ago, Tyler, now a 12-year-old seventh-grader at Clifford Smart Middle School, was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes, the most dangerous form of the disease. While Tyler rarely complains, his family, who lives in West Bloomfield, is doing its part to wipe out the metabolic disorder characterized when the pancreas stops producing insulin.

For the third year in a row, the Kramers will participate in the American Diabetes Association's Tour de Cure bike ride, June 8, in Brighton, and so far about 40 people, including teachers, family and friends, have signed up for Team Tyler. This year is special, however, because Tyler was named a youth ambassador for the event, which hosts several rides across the U.S.

"I'm very excited about it," said Tyler, who applied for the title. "I want to help out in any way I can, not just because I have diabetes, but because a lot of other people have it, too, and I want to do my part to find a cure."

The Kramers plan to ride about 15 miles in the event, but other team members are going above and beyond. Louise Schneberger, Tyler's English teacher at Clifford Smart, plans to ride 70 miles in the Tour de Cure.

"Tyler gives his all in the classroom, so I am giving my all on the bike," Schneberger said.

Last year, Team Tyler raised more than \$8,000. Members are setting their sights on the \$20,000 mark in 2008. They're nearly half way there already.

"Ever since Tyler was diagnosed, we sort of made it our mission to help find a cure," Peri said. "And the community is so supportive. It seems like everyone is somehow affected by this disease."

Finding a cure for diabetes is a must, the Kramers said. About 16 million people in the U.S. have diabetes - one of the most common, chronic and potentially debilitating diseases around. Diabetes kills 180,000 Americans annually and is the leading cause of blindness, kidney failure and amputations.

The Kramers weren't prepared for Tyler's diagnosis in 2005. Born a healthy baby, Tyler acquired an excessive thirst and began urinating often.

"My fifth-grade teacher thought I was skipping class because I was using the restroom so much," Tyler said.

Tyler was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes, also known as juvenile diabetes. The normal blood sugar level is between 80-150, but Tyler's was skyrocketing at 600, which usually results in a coma.

Although there is no proven genetic link, Tyler's uncle also has the disease.

Initially, Tyler started giving himself shots of insulin, but after about six months he started on an insulin pump. Now he uses a wireless, tubeless pod that attaches to his hip.

Diabetes can be easily controlled with a balanced diet and medication. Tyler checks his blood sugar often - even at school - by pricking his finger and counting carbs before every meal.

"If I feel dizzy or tired or shaky, I follow the Three Ts," Tyler said. "Tell someone, test my sugar and treat. So I have some juice or something. I was scared at first, but I know how to manage it."

There are some advantages to having diabetes and serving as the ADA youth ambassador, Tyler joked. He met the popular band the Jonas Brothers backstage after a recent Detroit concert. One of the band members, Nick Jonas, also has diabetes and uses the same insulin pod as Tyler.

Tyler also met the NBA's Adam Morrison of the Charlotte Bobcats, who also has diabetes.

"My friends said I am lucky that I got to meet the Jonas Brothers," Tyler said. "I said I'm not lucky because I have to get shots. But (meeting the band) was cool."