



In the beginning of April 2019, nine year old Chase was placed with Brandt, a wonderful yellow Labrador/Golden Retriever cross. Brandt had spent the last several months learning a very important job: To use his nose to smell the changes happening to the blood sugar of a person with type one diabetes and to alert that person of the change.

Chase was diagnosed with type one diabetes (T1D) when he was only two years old, just a few days before his mom, Lauren, was scheduled to have her second child. Chase's breath had been smelling very fruity, and despite being well potty trained, he had suddenly started to have accidents. Lauren and her husband, Jon, took Chase in to see the doctor, and Chase was diagnosed with T1D.

Type one diabetes is an autoimmune disorder in which the body begins to attack and kill off the type of cell in the pancreas that creates insulin. Insulin is the peptide hormone that acts as the key to let the sugar from the food you eat into your cells to be turned into energy. People with T1D make very little to no insulin, so they (and/or their caretakers) have to act as their own pancreas, figuring out how much insulin is needed for how much food has been consumed. If a diabetic takes too much insulin, their blood sugar goes low, which can lead to a coma and possible death. If they don't take enough insulin, the excessive sugar left in their blood wreaks havoc within their body, leading to long-term complications such as damage to blood vessels, kidney failure, neuropathy, retinopathy, and more.

Before Brandt was placed with Chase, Jon and Lauren had to constantly be on high alert looking after their son. "Every parent's biggest fear is



losing their child, and with diabetes it's a constant battle to keep your child alive," Lauren shared.

"Since diagnosis, Chase has always had a hard time feeling his low and high blood sugars. A few years ago, we did some research and found several different service dog organizations but realized our dream of getting one for Chase probably wouldn't happen because purchasing a fully trained medical alert dog was so expensive. About a year later we were talking with our endocrinologist about Chase being unable to feel some of the crazy lows he experiences. She told us about another patient who just received a dog and how much it helped to catch the lows and highs as well as lowering her A1C. I soon found Early Alert Canines (EAC) through the PADRE Foundation, who had just hosted EAC for a seminar on diabetes alert service dogs. I called EAC to get more information about their organization, and after speaking with Beth, I knew this was the right organization for us and immediately started the application process!"

Early Alert Canines places fully trained medical alert service dogs for only a \$100 application fee, rather than the \$30,000+ it takes to train and place a dog, and support the team over the dog's lifetime.



"Before we got Brandt, our biggest struggle was that Chase doesn't always feel his highs and lows. That can be so scary, especially when Chase is far away from us, like on the baseball field or out playing with friends. Having that extra sense of security, having Brandt able to smell Chase, from all the way out at the far edge of the baseball field while we're watching the game, and alert us is so comforting."

Chase is a very active baseball player. He just finished his 5th season with Anaheim Hills Little League and has now been drafted for his second year of All-Stars. Lauren shared a story about Brandt catching a potentially dangerous low, "We were watching Alyssa play on the t-ball field, which is probably a couple hundred feet from where Chase and his friends were playing around on the little league field. Brandt started alerting, but there was a whole crowd of people and Chase was so far away! We thought for sure it was someone else, but we called Chase over and had him check his blood sugar. He was nicely in his range, but we set a timer to recheck it. Sure enough, his blood sugar had dropped pretty far in

only eight minutes, which was a total Brandt win! We sent the boys off to the snack bar for food and threw Brandt a puppy party for the great catch. Brandt kept alerting, and alerting, and alerting! Well after Chase had finished his snacks, Brandt continued to alert, and we figured the alerts were for Chase's blood sugar spiking after all the food he had. Brandt felt we were ignoring him and he started to alert the gentleman sitting next to Jon, so we had Chase check again. This time Chase was in the 40s (dangerously low!). Brandt was alerting from like 200 feet away before Chase was even below 100, and Chase had no clue he was low or dropping. He had no clue he was in the 40s, he didn't feel it at all."

Lauren shared another story with us: "While we were in Concord for our team training, we stayed at a hotel that had an indoor pool. Chase and Alyssa were swimming in the pool, and Brandt alerted us. Chase was in the low 100s, a good place to be (normal range), and when we did our 8 minute recheck, Chase was in the 70s (a little low). We gave him his Smarties and a granola bar, purposely giving him extra food since we knew he would be swimming and active, and let him go back into the pool. Brandt started alerting again, really assertively this time. Chase had dropped down to the 50s (very low). We never would have known he was still low, we had given him so much food. We would have thought for sure he was going straight up, but Brandt knew. **That one could have been so scary, but Brandt got it**, even though he barely knew us.

"Even after only about 6 weeks, Brandt is already starting to take a little bit of that stress, which obviously will never fully go away, out of diabetes. He has been about 80% accurate with his alerting and we are looking forward to watching that number continue to rise. Brandt follows Chase from room to room around our house and never lets him out of sight. They have become best friends and it has been special to watch their relationship grow!"



Help support Early Alert Canines in placing more incredible, life-saving dogs like Brandt by contributing today.