

Theme Topic

History Taking THE SILENT ADOLESCENT

The following strategies can be helpful when interviewing teenagers who are reluctant to speak:

1. Multiple Choice Questions

Open questions (*Tell me about your insulin?*) are often unrewarding (*Dunno*);

Closed questions (*Do the injections bother you?*) may get a yes or a no, but that might mean anything.

Try: *Are you having trouble with your insulin because you don't like the injections, or you feel embarrassed to be different, or is there some other reason?* For some reason, kids often open up more in answering questions like this than either open or closed ones.

2. Comparative Questions

Are you doing your BSLs more often, less often or about the same as last time that I saw you?

3. Third person

Lots of kids with Coeliac Disease tell me that they hate most the idea of having to be different from their friends. Maybe you feel that too.

4. Speculate

Rather than using a question, make a (tentative) statement.

I think you might be not wanting to talk today because you are worried that I am going to be cross with you for having forgotten to take your preventer.