

EATING DISORDERS AND HEALTHY EATING

Healthy Young Minds

THE FACTS

What is an eating disorder?

- A serious mental illness which occurs in boys and girls
- Abnormal eating habits that affect physical and mental health
- There are different types:
 - * Binge eating (eating large amounts of food in short period of time)
 - * Anorexia Nervosa (eating very little often with low body weight)
 - * Bulimia Nervosa (eating a lot then trying to get rid of calories e.g through vomiting or exercising)

What are the early signs to look out for?

- Avoiding eating in front of anyone
- Unusual eating habits or rituals eg cutting food into tiny pieces
- Only eating certain foods
- Eating in secret
- Hiding food
- Cooking meals for other people but eating little of the food themselves
- Saying they have already eaten or will be eating out somewhere shortly
- Missing meals
- Fear of gaining weight
- Notable weight loss
- Mood swings
- Going to bathroom after meals
- Over exercising
- Avoiding social situations
- Isolating self from friends and family
- Restricting/counting calories e.g using apps such as myfitnesspal
- Use of websites promoting eating disorders
- Repeatedly weighing themselves or looking at themselves in the mirror
- Weighing self more than once a week

Tips

What should I do if I suspect a young person has an eating disorder?

- ✓ Allow them space and time to talk
- ✓ Listen openly
- ✓ Be patient and non-judgemental
- ✓ Continue to reach out even if they push you away
- ✓ Express your concerns to them
- ✓ Speak to GP or school nurse
- ✗ Try not to shout at them
- ✗ Don't force them to eat
- ✗ Don't take their actions personally

How can we encourage healthy eating in young people?

- Model healthy eating by eating healthily yourself e.g use the eatwell plate (over page)
- Provide three meals a day for your child and snacks
- Involve them in planning meals, grocery shopping etc
- Have healthy snacks available
- Try and establish family meal times
- Don't forbid unhealthy foods: teach importance of balanced diet
- Teach them it is ok to eat unhealthy things, just in moderation
- Give them choice in what they have and encourage them to make healthy choices

➤ Some useful websites:

- <http://www.nutritionist-resource.org.uk/content/healthy-eating-for-kids.html>
- <http://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/Goodfood/Pages/healthy-eating-teens.aspx>
- <https://www.b-eat.co.uk/>



CAMHS would be very grateful for any feedback on this newsletter. Please could you complete the online survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/XN9QSHG>

The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



Department of Health in association with the Welsh Assembly Government, the Scottish Government and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland