

Welcome to

Understanding Eating Disorders

From the heart



Parent
Workshop

in collaboration with





Parent *Workshop*

run by



Mrs Meredyth Holland
Health & Wellbeing Officer



Mrs Emma Jones
Assistant Head, Pastoral and DSL

in collaboration with



What do we know...

- 1 in 50 people in the UK are affected by eating disorders.

- Eating disorders are serious mental illnesses.

- They are complex and multifactorial.

- They are treatable and recovery is possible.

- Early intervention is crucial.



What you can expect from this evening

Today's workshop is all about increasing your knowledge and understanding of eating disorders.

- 1.** What are eating disorders?

- 2.** How can you spot the early warning signs?

- 3.** What can we do - next steps.



What are Eating Disorders?

Here's what we know...



Eating disorders don't discriminate

- Anyone can have an eating disorder, no matter their age, race, gender, size or ethnicity.
- It is estimated that 25% of people affected are men.
- Binge Eating Disorder (BED) is the most common.
- Many eating disorders develop during adolescence.
- There is no one single cause.
- Recovery is possible, and early intervention is vital.

1.25
million
people
in the
UK
have
one.



What Is An Eating Disorder?

Eating disorders affect the way we use food, weight or shape to...

- block out or control difficult thoughts.

- cope with or express emotion.

- control aspects of our life and manage day to day.

“Anorexia, terrible and life threatening though it is, it’s often not the core problem but it’s a symptom of other deep rooted issues. It’s the sufferer’s way of trying to handle those other, underlying issues; feelings of worthlessness, depression and negativity.”

Dear Michael, love dad, Iain Maitland 2016



Types Of Eating Disorders

Anorexia Nervosa

The persistent restriction of energy intake leading to significantly low body weight (DSM-5).

- Extreme weight loss; 85% or less expected weight for height/age.
- Intense fear of weight gain and persistent use of behaviours - *restrictive eating habits, compulsive excessive exercise.*
- Has the highest mortality rate of any mental illness.
- Physiological damage.



Bulimia Nervosa

Frequent episodes of binge eating followed by compensatory behaviours (purging) to avoid weight gain.

Can often manage to maintain a 'healthy weight' which means it's harder to recognise.

- **Binge** - Large quantity of food is rapidly consumed to block out difficult emotions and thoughts.
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- **Purge** - compensatory behaviours; get rid of calories, avoid weight gain, manage triggered feelings of guilt and shame, fear.

Self induced vomiting - abuse and misuse of laxatives and diuretics - compulsive excessive exercise - restrictions.



Binge Eating Disorder (BED)

Regularly experience loss of control and eat large quantities of food over a short period of time - in an attempt to manage difficulties in emotions and thoughts.

- Rapid eating of large quantities when not physically hungry and until uncomfortably full. Eats alone; embarrassed by how much they are eating.
- Might feel 'better' whilst bingeing...afterwards feel guilty, disgusted, anxious about what just happened. This may lead to planning their next binge.

Key difference to Bulimia

They DO NOT purge or take any measure to prevent weight gain following a binge. Steady weight gain is inevitable.

Why do young people develop eating disorders?

[Boys get Anorexia too | Nip in the Bud](#)



Adapted from Disordered Eating. Guidelines for school staff. Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

Other

Early onset
changes in body
shape

Teasing ,
bullying, diet
culture

Individual or family risk
factors: perfectionism
Depression, eating
disorders

**Poor Body
Image
Low Self
Esteem
Feeling out
of control**

Academic
pressure,
relationships,
sports, extra
curricula

Ideals, images, the
media

Comments on weight and shape,
beliefs about food and exercise,
expression of emotion, conflict,
early experiences, expectations

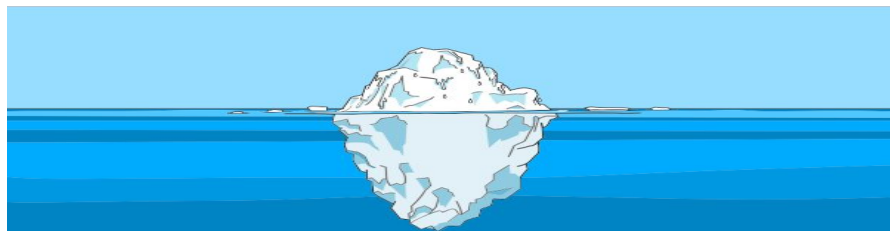


Spotting the signs

It can be difficult to spot the early warning signs of an eating disorder as they sometimes mirror 'normal adolescent behaviour'; mood swings, body consciousness, weight concerns and dieting for example.


Think of it as 'the tip of the iceberg.'


What we see is the surface versus what'd deep below - remain curious.





Warning Signs


- Marked change in physical appearance.
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 - Withdrawn, anxious, low mood, loss of interest in favourite activities/subjects.
.....
 - Appear distracted and/or isolated.
.....
 - Avoiding interacting with family, friends and teachers.
.....
 - Demeanor change, ie. from bubbly and outgoing to quiet and anxious.
.....
 - Refusal to eat, cutting out foods, eating less, binging, hiding food. Increased interest in food, drinking a lot.
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- Excessive and compulsive levels of exercise, walking during breaks/lunch. Exercising in their bedroom. Distressed when expected exercise is cancelled.

 - Frequent trips to the toilet to purge/exercise.

 - Increased pressure to succeed in study or loss of interest. High achiever/performer.

 - Thinking is rigid, black and white, struggles to make decisions.

 - Baggy and layered clothing to disguise, or skimpy clothing to display weight loss.
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So what can you do?

- Understanding what is happening can be really helpful if your child may have an eating disorder.

- Remember some of their behaviours and actions will be the result of their illness.

- Eating disorders thrive on anxiety, so try and stay calm and be a role model to your loved one.

- Start by saying '*I am worried about you*' '*I've noticed some worrying behaviour*' and back up with examples, not assumptions.

- Eating Disorders are linked to low self esteem so doing anything you can to increase their self-worth.




Next Steps...



Start somewhere

If your child is showing any worrying signs or behaviours and you're concerned they may be struggling with an eating disorder - getting professional help is a great first step.

1. Make an appointment with your child's GP.
2. Contact Beats' Helpline - practical useful advice - via BEAT portal. 
3. Speak to your child's school - Mrs Holland is always available to listen to your concerns or worries.
4. Reach out - **don't assume it will go away.**





School

Helplines

**DON'T
GO IT
ALONE**

Forums

GP

Any questions...?



Resources

NHS

<https://ctmuhb.nhs.wales/services/mental-health/specialist-mental-health-services/eating-disorder-services/>



BEAT - POD Peer support Online Development

<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/about-beat/>



Helpfinder - links to community support, charities and counsellors

Mental Health Matters

<https://mhmwales.org.uk/peer-support-1/sorted.html>



Nip it in the bud

<https://nipinthebud.org/>



Dove Self Esteem Project

<https://www.dove.com/uk/dove-self-esteem-project/help-for-parents.html>



— UBI AMOR, UBI OCULUS —