

Let's Talk:

Disordered Eating



Covid-19 has had an impact on the lives of children, young people and families in Essex. Disordered eating has been identified as an increasing concern for all ages.

If you are worried about a child or young person's eating, body image or changes in their weight, there are things you can do to help.

If you are noticing any changes from a child/young person's presentation, **be curious with the family** to find out more. Remember to discuss confidentiality agreement and boundaries with the pupil before having conversations with them.

Look

- Are there changes in eating and exercise habits?
- Are there fluctuations in weight and mood?
- Are the signs of fatigue, dizzy spells and low concentration?
- Are there rituals and routines around meal times?

Listen

- Distorted views about body image
- Preoccupation with diet and exercise
- Seeking to control aspects of their life
- Indicators of stress or hopelessness

Say

- "I've noticed... and I'm wondering what's happening?"
- "Let's think about this together."
- "Help is available for you."

Do

- Offer emotional support and let them know you care with regular check-ins
- Think with the child/young person about distraction and calming techniques e.g. music, breathing exercises, writing their thoughts down
- Make reasonable adjustments
- Follow your policies and procedures for Safeguarding

Signpost

- GP
- BEAT <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>
- Essex Wellbeing Service 0300 303 9988 (for education staff and families)
- EWMHS EP helpline: <https://bit.ly/38vdNZm>
- EWMHS <https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/ewmhs-get-in-touch/>

Essex promotes the values of Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) in all that we do:

Compassion & Kindness

Hope

Connection & Belonging

Other topics available in this series of posters:

Self-injury, Loneliness & Isolation and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Pillars.

If you found this poster useful and would like to propose more themes to add to the range, please get in touch: semhstrategy@essex.gov.uk



Essex County Council