

A positive body image **Getting the balance right**

Turn on the TV, browse social media sites or flick through a magazine and chances are they will see pictures of perfect looking celebrities staring back. This might affect your child's body image and could make them feel bad about themselves or that they should try to change the way they are.

Many young people who are perfectly normal and healthy feel that they don't look 'right' because they are comparing themselves to role models such as pop stars, models or other celebrities who are often seen as skinny. This can lead to an unhealthy body image. If your child feels that they are overweight encourage them to talk to you or an adult they trust. Find out more about healthy eating and exercise.

"It's a good idea to eat well and stay a healthy weight but some young people, can take dieting too far and develop an eating disorder."

The two main types of eating disorders are anorexia nervosa which is when you starve yourself and bulimia nervosa which is when you make yourself sick after you eat or take laxatives, these can be very harmful as a means to control weight.

Make sure your child talks to you or an adult or friend they trust to get the help they need.

Could this be your child?

If they have an eating disorder:

- It's hard to cope with an eating disorder alone - Encourage them to talk to you or another adult or friend they trust.
- If they would like to talk to someone confidentially they can attend the school nurse drop-in at their school.
- If you are worried make an appointment for them with their GP.
- Remember that the sooner they get some help, the easier it will be for them to beat their problem.

If a friend has an eating disorder:

- Tell them that you're worried and that you're there for them.
- Get them to see their school nurse or GP.

- Set a good example and show your friend how important it is to have a healthy diet.

Facts about eating disorders:

1. Eating disorders can be beaten.
2. An eating disorder is serious.
3. An eating disorder is not a dieting craze.
4. An eating disorder is not attention seeking.
5. An eating disorder is an illness.

“Boys as well as girls can have eating disorders.”

Look out for:

Signs of Anorexia include:

- Eating less and less.
- Losing a lot of weight very quickly.
- Growing more body hair (usually girls).

Signs of Bulimia include:

- Eating too much in one go.
- Going to the toilet after eating to be sick.
- Sore throat and mouth infections.

Skinny and fat shaming

We usually hear about body shaming being directed at women with curves. But that's not always the case - skinny shaming can be just as damaging.

This may be a simple comment like ‘when did you last have a good meal?’ from a friend or perhaps more damaging messages from strangers via facebook and twitter.

It's up to all of us to stop the well known stereotype of a thing called thin shaming. Thin shaming and fat shaming are not separate, opposing issues - they are the same issue. We are all equal and all bodies are beautiful. Tell them to accept themselves and others for who they are and they will be truly beautiful.

Contacts

Beat (beating eating disorders)

www.b-eat.co.uk

Parents, teachers or any concerned adults should call the Beat Adult Helpline (open to anyone over 18) 0345 634 1414

Email help@b-eat.co.uk

The Beat Youthline is open to anyone under 25. 0345 634 7650

Email fyp@b-eat.co.uk

Text 07786 20 18 20.

If you would like a call back, send the text

message 'call back'. They will aim to get back to you within 24 hours and during Youthline open hours.

Anorexia & Bulimia Care

www.anorexiabulimiare.org.uk

03000 11 12 13

Email support@anorexiabulimiare.org.uk

Get Connected

Offers a telephone counselling service for anyone aged 25 or under.

www.getconnected.org.uk

0808 808 4994 (Open from 11am-11pm every day)

Supportline

www.supportline.org.uk

01708 765200

Email info@supportline.org.uk

Young Minds

www.youngminds.org.uk

Parent Helpline 0808 802 5544

Childline

Emotional support for children and young people on issues relating to child abuse, bullying etc.

0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

Men Get Eating Disorders Too

www.mengetedstoo.co.uk

Email sam@mengetedstoo.co.uk

Sutton Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

www.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk

Jump Start

Jump Start is a free, confidential service, offering counselling to young people in Sutton.

<http://suttonyouth.org/web/locations/jumpstart/>

Off the record

Face-to-face Counselling for young people in Sutton.

www.talkofftherecord.org/sutton/counselling/

Skyline - Sutton Youth

SkyLine is a free and friendly online counselling service for young people in Sutton.

www.suttonyouth.org/web/locations/skyline/