

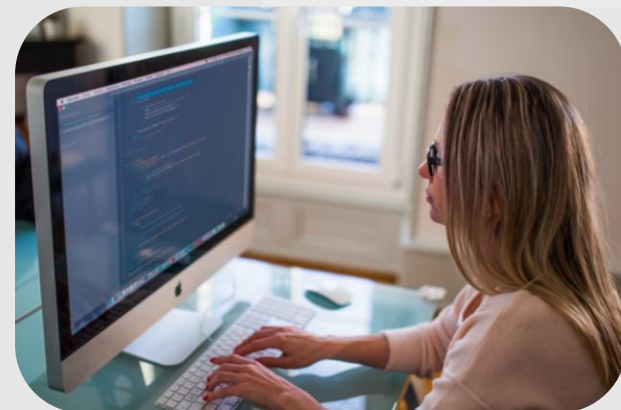
Do Now

Lesson 5: What do we need to know about eating disorders?



Kelly is beautiful – but she thinks she is too fat. No one else comments on her weight; in fact, people tell her she looks great. But Kelly doesn't think so. Kelly's friends have noticed she has been distancing herself from them. Kelly spends more time in her room, reading forums, than she does hanging out with her friends recently.

Discuss: What do you think Kelly is reading about on the forums? Why?



Explain briefly what we mean when we talk about 'eating disorders'. Name any that you have heard of.

I think eating disorders are...

and one I've heard of is...

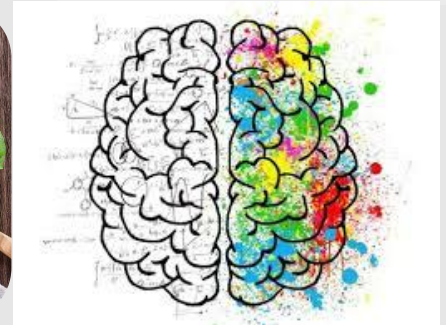
What do we need to know about eating disorders?



Learning outcomes:

Identify the causes of unhealthy coping strategies, such as eating disorders, and the need to seek help for themselves or others as soon as possible.

Describe how to recognise common mental health issues such as eating disorders.



Eating disorder – a any of a range of mental conditions in which there is a persistent disturbance of eating behaviour and impairment of physical or mental health.

How are eating disorders mental illnesses?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Bax8ijH038>



What percentage of people will experience an eating disorder?

How is anorexia different to bulimia?

Can you tell if someone has an eating disorder from their weight alone?

Why can't we cure these disorders by saying 'eat differently'?

What is a common shared perception by people with eating disorders?

What causes eating disorders?

When are people particularly vulnerable to developing eating disorders?

Watch the clips and complete your questions on your task sheet. We will then go through the answers together so you can fill in any you've missed.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Bax8ijH038>

How are eating disorders mental illnesses?



1) What percentage of people will experience an eating disorder?

Ten percent.

2) How is anorexia different to bulimia?

People with anorexia restrict eating, but bulimia is characterised by bingeing and purges.



3) Can you tell if someone has an eating disorder from their weight alone?

No

4) Why can't we cure these disorders by saying 'eat differently'?

Because these are psychiatric illnesses (serious mental illnesses).

5) What is a common shared perception by people with eating disorders?

Many perceived flaws in appearance.

6) What causes eating disorders?

It's complicated, but both genetic and environmental factors.

7) When are people particularly vulnerable to developing eating disorders?

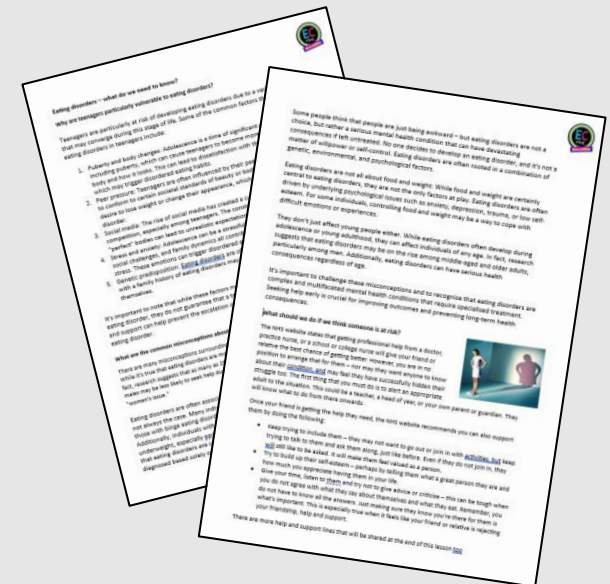
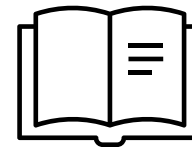
During adolescence.

What do we need to know about eating disorders?



We will now find out more about why teenagers are particularly at risk for eating disorders, some of the common misconceptions about eating disorders and what to do if you believe yourself or someone you know to be at risk.

THORNDEN THREE – GUIDED READING!



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Eating disorders – what do we need to know?

Why are teenagers particularly vulnerable to eating disorders?

Teenagers are particularly at risk of developing eating disorders due to a variety of factors that may converge during this stage of life. Some of the common factors that contribute to eating disorders in teenagers include:

1. **Puberty and body changes:** Adolescence is a time of significant physical changes, including puberty, which can cause teenagers to become more conscious of their body and how it looks. This can lead to dissatisfaction with their body shape and size, which may trigger disordered eating habits.
2. **Peer pressure:** Teenagers are often influenced by their peers and may feel pressure to conform to certain societal standards of beauty or body image. This can lead to a desire to lose weight or change their appearance, which can escalate into an eating disorder.
3. **Social media:** The rise of social media has created a culture of comparison and competition, especially among teenagers. The constant exposure to images of "perfect" bodies can lead to unrealistic expectations and a negative body image.
4. **Stress and anxiety:** Adolescence can be a stressful time, with academic pressure, social challenges, and family dynamics all contributing to feelings of anxiety and stress. These emotions can trigger disordered eating habits as a way of coping.

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5. predisposition: Eating disorders are often linked to genetics, and teenagers with a family history of eating disorders may be more susceptible to developing one themselves.

It's important to note that while these factors may contribute to the development of an eating disorder, they do not guarantee that a teenager will develop one. Early intervention and support can help prevent the escalation of disordered eating habits into a full-blown eating disorder.

What are the common misconceptions about eating disorders?

Eating disorders are often associated with extreme weight loss, but this is not always the case. Many individuals with eating disorders, particularly those with binge eating disorder, may be of normal or higher weight. Additionally, individuals with anorexia nervosa may not appear significantly underweight, especially early on in the disorder. It's important to remember that eating disorders are complex mental health conditions and cannot be diagnosed based solely on physical appearance.

There are many misconceptions surrounding the relationship between gender and eating disorders. While it's true that eating disorders are more prevalent among females, they can also affect males. In fact, research suggests that as many as 25% of individuals with an eating disorder are male. However, males may be less likely to seek help due to societal stigmas around eating disorders being seen as a "women's issue."

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Some people think that people are just being awkward – but eating disorders are not a choice, but rather a serious mental health condition that can have devastating consequences if left untreated. No one decides to develop an eating disorder, and it's not a matter of willpower or self-control. Eating disorders are often rooted in a combination of genetic, environmental, and psychological factors.

Eating disorders are not all about food and weight: While food and weight are certainly central to eating disorders, they are not the only factors at play. Eating disorders are often driven by underlying psychological issues such as anxiety, depression, trauma, or low self-esteem. For some individuals, controlling food and weight may be a way to cope with difficult emotions or experiences.

They don't just affect young people either. While eating disorders often develop during adolescence or young adulthood, they can affect individuals of any age. In fact, research suggests that eating disorders may be on the rise among middle-aged and older adults, particularly among men. Additionally, eating disorders can have serious health consequences regardless of age.

It's important to challenge these misconceptions and to recognise that eating disorders are complex and multifaceted mental health conditions that require specialised treatment. Seeking help early is crucial for improving outcomes and preventing long term health consequences.

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THORNDEN THREE – GUIDED READING!



What should we do if we think someone is at risk?

The NHS website states that getting professional help from a doctor, practice nurse, or a school or college nurse will give your friend or relative the best chance of getting better. However, you are in no position to arrange that for them – nor may they want anyone to know about their condition, and may feel they have successfully hidden their struggle too. The first thing that you must do is to alert an appropriate adult to the situation. This could be a teacher, a head of year, or your own parent or guardian. They will know what to do from there onwards.

Once your friend is getting the help they need, the NHS website recommends you can also support them by doing the following:

1. Keep trying to include them – they may not want to go out or join in with activities, but keep trying to talk to them and ask them along, just like before. Even if they do not join in, they will still like to be asked. It will make them feel valued as a person.
2. Try to build up their self-esteem – perhaps by telling them what a great person they are and how much you appreciate having them in your life.
3. Give your time, listen to them and try not to give advice or criticise – this can be tough when you do not agree with what they say about themselves and what they eat. Remember, you do not have to know all the answers. Just making sure they know you're there for them is what's important. This is especially true when it feels like your friend or relative is rejecting your friendship, help and support.

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Need Support? You're Not Alone

If anything in today's lesson has affected you, or you want to talk to someone, there is help available.



Mental Health & Low Mood

YoungMinds – <https://www.youngminds.org.uk>
Kooth – <https://www.kooth.com>
Mind – <https://www.mind.org.uk>

Talk to Someone

Your Tutor or Head of Year – We're here to help.
Wellbeing Team and School Nurse
Report a Concern on Satchel
Safeguarding Team with the Purple lanyards

Healthy Lifestyle

NHS Every Mind Matters – <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters>
Change4Life – <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>

Apps That Can Help

Calm – For mindfulness and sleep.
Headspace – Meditation and stress relief.
Clear Fear – Manage anxiety (designed for young people).
MeeTwo – Anonymously talk to other teens, moderated by experts.

Eating Concerns

Beat Eating Disorders –
<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>
NHS Live Well – Eating Disorders –
<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/eating-disorders/>



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