

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Going to the GP is the most important first step. If they suspect an eating disorder, they will carry out tests e.g. weight, body shape, blood and eating patterns. They may also want to talk to parents/care givers to gain further information.

Seek immediate medical advice if your child or young person is displaying;

- Sudden or rapid weight loss
- Fainting / collapsing due to lack of food
- Refusing food or drink for more than 24 hours
- Chest pains

BEAT

Offers information and support for anybody affected by eating disorders.

Access to helplines, chatroom and resources available via the website.

www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 801 0677

help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Young Minds

Young Minds provide young people with tools to look after their mental health. The website has advice and information on what they can do if they are struggling with how they feel. There is also a parents section.

www.youngminds.org.uk

If you need to talk to somebody right now, these organisations can help:

	NHS 111	ChildLine 0800 1111	Shout 85258	Samaritans 116 123	 In emergencies, call 999
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USEFUL APPS



Good Blocks



What's Up



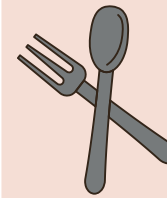
SuperBetter



SAM

Mental Health
Support Team
Portsmouth

NHS
Hampshire and
Isle of Wight Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

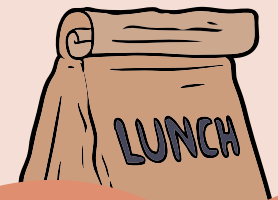
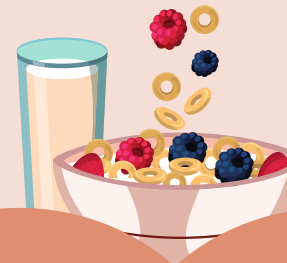


EATING DIFFICULTIES



A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

PICK-ME-UP



[pik-mee-uhp] *noun*

A pick-me-up is something that restores a persons energy, improves their mood, or generally lifts their spirits.

ATTITUDES TO EATING

Lots of people have different eating habits. We might eat a large amount one day, be less hungry another day, or go through phases of wanting to eat more or less healthily.

Children's attitudes to eating are affected by a range of factors and appetites may change at different ages. Most of us have trialled different eating habits at some point to lose weight or improve our health, and this isn't necessarily a cause for concern.



WHEN DOES IT BECOME A PROBLEM?

Food becomes a problem when it is used to help cope with painful situations or feelings, or to relieve stress, perhaps without even realising it. Children can fear becoming fat and may perceive their body shape differently than those around them.

WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?

- A committed and persistent effort to lose weight or control weight and body shape
- Eating excessive amounts, even when not hungry
- Experiencing distress after eating
- No longer enjoying eating socially, or leaving the table quickly to be sick or hide food
- Eating only certain types of foods or following fad diets
- Being secretive or preoccupied with food

WHAT CAN I DO?

Encourage regular meals and snacks

It is important that your child or young person eats regularly so insist upon breakfast, lunch and dinner plus snacks especially if the young person is exercising. Encourage a balanced lifestyle; we need all food groups (carbohydrates, protein, fats, vegetables and fruits, dairy/dairy alternatives).

Remind children to stay hydrated

Ensure children and young people are well hydrated; aim for 6-8 glasses per day (water, milk) and avoid large quantities of sugary drinks.

Set boundaries

Monitor and restrict use of apps/gadgets that track exercise and food such as My Fitness Pal and Fitbit watches

Act as a role model

The best way for your child to learn to eat and enjoy new foods is to copy you. Try to eat with them as often as you can. Make mealtimes enjoyable and not just about eating. Sit down and chat about other things.

Be there to listen

It is important to validate and acknowledge difficult feelings. Demonstrate that you are available to talk but without forcing the conversation at a particular time.

Find what works

Some families with children on the Autism spectrum may struggle to encourage them to eat because they feel comfortable with a restricted diet. This means that they are more comfortable with certain types of food, such as crunchy, soft, dry or wet or certain colours or textures. Try to make a list of the foods that your child will eat. Work within those or try to find similar foods.

