

Noticing Changes, Raising Concerns

Parents often notice changes in their child's eating behaviours or relationship with food before they know what those changes may mean. Having all the answers is not necessary before you raise the concern.

STARTING A CONVERSATION

If you've noticed changes in your child's eating behaviours or relationship with food, starting a conversation can feel difficult. Choose a calm moment and focus on what you've noticed, rather than making assumptions. Let them know you're concerned because you care and want to understand how they're feeling. They may not be ready to talk, so keep the conversation open, listen without judgment, and reassure them that you're there when they're ready.

GET SUPPORT

Watch our free masterclass for more guidance on starting these conversations, or register for a free, one-on-one, online NNN Drop-In Session with our paediatric dietitian. You can talk through your concerns, ask questions and receive guidance tailored to your situation.

Book your session at:

www.nourishnurturenotice.com.au.

RAISING CONCERNS WITH A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

As a parent, you don't need to be certain about what is happening before seeking professional advice. If you are concerned, make an appointment with your child's GP or another trusted health professional and be specific about the changes you have noticed, including changes in eating behaviours, mood, activity, or physical health. Ask what the next steps should be.

IF YOUR CONCERNS AREN'T BEING HEARD

If you leave an appointment feeling that your concerns haven't been fully understood or addressed, continue asking questions and seeking support. Ask the health professional to explain their assessment, what signs or changes you should continue to look out for, and when your child should be reviewed again. You know what is usual for your child, and continuing to raise changes that concern you can help ensure they receive appropriate assessment and support as early as possible.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Australia's healthcare rights are set out in the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights and apply wherever healthcare is provided. These include the right to access healthcare, receive safe and respectful care, be involved in decisions, receive clear information, and provide feedback or raise concerns. Understanding these rights can help you feel more confident asking questions and being involved in decisions about your child's care.

STIGMA AND MISCONCEPTIONS

Despite growing awareness, myths and misconceptions about eating disorders and disordered eating still exist. You may encounter people who minimise your concerns or don't understand what you are noticing. Be clear about the changes you've observed and continue seeking support from people and professionals who will listen and take your concerns seriously.

URGENT CARE

If you believe your child needs urgent medical care and they cannot be seen immediately by their GP, take them to your nearest hospital emergency department. If you believe it is an emergency or you cannot safely get them to hospital, call 000 for an ambulance.