

How to Talk to Parents About What You've Noticed

INTRODUCTION

As a teacher or sporting club leader, you are well placed to notice early signs of disordered eating in the young people in your care. In some instances, young people may display disordered eating behaviours more openly outside the home.

SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR

Some examples of changes or behaviours you may have noticed include:

EATING HABITS

- The young person is regularly disposing of food without eating it.
- Friends have expressed concern the young person is not eating.

WELLBEING & PARTICIPATION

- Changes in the young person's alertness, concentration, and ability to engage with learning.
- Teachers have noticed a significant increase or decrease in participation in physical activity.

PHYSICAL PRESENTATION

- Noticeable changes in the young person's weight or physical appearance over a short period
- Lower than expected energy levels or more frequent visits to wellbeing staff.

MOOD & BEHAVIOUR

- Changes in confidence and self-esteem.
- Increased perfectionism or rigid thinking.

BE PREPARED

Parents may not initially share your concerns or may find it difficult to hear that their young person could be experiencing disordered eating or an eating disorder. Before speaking with them, make a note of the specific changes or behaviours you have observed and why they are concerning.

Focus on what you have noticed rather than trying to interpret or diagnose the behaviour. Being clear and specific can help parents understand why you are raising the issue and reinforce that the conversation comes from a place of care and concern.

REASSURE

Reassure parents that they know their young person best and have an important role to play in recognising changes, seeking help early and supporting their young person.

PROVIDE INFORMATION

Provide the parents with copies of the relevant Nourish, Nurture, Notice fact sheets:

- Fact Sheet 1 - Early Warning Signs
- Fact Sheet 2 - What is an Eating Disorder
- Fact Sheet 3 - Noticing Changes, Raising Concerns
- Fact Sheet 5 - Action Checklist

PROVIDE REFERRAL

Provide parents with a referral card (included in the Nourish, Nurture, Notice pack), which they can use to book a free Nourish, Nurture, Notice Drop-In Session. Here, they can speak with experts and lived experience workers about their concerns.

www.nourishnurturenotice.com.au.