

Parents and Caregivers' Information Sheet

Grade 4,5 & 6 – 2022

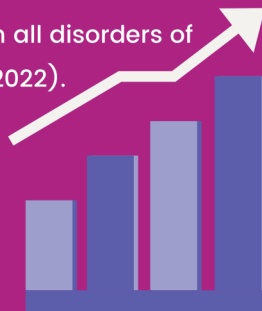
BODY IMAGE

WHY TALK ABOUT BODY IMAGE WITH PRE-ADOLESCENT YOUTH ?

Body image and dietary concerns can be complicated and difficult to understand. As we grow, the way we perceive and feel about our changing bodies can be confusing, and some people may develop distressing thoughts and behaviors regarding food, exercise, and body shape. When people become so focused on their eating habits and physical activities that they have problems at school, at work or in their relationships, it can be a sign of a more deeply rooted problem (Foundry BC, 2022) .

WHAT IS AN EATING DISORDER ?

An eating disorder is an obsession with food that is very dangerous to physical and mental health. Eating disorders usually begin at puberty. In the next 10 years, 10% of people will die from the disease. Approximately 1 million Canadians are diagnosed with an eating disorder. Eating disorders have the highest rate death from all disorders of Mental Health (CMHA, 2022).



DIFFERENT TYPES OF EATING DISORDERS

Anorexia: controlling your weight by severely limiting the amount you eat

- Behaviors: depriving oneself of food (by eating little, limiting what a person eats, exercising far too intensely, saying they are never hungry, always saying they are fat or obese).
- Thoughts: need to be thin and fear of being fat, preoccupation with weight, and body image, distorted body image (body dysmorphia) feeling too fat even though you are thin, low self-esteem.
- The consequences: death, hospitalization, risk of fainting, hair loss, fatigue.

Bulimia: A person with bulimia nervosa eats, but purges after eating

- Behaviors: a cycle of eating large quantities and then a purge in order to eliminate the effects of having eaten a large quantity of food, and excessive exercise.
- The consequences: lack of energy, swollen jaws, heart problems.

Binge eating disorder: A person with frequent episodes of binge eating, often junk food and often hiding it

- Behaviors: feeling out of control during the binge episode, feelings of guilt, shame, and disgust about the binge episodes
- The consequences: diabetes, joint pain, and fatigue (due to excess weight), depression, heart disease.



THE DANGER OF FILTERS

The use of social media can have negative consequences on our body image. For the past few years, filters have created body dysmorphia on Snapchat and Instagram users. Recent studies show a rising mental health disorder called "selfie dysmorphia", watch the video to learn more about the dangerous effects of filters on body image.



WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR PRE-TEEN :

It often takes time for a person to admit they need help. If you know someone who may have an eating disorder :

- Inform yourself.
- Be patient.
- Offer him support.
- Don't judge her.

HOW IS YOUR PRE-TEENS RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD ?

HEALTHY

- Isn't concerned about what they eat
- Eat things that feel good in your body
- They feel no pressure to exercise after a meal or a treat
- They feel good when they eat something for fun (ice cream, chocolate)

UNHEALTHY

- They believe people would like them more if they were thinner or looked different
- They often talk about their body and their weight with their friends
- They often compare themselves to models and actors on TV
- They eat less and less over time

DANGEROUS

- They are constantly planning what they will eat (or not eat)
- They feel compelled to exercise to eliminate calories from the meal
- They don't eat even if they are hungry
- They go to the bathroom immediately after eating

Source : [Body Image & Eating signs, Foundry BC 2022.](#)

Resources

 **Important!** If you are concerned about your adolescent's health, ask a professional for help, or call the helplines mentioned below.

Do not hesitate to communicate with the school staff: the counselor, the teacher or the principal. Your family doctor can also help, as can the following resources:

- **Kids Help Phone:** to confide in somebody, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anonymous and bilingual. Toll-free number: 1-800-668-6868. kidshelpphone.ca
- **Phobies-Zéro (French only):** support and self-help group for people with anxiety, panic disorders, phobias and agoraphobia. 514-276-3105 or toll-free 1-866-922-0002.

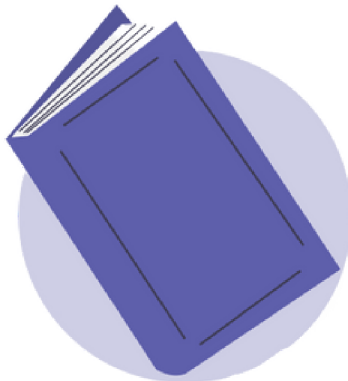


RESOURCES IN FRENCH

[Comprendre les troubles alimentaires. Association canadienne pour la santé mentale](#)

[Troubles de l'alimentation. Jeunesse J'écoute](#)

[Trouble de l'alimentation chez les jeunes. Teljeunes](#)



RESOURCES IN ENGLISH

[Kelty Eating Disorders](#)
Provides resources and peer support for people of all ages with eating disorders.

[Foundry BC. Body Image and Eating](#)
An online space for youth and young adults in British Columbia to check in on how they are feeling and connect with mental health resources.

Contact us:

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