

Young Healthwatch Podcast

Young Healthwatch volunteers conducted interviews with service users affected by eating disorders, an eating disorder nurse and a school teacher. By creating their own podcast they have been able to share their experiences, which they hope will help and guide young audiences across Central Bedfordshire.



The podcast can be heard here:



Where to get help

- ◆ East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT)
01582 293333
<https://www.elft.nhs.uk/service/302/Community-Eating-Disorder-Service-Bedfordshire-and-Luton>
- ◆ Bedfordshire And Luton Camh Eating Disorders Service 01234 893308
<https://www.nhs.uk/services/service-directory/bedfordshire-and-luton-camh-eating-disorders-service/N10874711>
- ◆ Beat eating disorders 0808 801 0677
<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>
- ◆ CARALINE Eating Disorders Counselling & Support Service 01582 457474
<https://caraline.com/>
- ◆ Mind Infoline 0300 123 3393
<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/>
- ◆ Overeaters Anonymous 07000 784 985
<https://www.oagb.org.uk/>

Get in touch

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Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire



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yhwcentralbeds



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Understanding
eating disorders
and seeking
help: a guide

YOUNG
healthwatch
Central Bedfordshire

What is an Eating Disorder?

Eating disorders are mental health illnesses that include the use of poor eating behaviours to cope with tough thoughts and difficulties. They are not the same as altering your diet; they have the potential to take over someone's life and the lives of those around them.

They aren't about food, even when they entail bad eating habits. They are instead concerned with feeling in control or coping with anything else. Individuals suffering from eating disorders are frequently secretive about their eating habits and may feel guilty and humiliated about it. All eating disorders are extremely severe, and anybody suffering from one needs to be cared for and supported. The good news is that it is possible to recover.

Anorexia

Anorexia is an eating disorder characterised by relentless drive for thinness with a fear of gaining body weight associated with self-induced behaviours towards thinness.

People with anorexia may eat little to no food one day, or binge (eat lots of food all at once) and then exercise or make themselves sick so they don't gain weight. Someone with anorexia is likely to be a lower weight than expected for their age and height.



Signs may include:

- ◆ worry about gaining weight
- ◆ being secretive about their eating
- ◆ going out of their way to skip meals
- ◆ doing a lot of exercise
- ◆ having dizzy spells
- ◆ feeling cold
- ◆ wearing baggy clothes to hide their body shape
- ◆ isolating themselves from others e.g., quitting hobbies and social activities

Bulimia

Bulimia is an eating disorder characterised by binge eating and methods to avoid weight gain such as purging after meals.

People with bulimia may binge, then make themselves sick, exercise obsessively, or take laxatives to keep their weight down. Often someone with bulimia will stay a 'normal' weight, which can make it even harder to detect.



Signs may include:

- ◆ eating in secret away from other people
- ◆ going to the toilet after meals
- ◆ fluctuations in weight
- ◆ poor, dehydrated skin
- ◆ scars on fingers, knuckles, or backs of hands
- ◆ bad breath from being sick
- ◆ body dysmorphia

Binge eating disorder

Binge eating disorder is characterised by excessive indulgence of foods in a short space of time. Often, people with BED will binge on a regular basis, eating way more than the recommended daily intake of food. Binges will often be planned in advance and the food eaten in secret. Someone might feel better while bingeing, but afterwards they will feel guilty and ashamed over what they just did. Their way to cope with this may be to plan their next binge.



Signs may include:

- ◆ eating lots of food all at once, even when physically full
- ◆ eating in secret
- ◆ weight gain
- ◆ self-conscious about eating in front of others
- ◆ loss of confidence and low self-esteem

