



## What to do if a young person needs help:

- Talk to the youth, and, ask them what is going on
- Offer hope
- Know the available resources
- Call a crisis center, 911, or take the youth to your local emergency department
- Encourage the teen to contact a supportive service like those listed below, this will provide a professional to talk with them while waiting for emergency services
- Do NOT leave the child/teen alone

### Ask for Help:



**Maine Crisis Hotline:**  
**(888) 568-1112**



**National Crisis  
Text Line:**  
**741741**



**Drive:**  
**To your local  
Emergency Dept.**

**National Eating Disorder Association Hotline (NEDA)**  
**(800) 931-2237**



(800) 640-1211 • (207) 973-6100  
268 Stillwater Avenue • PO Box 422  
Bangor, Maine 04402-0422  
[www.acadiahospital.org](http://www.acadiahospital.org)



# Acadia Hospital

EMHS MEMBER

## CARES

Child-Adolescent Resource  
and Educational Series

## Eating Disorders

Acadia Hospital CARES is a video project dedicated to educating the community about several important topics relevant to youth mental health. The aim of the series is to provide information about prevention and resources, to start conversations with the broader adult community, especially parents and educators, about how to address symptoms they may see and talk with youth directly about their mental health needs.





## Things to consider if a young person you know is in need of help...

If a child or adolescent you know is struggling and has come to you for help, you can take steps to assist them achieving a healthy, happy outcome and lifestyle. Below are some important facts about eating disorders that can help you determine if they need a higher level of help.

### SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM:

The mortality rate associated with anorexia is **12x higher** than the death rate of all other causes for females 15-24 years old.

**64%** of Maine high school girls report that they are trying to lose weight.

Eating disorders **do not discriminate** and can impact individuals of all genders, ethnicity & sexual orientation.

**14%** of girls and **6.5%** of boys struggle with an eating disorder.



### Warning Signs:

Unexplained weight loss or weight gain, preoccupation with weight and calories, negative self-talk or distorted body image, withdrawal from friends and activities (especially those activities that involve food), frequent trips to the bathroom after meals, excessive exercising and exercising in the presence of an injury when they have been advised not to exercise, eating in isolation (bedroom), evidence of binge eating (such as the disappearance of a large amount of food), frequent complaints of stomach aches that result in decreased intake and going on a special diet such as a vegetarian diet or gluten free diet or "eating healthier" that results in weight loss.

### Action Steps for Parents and Caregivers:

- Educate yourself on the signs and symptoms of Eating Disorders
- Let your child know that you are worried about their eating behaviors and attitudes
- Discuss your concerns with them early on, don't wait
- Listen to your child and try not to rush to action to "fix" it for them or try to control what they eat
- Discuss your concerns with your child's medical provider as soon as possible. Early intervention is correlated with better outcomes

### Talking with Your Child:

In a loving and non-confrontational way, share your concerns about specific things you're seeing and feeling. Give examples of times when you have felt concerned or uneasy because of their eating and exercising behaviors or comments they have made about their body. Support them in seeking treatment and be persistent.

### Tips for Youth:

Remember, you are not alone! Tell a supportive adult about how you're feeling and what you're struggling with. Many people go on a diet or over eat some of the time, but when it feels out of control and you can't stop the behavior, that's when you should seek help.