

Eating Disorders Prevention and Treatment in Maine

Background

Eating disorders include a variety of illnesses such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge-eating. These illnesses affect people of all ages, but are more common in teens, young adults, and females. They are serious mental and physical health problems that can be life-threatening. Coordination between different professionals is critical to effective prevention and treatment of eating disorders.

- Nationally, it is estimated that:
 - 1% of young women ages 10-20 have anorexia.
 - 4% of young adult women have bulimia.
 - 1% of all women have a binge-eating disorder.
- In 2005, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) (www.maineecshp.com/survey.html) showed that in Maine:
 - Over half of all students were trying to lose weight, while only a quarter were overweight or were at risk of becoming overweight.
 - 68% of high school girls reported they were then trying to lose weight.
 - 6 times as many girls believed they were overweight than actually were.
 - Of all those trying to lose weight, 11% used fasting, 6% used diet pills, 5% vomited. All of these methods are unhealthy methods of weight loss, and may be early signs of an eating disorder.

The Teen and Young Adult Health Program co-chairs an Eating Disorders work group with Mainely Girls (www.midcoast.com/megirls/). The mission of the Eating Disorders Work Group is:

- To promote healthy eating habits, physical activity, positive self-esteem and body image;
- To provide early identification for effective treatment;
- To identify and increase eating disorders prevention and treatment resources in Maine; and
- To reduce the number of people with eating disorders in Maine.

The State Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan

(www.healthymainepartnerships.org//panp/PANP_plan_2005_2010.aspx) also addresses eating disorders by including these two objectives:

- Reduce the number of people with eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa.
- Reduce the proportion of Maine people who use weight loss strategies that endanger their health.

Currently, there is no specific funding for eating disorder prevention, but there are a number of opportunities for programs to work together and pool their resources to better address eating disorders.

Resources:

If you think you may have an eating disorder, or have a friend you think may have an eating disorder, please call the **Statewide Crisis Hotline (1-888-568-1112) in emergency or the Statewide Warm Line at 211.**

Information on Providers in Maine can be found through one or more of the following web-based referral systems:

- 211 Maine: www.211Maine.org
- The Society for Adolescent Medicine: www.adolescenthealth.org
- The Eating Disorder Referral and Information Center: www.EDReferral.com
- National Eating Disorders Association: <http://www.edap.org>

School nurses and guidance counselors may also know of local resources.

General information for teens and parents can be found at:

- The Center for Young Women's Health at Boston Children's Hospital www.youngwomenshealth.org
- National Eating Disorders Association: <http://www.edap.org>

Resources for teachers can be found at:

- Health Education Resource Center at the University of Maine, Orono, www.library.umaine.edu/herc/
- Maine Office of Substance Abuse, Information and Resource Center: www.maine.gov/dhhs/osa/irc/
- Curriculum Resource Center of Maine: www.crcm.org
- A Guide to Linking Key Concepts (eating disorders key concepts to be added soon): www.maineeshp.com/health_education/Kathy/KeyConcepts%20Cover.html

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