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MENTAL NOTES

CAL-HOSA MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



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Did You Know?

- 30 million people in the U.S. have an eating disorder
- 95% of people with eating disorders are between the ages of 12 -25
- Eating disorders have the highest risk of death of any mental illness
- Eating disorders affect all genders, all races and every ethnic group

<https://www.hopkinsallchildrens.org/Services/Pediatric-and-Adolescent-Medicine/Adolescent-and-Young-Adult-Specialty-Clinic/Eating-Disorders/Eating-Disorder-Facts>

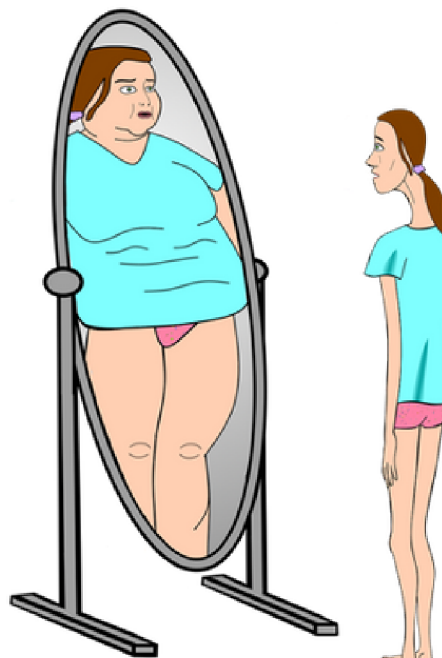
Eating Disorders

As we begin talking about eating disorders, we first need to think about our own attitudes about eating and body weight. Ask your self a few questions? How do you feel when you see an extremely thin person or alternately an obese person? Do you compare your body to the people you see on TV or advertising and entertainment? How do you feel about your body? What do you eat when you are under stress? What problems do you have that chocolate or ice cream can't fix? Food and eating have meanings far beyond nutrition. Will your personal opinions affect how you feel about people with these disorders or can you put these aside to provide the support these people need?

Eating disorders are complicated medical and mental illnesses that people do not choose. A person becomes obsessed or preoccupied with food and weight issues making it harder to focus on other life issues. Eating disorders can affect people of any age or gender, although higher in women. People with eating disorders suffer deeply both emotionally as well as physically.

Anorexia Nervosa

Persons with Anorexia Nervosa deny themselves food by severely restricting food intake, avoiding foods that have high calorie content. They have an intense fear of gaining weight and will say they are fat when they are underweight. Amenorrhea which is an absence of menstrual periods is another sign. They may progress to purging which is induced vomiting, laxatives and diuretics may be abused. Often extreme exercising is seen. Cardiac arrhythmias occur due to electrolyte and potassium loss.



Eating Disorders

The emotional toll can include irritability, avoidance of eating in public, perfectionism, limited social interaction, depression, and food rituals may be developed. They may have lack of initiative, strained expressions, some may have impulse control issues, mood changes and suicide ideation.

Ninety percent of these individuals are female. The onset is typically 14-18 years of age. Some people recover completely after a single episode. Others may have fluctuating patterns with weight gain followed by relapse.

Bulimia Nervosa

Bulimia nervosa is more common than Anorexia. People with Bulimia feel out of control. Binge eating is defined by taking in large amounts of food in a short amount of time. They are often ashamed of this behavior and often binge in private. They then compensate by self-induced vomiting (purging). Desperately trying to rid themselves of calories, they may abuse laxatives, diuretics, enemas and engage in extreme exercise. These people are often within the normal weight range, or slightly above or below it.

An episode of binge eating may be triggered by a sad mood, stressful event, body image issues, or just feelings about appearance or weight. The binge may temporarily relieve the emotional symptoms, but the shame, guilt, and self-criticism reoccur. The physical consequences are harmful to parts of Gastrointestinal system involved in eating and digesting food. Teeth are damaged by the acids that come up with repeated vomiting. Dehydration affecting electrolyte imbalance which can lead to cardiac arrhythmias, heart failure and death.

Binge Eating Disorder (BED)

This individual loses control over their food consumption and eats a large amount of food in a short period of time. It is also described as recurrent binge eating event. Unlike the previous eating disorders there is no purging or excessive exercise. Often the person may eat even though not hungry. This may lead to overweight or obese.



Eating Disorders

This person often feels disgusted with themselves, are embarrassed, depressed, and ashamed about the behavior. They often eat in private. It may interfere with their relationships. They may have more physical complaints due to obesity and the effects on the body. This typically starts in late adolescence or the early 20's. The first event may occur after a stressful event.

Eating Disorder Causes

These complex disorders have been studied by scientists and they are constantly learning about them. Experts believe that eating disorders are caused by people attempting to cope with overwhelming feelings and painful emotions by controlling food. (NAMI 2022). Factors include:

- Genetics
- Environment
- Peer Pressure
- Emotional Health

Treatment

Psychotherapy

Medicine

Nutritional Counseling and weight restoration monitoring

Related Conditions include:

- Depression
- Anxiety Disorders
- Borderline personality disorders

<https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Mental-Health-Conditions/Eating-Disorders>



Chapter Spotlight: Oxford Academy



Academic rigor, family expectation, social pressure and the personal desire to be the best are just among the many factors that cause Oxford Academy students to feel overwhelmed mentally and emotionally. The social isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has made the matter worse. Other than losing family members and seeing the reality of hardships families had to endure, students also lost in-person connection and were forced to adapt to online learning. When school reopened, they were expected to meet the same level of academic standards as though they had a quality experience with online learning.

Luckily, Oxford Academy HOSA was among the chapters chosen to implement the Mental Health and Wellness Prevention and Early Intervention Project. The cornerstone of the MHW-PEI project is the Zen Garden - a student-built rock garden that serves as the wellness center for the entire community. Not only does it symbolize calmness, it has also become the venue for clubs and organizations to host their mindfulness meetings.

OA-HOSA's MHW-PEI project consisted of a series of activities aimed at developing resilience to stress through community-building and altruism. Partnerships with various clubs, organizations, and special interest groups were formed and impactful service projects were pursued to foster civic-engagement and activism. These initiatives have allowed middle and secondary school students to discover, explore and use available resources as their protective barriers to stress as well as feel empowered to take control over their own mental health.

Advisor: Jun Cuenca



Save The Date!

EVENTS ON HOSA, MENTAL HEALTH, & MORE

August 24-26, 2022

NAMI CA 2022 Conference

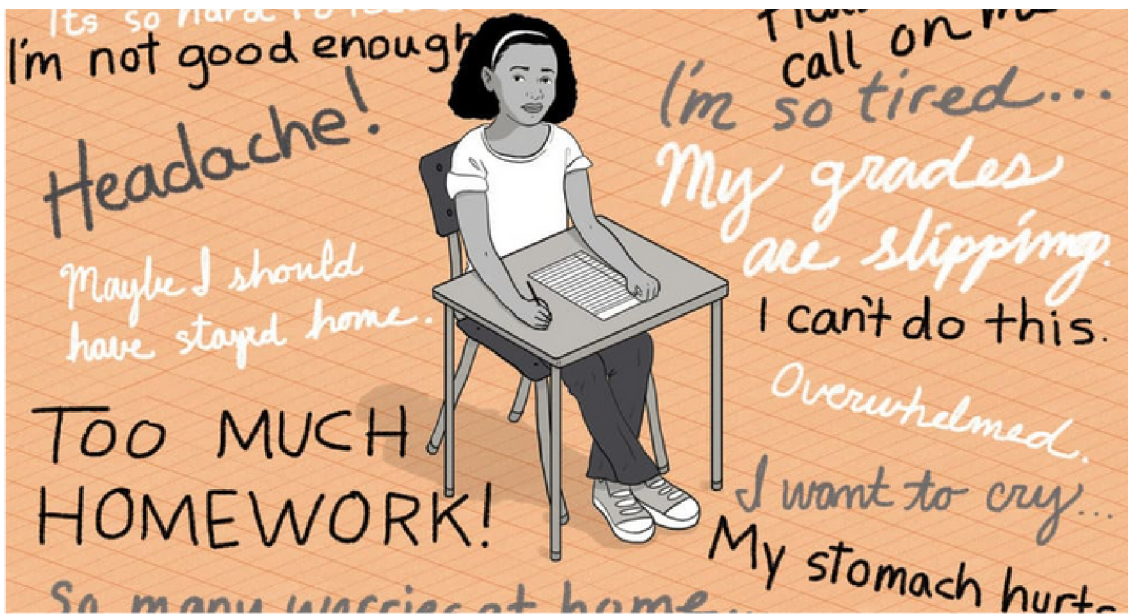
"Moving Forward with Hope and Resiliency"

Newport Beach, Ca

If you want to fly, give up everything
that weighs you down



**Cal-HOSA State Officers post mental health facts
every Monday on Cal-HOSA's social media platforms**



Resources

<https://medlineplus.gov/eatingdisorders.html>
Eating Disorders

<https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/help-support/contact-helpline>
Helpline; NEDA National Eating Disorder Association

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/eating-disorders>
National Institute of Mental Health; Eating Disorders

<https://jeatdisord.biomedcentral.com/articles>
Journal of Eating Disorders

<https://health.usnews.com/health-care/for-better/articles/2018-01-04/the-truth-about-teen-eating-disorders>; Heather Monroe, MSW, LCSW, is a psychotherapist and licensed clinical social worker.

Cal-HOSA's MHWPEII project is funded by Kaiser Permanente