HOW TO HELP A FRIEND
with disordered eating concerns

WARNING SIGNS OF POSSIBLE DISORDERED EATING:

BEHAVIORS:
• Preoccupation with food
• Rearranging food on a plate
• Ritualistic habits with food
• Binging and/or purging behavior
• Trips to bathroom after eating
• Social withdrawal
• Compulsive dieting
• Rigid exercise regimes
• Wears layered clothing to conceal body
• Use of laxatives, appetite suppressants or stimulants

ATTITUDES, BELIEFS & EMOTIONAL REACTIONS:
• Extreme sensitivity to comments/ criticism
• Intense fear of weight gain
• Guilt/fear about eating meals
• Low self-esteem
• Perfectionistic style, driven or obsessive
• Impulsive and/or controlling
• Unrealistic perception of body shape

PHYSICAL SIGNS:
• Irregular menstrual periods
• Extreme sensitivity to cold
• Thinning of hair
• Yellowish tone to skin
• Swollen facial glands
• Dental decay

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MY FRIEND?

TALK TO YOUR FRIEND: Approach your friend privately at a time when you are not rushed

EXPRESS CARE AND CONCERN: Use non-judgmental statements to address behaviors concerning to you. The use of "I" statements are helpful when communicating your concerns.

EXAMPLES:  "I have noticed you eat only vegetable soup every time we go to the SLP."
            "I am concerned about you and want to help."

LISTEN SENSITIVELY: Listen to your friend's thoughts and feelings in a non-threatening way. Communicate understanding by repeating the essence of what is shared with you.

REFER YOUR FRIEND TO CAMPUS RESOURCES: Share campus resources, express that it takes courage to seek support and share that you are happy to go with your friend to seek support. If you have utilized campus resources, a personal story can help normalize help seeking behavior.

FOLLOW-UP WITH YOUR FRIEND: Make a plan to re-connect with your friend and provide appropriate support.

MODEL POSITIVE BODY IMAGE TALK: Focus conversations on positive attributes: avoid self-criticism and negative comments about body shape and size.
USD RESOURCES

COUNSELING CENTER
(619) 260-4655 - Available 24 hours, 7 days per week
Serra Hall Room 300
sandiego.edu/wellness

CENTER FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROMOTION
(619) 260-4618
University Center, Room 161
sandiego.edu/health-wellness

STUDENT HEALTH CENTER
(619) 260-4595
Maher Hall, Room 140
sandiego.edu/health-center

WOMEN’S COMMONS
(619) 260-2396
Student Life Pavilion, Room 420
sandiego.edu/womens-commons

PUBLIC SAFETY
Emergency: (619) 260-2222
Non-emergency: (619) 260-7777
sandiego.edu/safety

NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS ASSOCIATION
Helpline: (800) 931-2237
nationaleatingdisorders.org

For more information on disordered eating and other health and wellness concerns, visit:
sandiego.edu/youareusd