

HOW TO TALK TO SOMEONE

If you suspect an eating disorder in someone you care about, use this guide to start the conversation.

1 PREPARE

Try to have resources available when you approach the person. Any written information about eating disorders, or where to go for help, may help the person identify the eating disorder within them.

2 TALK

Speak to the person privately, and allow time to talk.

Tell the person you are very concerned about him or her.

Calmly tell the person all the specific observations that have aroused your concern. Avoid using words that would define the person's physical appearance. Words such as "thin," "skinny" or "sickly" may define the exact body type the person is trying to attain.

Keep the focus on problems (for example, withdrawing from others).

3 LISTEN

Listen carefully and in a nonjudgmental manner. Listening is very important in this process.

Allow the person time to respond to your concerns.

4 RESPOND

If the information you receive suggests an eating disorder:

- Summarize what you have heard, and tell the person you think he or she has a problem with eating, body image or weight management
- Restate your concern about his or her health and well-being
- Tell the person you are concerned, and the matter needs to be evaluated by someone who understands eating disorders

5 GET HELP

Get medical help or tell a trusted adult immediately if the person has problems that scare you. For example, if the person is:

- Bingeing and throwing up several times throughout the day
- Passing out or complaining of chest pains
- Complaining of severe stomachache or vomiting blood
- Having suicidal thoughts

GET HELP NOW

CALL 952-993-6200

LOCATIONS

Burnsville

St. Louis Park

Woodbury

Maple Grove

St. Paul