

## Threshold Guidance - Eating Difficulties - Amber

**Name of Young Person:**

**Staff member supporting:**

**Has this been completed in collaboration with the YP?    Yes/NO**

### **What we do, what we don't do and what you can do if you are worried about your child**

Many young people go through phases of dieting and not eating enough. Sometimes this can tip into developing an eating disorder. Here's a guide to help you know how best to support your young person if they are experiencing eating difficulties. This is not an exhaustive list; young people may experience symptoms which may not be included on this guide:

### **Needs for help; These are challenges that some young people experience and may need some support with**

#### **Type and nature of distress**

The degree to which a young person experiences eating difficulties may cause the young person distress or might have some mild impact on their ability to cope with everyday life such as going to, or coping at school, seeing friends or taking part in leisure activities. The family may also be experiencing a degree of stress characterised by more arguments or disagreements around food/mealtimes, exercise levels/known or suspected vomiting. Other people may be commenting or noticing there is a difficulty or noticing change in weight. These difficulties may have been going on for a few weeks.

<b>What you might see or a young person might report (Tick all those that apply)</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>	<b>Date completed</b>	<b>Date completed</b>	<b>Date completed</b>
A committed and persistent effort to lose weight or control weight or shape through: Dieting/ restricting food intake Exercising/ increased activity Purging (self-induced vomiting) Taking laxatives Or Eating excessive amounts/ bingeing/ constantly seeking food; gaining weight				
Experiencing upset or distress/ feeling of guilt or shame after eating				
Dissatisfaction about body image				
More emotionally labile/more sensitive (upset, irritable, withdrawn) especially when boundaries are put in around food or exercise				
More argumentative (especially around food or mealtimes)				
More controlling or rigid around food/mealtimes and other areas of life				
Preoccupied/ overly concerned/ interested by food (eg, counting calories)				

May show some signs of physical compromise eg, gradual weight loss, tired/lethargic, difficulties concentrating, not seeming usual self, feeling cold				
Other areas of life might be a struggle eg, academic work, friendships, engaging in family life				

### Things to try, support and Next Steps

- Seek advice and consultation from our Specialist Eating Disorder Team: 03003040062 or email: [HANTSCAMHSEDT@nhs.net](mailto:HANTSCAMHSEDT@nhs.net)
- Important that all young people eat regularly so insisting upon breakfast, lunch and dinner plus snacks
- Encourage balanced life style; need all food groups (carbohydrates, protein, vegetables and fruits, dairy/ dairy alternatives ) plus it's ok to have snacks
- Ensure young people are well hydrated; aim for 6-8 glasses per day (water, milk, avoid sugary drinks)
- Support during mealtimes
- Support your young person to access self-help resources including:  
 YP section- eating difficulties, anxiety, depression (see downloads)  
 Podcasts and Videos Section on our website
- Watch our parent/carer workshop on:  
 How to support a young person with an eating difficulty here: <https://youtu.be/-ApfAzKOy60>  
 How to support a young person with anxiety: <https://youtu.be/LMFQHABnH1M>  
 How to support a young person with depression/ in crisis/ who engages in self-harm: <https://youtu.be/qBAZQVjSmQU>
- Share concerns with your child's school/college
- See your child's GP; ask for physical observations to be taken (including; height, weight, temperature, blood pressure, pulse and request a blood test)
- Inform and access pastoral support from school
- Monitor and restrict use of apps or gadgets that track exercise and food eg, My Fitness Pal and Fitbit watches
- Monitor use of social media and ensure only positive accounts are being followed/accessed

### **Other Useful resources:**

- For fussy/faddy eating : Food Refusal and Avoidant Eating in Children; A Practical Guide for Parents and Professionals
- What's Eating you? A Workbook for Teens with Eating Disorders by Tammy Nelson
- The Self-Esteem Workbook by Lisa Schab

- Banish Your Self-Esteem Thief by Kate Collins-Donnelly
- Banish Your Body-Image Thief by Kate Collins- Donnelly
- Beat (eating disorder charity): <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>