

jessie's legacy

Eating disorders prevention resources and support for people in BC 'Quick Facts'

Jessie's Legacy, a program of Family Services of the North Shore, provides eating disorders prevention education, resources and support for BC youth, families, educators and professionals. Primarily web-based, resources include:

Love our bodies love ourselves

Body image is both the mental picture you have of your body and how you perceive yourself when you look in the mirror. Self-esteem is how you value and respect yourself as a person. Recognize that beauty, health and strength come in all sizes, and learn to feel comfortable and confident in your natural body shape.



Disordered eating

Disordered eating consists of a range of thoughts and feelings about food and body image that lie between healthy eating habits and body acceptance at one end, and eating disorders (anorexia, bulimia, or binge eating) at the other. It can include preoccupation with weight and shape, striving for perfection, excessive exercising, fasting or restricting, compulsive overeating, purging, and steroid or laxative abuse. Disordered eating can put you at risk for eating disorders.

Health, not weight!

The key strategies to feeling and looking your best and having a positive outlook in life are to eat well, keep active, and maintain a healthy self-image. Negative attitudes about food, weight and exercise can lead to a range of health issues. Healthy eating habits include: a positive attitude about eating and food, knowing your body's hunger and fullness cues, planning meals ahead of time, and making informed nutritional choices. Keeping fit, can mean a trip to the gym, walking or biking to school or work, soccer practice or monkey bars. Benefits of good eating habits and regular exercise include strong muscles and bones, less risk of type 2 diabetes, lower blood pressure and cholesterol, better sleep, less anxiety, and a better ability to handle life's challenges.

The media: how does it influence us?

The influence that media messaging and advertising have on self-esteem and body image is widely acknowledged as a contributing factor to the development of disordered eating. Media literacy means knowing that the images of thin young models in magazines, music videos, on TV or the Internet promote an unattainable physical ideal that's false in the first place, due to airbrushed and photo-shopped body proportions. As consumers, let's think critically about media images, and create healthy standards of beauty and identity that we can live with.

Resiliency: bouncing back

Parents often think it's easy to be a kid or teenager, but the reality is that at any age, life can be tough, and it takes self-confidence and resiliency skills to get through the bad times and bounce back. *Resiliency* is the ability and desire to believe in yourself, to cope to the best of your abilities, and to adapt well in difficult circumstances. Parents can help build resiliency by allowing their kids to have opportunities to take on and master new skills and experiences, and by cheering them on so that they don't stop trying to achieve their goals. Over time, their growing self-confidence is what kids tap into when tackling future challenges.



Boys to men and eating disorders

Disordered eating issues are usually linked to girls and women, but boys and men are just as susceptible. Unlike girls, boys are less likely to talk to parents or friends about changes to their bodies. As they develop, some guys try to lose weight, while others "bulk up" by gaining weight and working out at the gym. In an effort to build muscle, some try quick-fix methods like steroids or other drugs.