

Communicating to reduce eating disorder risk

Fact sheet for Primary Health Networks

Health services and health professionals have a role in communicating about weight, nutrition, physical activity, body image and eating disorders in a way that reduces eating disorder risk. This infographic illustrates some helpful messages which can be used, as well as unhelpful messages to avoid.

Helpful messages

Weight

- ✓ Recognising that a person's health encompasses physical, emotional and social wellbeing; respect for people at any weight, size or shape.

Nutrition

- ✓ Eating a variety of different foods from all food groups, at regular intervals; recognising the social and cultural aspects of food and eating.

Physical activity

- ✓ Engaging in physical activity for physical health, psychological wellbeing, enjoyment, social, and lifestyle reasons.

Body image

- ✓ A positive, nurturing relationship with one's body; focusing on the body's function.

Eating disorders

- ✓ Refer to the [Mindframe guidelines](#) for best practice information on reporting and portrayal of eating disorders.

Unhelpful messages

- ✗ Making assumptions about a person's health based on weight, size or shape.

- ✗ Making moral judgements about eating (e.g. labelling foods as 'good'/'bad'/'junk', or categorising food choices as 'right'/'wrong'); encouraging dieting.

- ✗ Encouraging engagement in physical activity for reasons solely related to weight loss, weight control or appearance.

- ✗ The body as a 'problem' to be fixed; focusing on the body's appearance.

For more information on communicating to reduce eating disorder risk, [click here](#).