EATING DISORDERS

# ARE NOT JUST

A 'GIRL THING'

Bev Mattocks





### My son, Ben, developed anorexia in 2009 at the age of 15

41010 (N. wely "If it weren't for pathological parents, we wouldn't have eating disorders."

"I think it's possible anorexia could be about narcissism."

Mental health professional

"If I met a younger person with anorexia, I would shake them." Baroness Joan Bakewell

Celia Imrie, actress

### Some facts...

- Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness
- They affect people of all socio-economic groups, races, colours, creeds and sexes
- As many as 20% of people with chronic anorexia will die as a result of their illness
- EDs affect approx 725,000 people in the UK
- Around 25-40% of people with EDs are male
- EDs usually begin in adolescence but can develop at any age
- Can coexist with other mental health conditions
- Treatable, but only around 46% fully recover

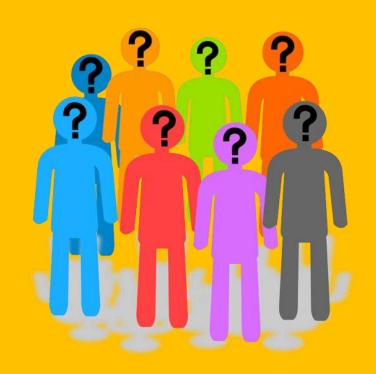


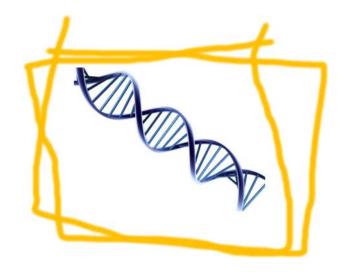
Brain chemistry, function and structure are altered in eating disorder patients

# CERTAIN PEOPLE MAY BE MORE VULNERABLE THAN OTHERS

#### **Typical personality traits may include:**

- Perfectionism
- Inflexible thinking
- Obsessive behaviours
- Low self-esteem
- Body dissatisfaction





# Many people believe that eating disorders may have a genetic link



#### EATING DISORDERS

IMPORTANT!



a disease of choice

# NO-ONE WOULD CHOOSE TO GET AN ILLNESS LIKE THIS



### skinny models

### DON'T CAUSE

EATING DISORDERS

... although media pressure to be thin can be one of the many things that can TRIGGER an eating disorder

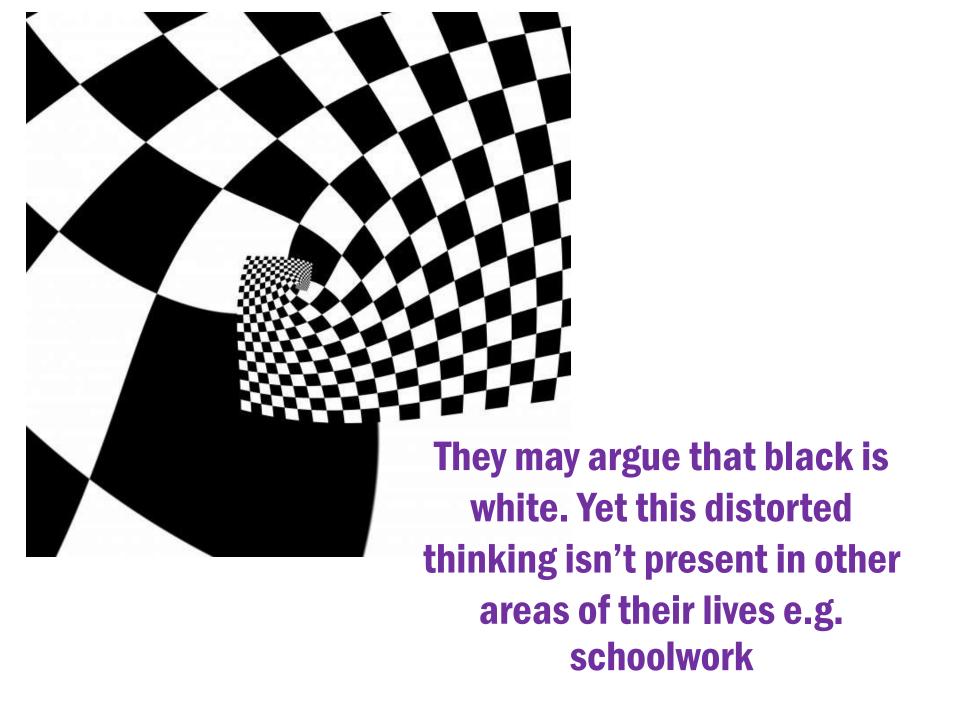




# Often patients don't feel ill or realise how sick they are



# Individuals with eating disorders can be great actors





# Eating disorders are not just about losing weight





# FACT: You can't tell if someone has an eating disorder just by looking at them



# The warning signs in boys can be slightly different from girls

### EATING LESS - EXERCISING MORE



### Ben's eating disorder began in 2009 when he was 15





### Less sport + diet foods = maintain physique + popularity



### School dinners...

Jacket potato, beans, salad + fruit

Jacket potato, beans, salad + fruit

Jackell potato, beans, salad + fruit



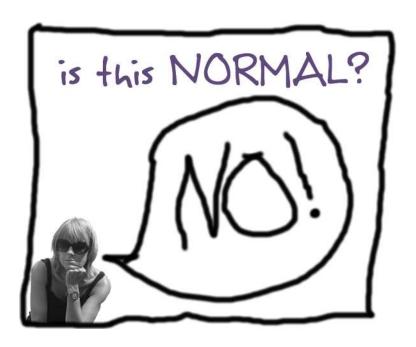
It's not as if I sat down one day and decided to 'get an eating disorder'

### Summer 2009 - symptoms

- Intense exercise without pleasure
- Dieting / avoiding widening range of foods
- New interest in 'healthy eating'
- Obsession with nutritional labels
- Eliminating fats / carbs from diet
- Increased interest in cooking
- Ritualistic eating
- Belief that 'getting fat'
- Social withdrawal
- Losing weight







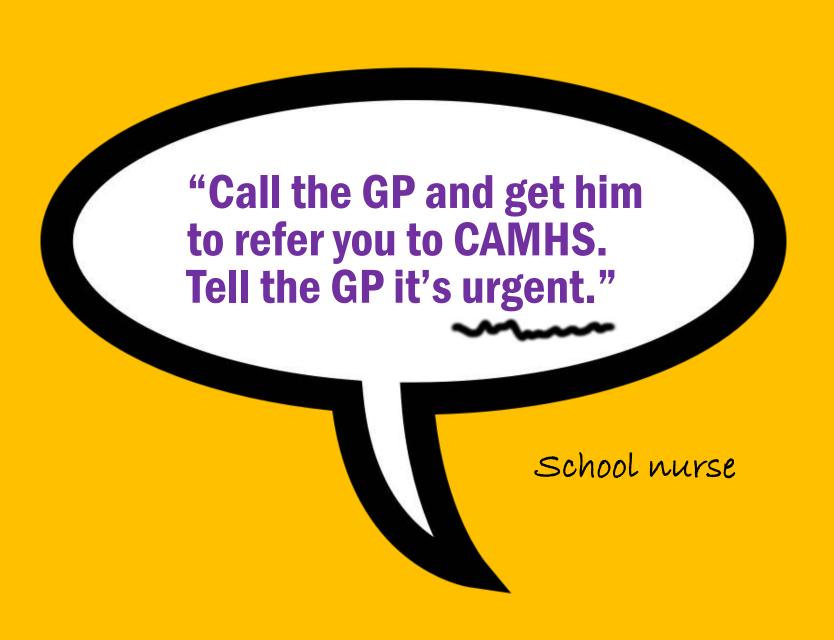


### Nothing wrong, huh?

- Crushing depression
- Vicious mood swings / violent
- Nightmare meals
- Exercising like crazy
- Out of control behaviour
- Social isolation
- Losing weight

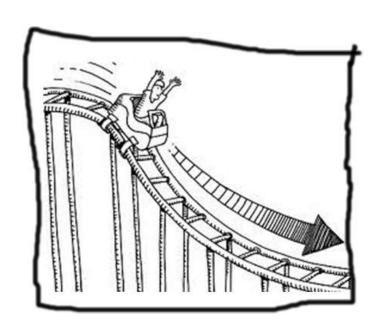






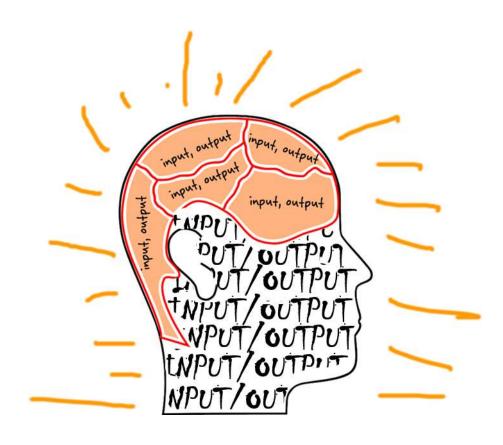
### A month before we heard back





**Eating disorders can escalate out of control very quickly** 





It was all about 'input, output', 24/7



66 Ben's heart is doing

### FUNNY THINGS









# ... mark 2



66 Ben's heart is doing

# FUNNY THINGS

Oh no, not again!!



# Slowly but surely...









Sept 2012







# How did the school help?

- ✓ Being flexible
- ✓ Willingness to learn & understand
- ✓ Treating Ben as a person, not as a 'problem'
- ✓ Medical centre 'bolt hole' / support for me
- ✓ Pack lunches
- ✓ Home-schooling regime
- ✓ Sitting exams separately
- ✓ Help with preparing university admission documents







# A few other useful strategies

- ✓ Watch out for excessive exercising / obsession
- ✓ Changes in eating habits e.g. switching to salad bar
- ✓ Avoid discussing food, weight, exercise & dieting in the classroom
- Zero-tolerance of appearance-based bullying
- ✓ Reduce / eliminate in-school weighing / BMI measurements
- ✓ Inform parents if you plan to weigh / measure students
- ✓ Be mindful of 'triggering' events e.g. Hunger Lunches
- ✓ Formulate plan / environment / support for eating snacks & lunches







Getting Ben through his eating disorder was a massive battle

# THE #1 THING THAT GOT BEN WELL WAS...



# Ben HINSELF

A really good resource for educators?

- HERA

#### HERBATOOLETT for Educators School strategies for assisting students with eating disorders

#### Teachery, administrators, and staff

- Deserto a student acostanza program (SAP) and profescol, if one is not aiready in place (set sample SAP information forms, for students, through and staff to Channel mirrar blooms. conclum about a student. This should strain an elementar participal that substants the local laws and regulators governing (Omenantications arroing teachers/parents)
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## Educator TOOLKIT







### MENA TOOLETT for Educators



Tips for communicating with parents/guardians The a Comment was some an extension of the comment me and the school and parents between the school way

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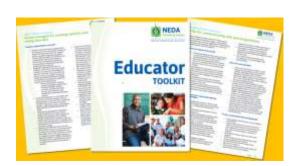
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## **NEDA** booklet includes....

- ✓ Info on eating disorders & what teaching staff should look out for
- ✓ Different kinds of eating disorders e.g. Bulimia
- ✓ Typical emotional, physical & behavioural changes
- ✓ Tips on how to assist the student & support their friends
- ✓ A handy education plan for students
- ✓ Why parent-school communications may be difficult – advice on how to approach the family
- ✓ Info for school medical teams



# Other resources – for schools & parents

- b-eat (UK eating disorder charity): www.b-eat.co.uk
- ✓ F.E.A.S.T. (Families Empowered & Supporting
   Treatment of Easting disorders) global resource
   & forum for parents:
   www.feast-ed.org
- ✓ Men Get Eating Disorders Too (UK male eating disorder charity): mengetedstoo.co.uk
- Men & Boys Eating & Exercise Disorders Service (Scottish charity, useful information): www.mbeedsscotland.org