

# Reaching Out to Someone Who May Have an Eating Disorder



*The Renfrew Center Foundation was established in 1990 due to the strong need for public and professional awareness regarding anorexia, bulimia and binge eating disorder. Today, the Foundation is dedicated to advancing eating disorders education, prevention, research, advocacy, and treatment.*

## DO

- Learn about eating disorders so that you will know the signs when you see them.
- Recognize that eating disorders are potentially fatal diseases and treat them accordingly.
- Listen to your friend with understanding, respect and sensitivity.
- Tell the person that you are concerned, that you care and would like to help.
- Suggest that the person seek professional help from a physician and/or therapist.
- Be available when your friend needs someone.
- Talk about things other than food, weight, counting calories and exercise.
- Attempt to discuss feelings instead.
- Share your own struggles.
- Stay calm; these things take time.

## DON'T

- Try to solve the problem for them; they need a qualified professional.
- Blame them for doing something wrong or tell them they are acting silly.
- Gossip about them.
- Focus on weight, the number of calories being consumed or particular eating habits.
- Make comments about a person's appearance.
- Be afraid to upset them; talk to them.
- Reject or ignore them; they need you.
- Get involved in a power struggle around eating or other symptoms.

For more information, please contact The Renfrew Center Foundation  
at 1-877-367-3383 or visit [www.renfrewcenter.com](http://www.renfrewcenter.com)