

EATING DISORDERS
AWARENESS WEEK 2023

EATING DISORDERS IN MEN

[#StrangerThingsHaveHappened](#)

WHAT IS 'EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK'?

A very good question!

It is our biggest campaign.
Every year, we set the theme and ask our
community to get involved.

This year, we're talking about eating
disorders in men.



EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK 2023

DATES 27 February – 5 March 2023

THEME Eating Disorders in Men

OBJECTIVE To raise awareness, bust gender stereotypes and change perceptions. Yes, men get eating disorders – but really, stranger things have happened

CAMPAIGN Stranger things have happened

WHY 'EATING DISORDERS IN MEN'?

- Around one in four people affected by eating disorders are men
- Toxic stereotypes are pervasive and lead people to think "only women get eating disorders"
- Men with eating disorders are often met with disbelief. This affects their access to treatment and journey to recovery
- EDAW '23 is all about changing perceptions. We're targeting society at large, and tackling unhelpful biases



OUR KEY FINDINGS

We knew there wasn't enough research.

So in October 2022, we ran the UK's biggest survey to date on men's experiences with eating disorders.

Of those that took part...



- 1 in 5 had never spoken to anyone about their eating disorder
- 4 in 5 felt raising awareness would help more men get treatment sooner
- 6 in 10 were disappointed with the help available to men with eating disorders

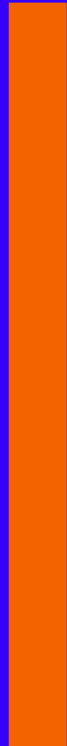
WE ALSO CONSULTED MEN

Throughout this campaign, we've been guided by a group of men with lived experience of eating disorders.

Based across the UK, and having struggled with different types of eating disorders (from anorexia and ARFID to bulimia and binge eating disorder) they shared different accounts of what it's like for men to struggle with an eating disorder.



- "My family pushed me away because they thought I was doing it for attention"
- "The doctor treated me like I was wasting his time. So I managed to fly under the radar"
- "My workplace couldn't believe I had an eating disorder. So they laid me off"
- "Finding out I had an eating disorder was actually a relief. I'd spent five years being incredibly unwell. And no doctor could tell me what was wrong with me. Because I was a man, no one even considered it"



OUR

MESSAGING

“He’s just going through a phase.”

“He just loves to work out.”

“He’s just a picky eater.”

“That’s just him.”



Around 1 in 4 people with eating disorders are men.
And yet in 2023, their symptoms can still go unnoticed by those
around them.

We'd sooner put the signs down to fussy eating, a busy
schedule — even a cry for attention.

Right? *Not quite.*

Just like Bruno, “we don’t talk about” eating disorders in men.

Just like that film reboot of *Cats*, they can’t be brushed under the carpet.

And just like *The Da Vinci Code*, they can be pretty hard to crack.

So to better understand these complex mental illnesses – and put harmful stereotypes to bed – we launched the UK’s biggest survey to date on men’s experiences with eating disorders.

1 in 5 had never spoken out about their struggles.

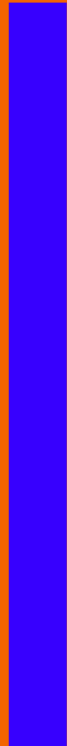
And **4 in 5** felt raising awareness would help more men get treatment sooner.

That’s where you come in.

This Eating Disorders Awareness Week, help us set the record straight.

Yes – men get eating disorders.
But really, stranger things have happened.

So spread the word and #HelpMenGetHelp.



OUR CASE STUDIES



“

In my head it was just like 'Oh, I must be too big so I need to eat less and lose weight'. So I started restricting. And when it got to the point where it was visible, I'll always remember my friend's parents almost paying me a compliment. Like 'Oh, doesn't Chris look more slim'.

It really encouraged me to keep going. Just enough to stop the bullying at school.

”

Read Chris' case study [here](#).



“

In the early stages I felt the stigma of having an eating disorder. Having spoken to people now, I know they don't judge me for it at all. But at the time I didn't want to be seen as a man with an eating disorder. Or a man with a mental illness in general.

I didn't want to be seen as weak. It's a gender-related societal problem.

”

Read George's case study [here](#).



“

As a teenage boy, you're starting to develop into a man. You're feeling like you should become more mature and more masculine.

And for someone to then attack your masculinity because of an illness you've got... it's embarrassing. And it made me feel even more inadequate.

The worse I felt about myself, the more I turned to the eating disorder because it was something I was good at. Like a skill.

”

Read Rory's case study here.



“

No one noticed it in me, even though I'd lost a lot of weight and it was really noticeable. But I was fine with that, I didn't care. I didn't reach out or ask why no one was helping me.

I was secretive and if anyone did bring anything up, I would lie my way out of it. I'd tell them I was on a health kick, and people didn't really question it.

”

Read Chris' case study [here](#).



**WANT TO GET
INVOLVED?**

Share this.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ★ Share our video, research and website on social, or with friends and family
- ★ Post about EDAW as we kick off on 27 February
- ★ Use our hashtags: #HelpMenGetHelp #EatingDisordersAwarenessWeek and #MenGetEatingDisordersToo
- ★ Like, share and retweet our posts throughout the week





Not sure what to say?
Tweet this!

YES, MEN GET EATING DISORDERS TOO

Around 1 in 4 people with eating disorders are men. Yet many struggle to speak out and their symptoms often go unnoticed. So this Eating Disorders Awareness Week, I'm/we're busting gender stereotypes to [#HelpMenGetHelp](#).

Join us/me and Team Beat

**AND
SHARE
THESE...**

[Our campaign video](#)

[Our digital flyer](#)



REMEMBER...

THIS CAMPAIGN IS ABOUT...



- Raising public awareness
- Busting gender and eating disorder stereotypes
- Targeting both men and women, aged approx. 12-65 — across all UK nations
- Being inclusive. By 'men', we mean trans men too, as well as non-binary people who identify with the theme
- Sharing new insights from in-depth research, surveys and lived experience focus groups (we've done our homework)

IT'S NOT ABOUT...



- Alienating women or other genders
- Doing everything, all at once. Our goal is to raise awareness
- Stereotyping anyone. We know every man's experience is different, so we want to steer clear of tired tropes

(We're also focusing on men with direct lived experience, though we hope male carers, loved ones, and everyone else will get involved too)



**THANK
YOU**

Beat

Eating disorders

edaw.beateatingdisorders.org.uk