

# East Kootenay Eating Disorder Project

“ You cannot look at someone and decide whether they are sick enough. ”  
 ~ Youth survey feedback

## PHYSICIAN PROJECT LEADS

Dr. Laura Swaney, Pediatrician  
 Dr. Jade Jensen, Family Physician & Foundry East Kootenay Physician Lead

With support from East Kootenay Division of Family Practice Project Lead **Melanie Spring** and Program Manager **Jacqui van Zyl**.

# BETTER CARE, SOONER, FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT.

## PROJECT AIM

The East Kootenay Eating Disorder Project is improving how local care happens—earlier, faster, and more responsive to youth needs. Based at Foundry East Kootenay, it is adapting and implementing a hybrid approach to care informed by established models, with a focus on rapid access and clearer pathways to care. The aim is to ensure all youth aged 16–24 with early symptoms are seen for intake within four weeks of referral. Built with input from providers, Indigenous partners, schools, and families, the goal is simple: This work is about getting the best care, to the right patient, as soon as possible.

**Timeline:** September 2025 to September 2027

## THE GOALS

1. Improve early identification
2. Improve timely access
3. Strengthen primary care confidence
4. Expand flexible care options
5. Reduce patient attrition
6. Improve patient, provider & family experience

## APPROACH

- Co-designed, locally adapted evidence-informed care model
- Refined referral pathways to improve access
- Data-driven decisions (informed by surveys, evaluation, qualitative insights)
- Rural, Indigenous, and community engagement
- Communication tools & materials
- Ongoing partner collaboration

## PROJECT PARTNERS

The East Kootenay Eating Disorder Project is developed in partnership with health-care providers, educators, Indigenous organizations, youth and families, and community agencies across the East Kootenay region. Key partners include Foundry East Kootenay, East Kootenay Division of Family Practice, Interior Health, School District No. 5 Southeast Kootenay, College of the Rockies, Ktunaxa Nation, and Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services Society, alongside local physicians, pediatricians, mental health clinicians, dietitians, and lived-experience voices.

## KEY YOUTH SURVEY FINDINGS

A March 2026 survey of 55 youth and community members found that 91% of youth were concerned about either their own eating patterns or those of a friend.

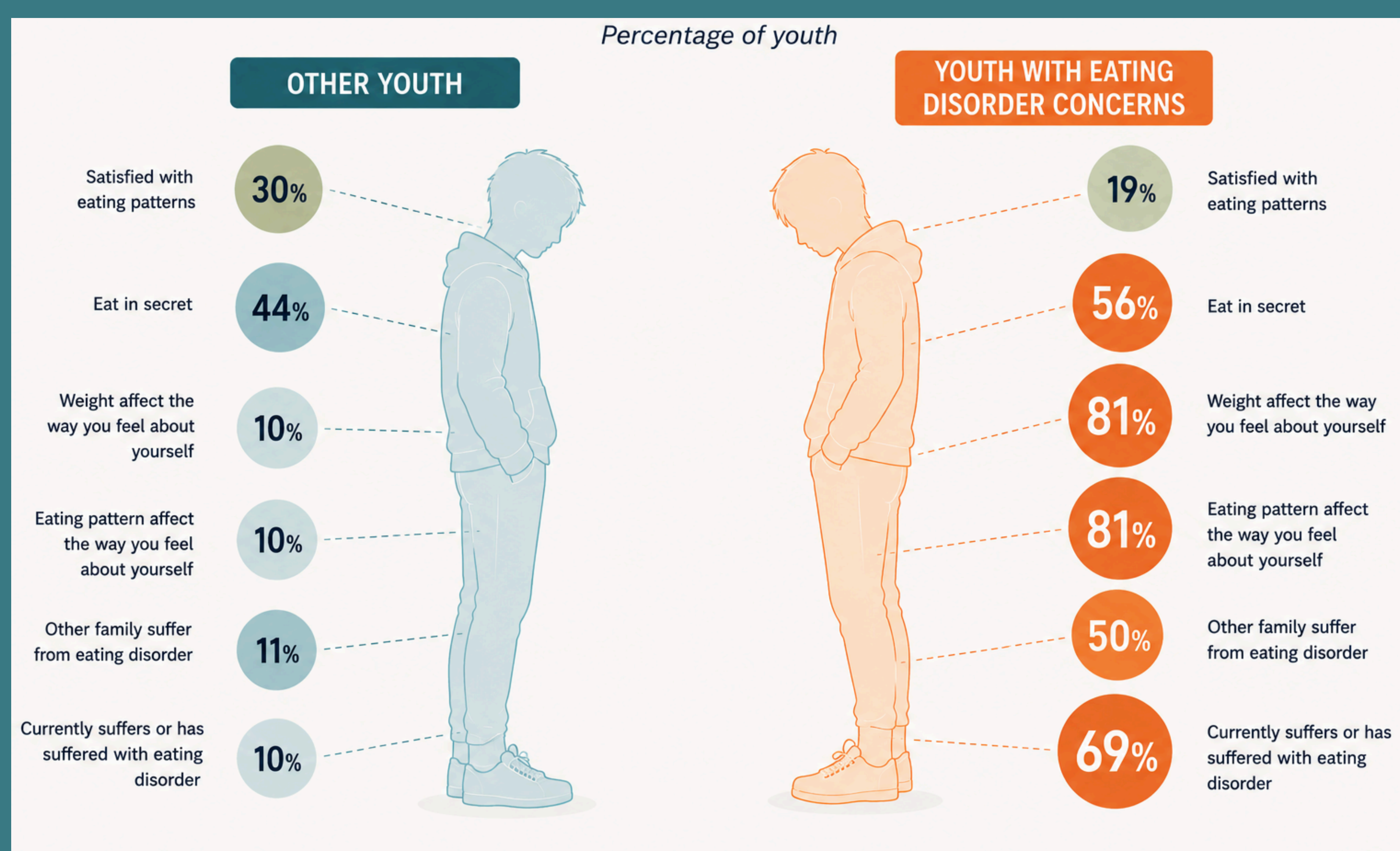
Question for youth with ED concerns: Who can you trust to talk to?

• A dietitian or nutritionist	73%
• A mental health counselor or psychologist	62%
• A pediatrician	50%
• A family doctor or nurse practitioner	50%
• Your friends	50%
• A teacher or school counsellor	18%
• Your family	12%
• A sports or dance coach	0%

“ Sometimes you don’t know if you have one even if it’s really serious. ”  
 ~ Youth survey feedback

# RESULTS

## RESULTS FROM THE EATING DISORDER SCREEN FOR PRIMARY CARE



## FREQUENCY OF FAMILY MEALS, GROUPED BY YOUTH CONCERNED WITH EATING PATTERNS

