



Media Release

9 March 2010

New eating disorders support group in Frankston

Inspired by one woman's personal journey to share support with others

An exciting collaboration between Eating Disorders Victoria (EDV) and Williams Road Family Therapy Centre (WRFTC) has resulted in a new support group being established in Frankston for people who are currently being treated or have recently been treated for an eating disorder.

The idea for the group was born when Frankston resident, Jenni Forbes, failed to find local support for her own eating disorder challenges. "During my ten week stint in inpatient care, the thing I found most helpful was connecting with others who really understood some of the difficulties I face living with an eating disorder. I wanted to create a similar environment outside the hospital in my own community where people can share their lives and enjoy each others company," said Jenni.

Together with her WRFTC therapist, Jenni sought the support of EDV in getting the support group up and running. "I know there are many others in the community like me who are living with a range of eating disorders, and I am sure they would benefit from the opportunity to exchange experiences as well as build a sense of well-being with others who may be experiencing similar problems and triumphs," explained Jenni. "Sometimes even the smallest things can trigger unhelpful behaviours and I feel like I'm losing control. If this group can help provide support and hope for others like me, it will all be worthwhile," she said.

The group is scheduled to begin meeting on Wednesday, 14th April, from 7.00-8.30pm in the Frankston Library. Attendance is free although a gold coin donation is encouraged. The groups' convenors, Sabina Read and Margie Fry, are both Provisional Psychologists, completing a PhD and Masters in psychology respectively, who have been trained by EDV and are undertaking professional internships with WRFTC.

Interested participants are invited to meet with Sabina, Margie and Jenni on March 24th to address any questions they may have and to discuss their current needs and interests related to support group membership. Suitable participants include males and females, over 18 years of age, who are, or have been, treated by healthcare professional/s for an eating disorder. The group is not appropriate for those who are in the early stages and unsure of diagnosis, and this group is not a substitute for treatment.

In line with Jenni's original vision for the group, Sabina, Margie and Jenni are seeking participants who are interested in forming a committed group and are able to attend

fortnightly meetings through to early December. "I know of other groups where people come and go, but in order for the group to serve the needs of its members, I think one of the active ingredients needs to be commitment and continuity," stated Jenni. As such, the group will run four weekly sessions to give interested members a taste of what the group entails, at which point interested members will be invited to commit to fortnightly Wednesday nights.

Jenni's journey – 3 key factors:

- 1. Admitting she had a problem.** "When my family became more open I was able to be honest about my bingeing and purging behaviour which helped to facilitate change and improvement in my day to day living," said Jenni.
- 2. Professional help.** "Inpatient care and ongoing help from my therapist has helped me move forward and find better ways to cope," explained Jenni.
- 3. Support network - family, friends, recovery support group.** "I am more transparent about where I'm at now and my support network helps keep me accountable," reflected Jenni.

***Interested participants are asked to call group convenors,
Sabina Read and Margie Fry at WRFTC on: 9530 2311.***

Media contacts:

Sabina Read, Group Co-Convenor, 0412 836 090

Jenni Forbes, Group Founder, 0418 341 003

Megan O-Connor, EDV Communications Officer, 0409 948049

About Eating Disorders Victoria

www.eatingdisorders.org.au

Eating Disorders Victoria is Victoria's foremost eating disorder charity and the primary source of support, information, community education and advocacy for people with eating disorders and their families in Victoria. Support services are free and confidential and include the **Eating Disorders Helpline 1300 550 236**, on-line Chat Room and Message Board, confidential support groups and education programs.

About Williams Road Family Therapy

www.williamsroad.vic.edu.au

The Williams Road Family Therapy Centre, situated in Windsor, provides a range of services from professional therapy and counselling for individuals, couples and families, to short courses and group and individual supervision. The centre offers counselling by a number of therapists, each specialising in either a particular approach to counselling or particular problems such as:

- Grief and Loss Issues
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Aged Care
- Learning Difficulties
- Eating Disorders
- Substance Abuse
- Anxiety
- Addictions
- Depression
- Phobias
- Trauma
- Social Anxiety
- Panic Attacks