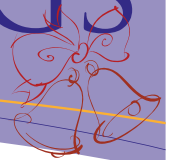


# SPREAD YOUR WINGS



## Providing support to our carers

Eating Disorders Victoria hosted its 'Caring for a loved one with an eating disorder' weekend workshop in early December to overwhelmingly positive feedback.

Presented by Gill Todd, the leading nurse consultant at the Maudsley Hospital in London for the past 15 years, the workshop was designed to give carers of people with eating disorders practical skills to assist in their role as carers.

Attended by over 60 carers, ranging from parents and partners to grandparents and siblings, the response to the workshop was extremely positive. Many of those who attended felt great relief at not only learning invaluable strategies in helping their loved one through their journey, but also took great comfort in the realisation that they shared many similar experiences and emotions as others carers.

EDV will be running additional workshops for carers in 2009. Many suggestions were given by the carers themselves as to how future sessions can be structured and we hope to be able to communicate 2009's events to you soon.

Thanks to those who attended the workshop, Gill Todd, who was an outstanding presenter and teacher, Romy Roth of The Butterfly Foundation and to our volunteers Andrea Whitehouse, Erin Mullane and Eilene Hannan who generously volunteered their time over the weekend.

Thanks also to the generous support of The Butterfly Foundation, Hairhouse Warehouse and Maison Living. Special mention also to Helen Franks, EDV's wonderful and passionate Family Support Officer, who made the workshop possible.

Don't forget Helen is available to provide single-session support to carers both face-to-face or by telephone, and will be available full time in 2009

thanks to the generous support of the Lord Mayor Charitable Foundation. Call the helpline 1300 550 236 to make an appointment.

What the participants said:

"Very clear in delivery, with very useful, wise and knowledgeable information."

"The weekend was invaluable for us as a couple to attend together. Enabling us to be on the same page."

"It gave us hope and confidence that recovery is possible."

"Her knowledge and the way Gill shared it was wonderful."

"Meeting and listening to other carers was fabulous."



Attendees of the workshop share ideas with one another during some group time

# Kirsty's Corner

## A note from EDV's Executive Officer

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Providing support for our carers
- EDFV News
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  - Mission Australia's Youth Survey results
  - Federal Government plans for new National Code on Body Image
- Tips for the Festive Season
- A dad's story
- Support Group News



### Eating Disorders Foundation of Victoria

1513 High Street, Glen Iris  
Victoria 3146

Phone: (03) 9885 6563

Fax: (03) 9885 1153

Help/Support/Information:  
1300 550 236/(03) 9885 0318  
Help@eatingdisorders.org.au  
www.eatingdisorders.org.au

Reg. No. A0022880J  
ABN 24 010 832 192

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of all members of EDV.

The last quarter of 2008 has seen EDV as busy as we have ever been. The office refurbishment was a huge task, but well worth it. Now it is complete, you will now notice a quietly improved environment when you come to visit in person. The library has been relocated downstairs to make it much more accessible to all. The support room has also been refurbished, which has been much appreciated already.

The EDV Annual General Meeting took place at the end of October. This year, the AGM was held off-site at a local restaurant. The short meeting was followed by an excellent dinner. It was a pleasant, relaxed evening which was enjoyed by all who attended. Our biggest workshop of the year has also happened recently - this was the 'Caring for a Loved One with an Eating Disorder' Workshop in December. Planning, organising, publicising and taking registrations for this workshop has kept all staff on their toes.

Our Education programs for teachers and fitness instructors continue to be popular, with many schools now approaching us for professional development for their teachers in the new year, as well as high demand for our services at educators' conferences. Our relationship as a training provider with the YMCA also continues. It is great to know that the YMCA incorporates eating disorder training into their Certificate IV course for all YMCA Fitness Instructors.

We are hard at work on a new community awareness campaign for the first quarter of 2009, with radio Community Service Announcements being recorded in the next few weeks, thanks to the generous support of our corporate partner Hairhouse Warehouse.

One of the most thrilling announcements of recent weeks came from the Federal Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon, who announced new funding to scope the development of a national collaborative approach to eating disorders. This announcement is significant since it is the first time that eating disorders has really appeared on the Federal Government's health agenda. EDV has been actively involved in collaborative developments following this announcement, and we hope to bring you more exciting news on this front in the new year.

I also had the opportunity to attend two incredibly mind-filling and satisfying eating disorder research events in recent months. The first, the annual conference of the Australia and New Zealand Academy of Eating Disorders, was three intensive days of workshops, research presentations and roundtable discussions, attended by many of the leading researchers and clinicians in the field. The second was a one-day research forum held by The Butterfly Foundation, which brought together people from many scientific and research disciplines to listen to presentations and discuss the ways a National Research Institute for Eating Disorders could move forward knowledge and understanding in the field and assist in developing more successful treatment strategies and better prevention efforts.

Kirsty Greenwood  
Executive Officer

# EDV News

## Changes to the EDV Board

There were several changes to the EDV Board announced at the recent Annual General Meeting. Rob Anderson has decided not to re-nominate as EDV President but will remain on the Board. Gill Ryan, EDV's former Vice President, was elected to the position of President and Sarah Harry was elected as Vice President.

Unfortunately, EDV said good-bye to long time Board members Sarah MacKay and Dr Andrew Kennedy who have left the Board to pursue opportunities outside Victoria. Both have made tremendous contributions to the EDV Board and have played integral roles in the growth of EDV over recent years. Their knowledge and expertise will be missed.

We are very pleased to announce that Dr Naomi Crafti of Swinburne University has filled one of the vacant positions on the Board. Naomi is a lecturer in Psychology at Swinburne University of Technology and specialises in mindfulness based counselling approaches and counselling evaluation and teaches Ethics and Professional Practice.

In 1994 Naomi developed the MEG (Moderate Eating Group) program which runs out of the Swinburne Psychology Clinic which helps women with Binge Eating and Body Image concerns. Naomi is also interested in Positive Psychology and applying this approach to Eating Disorders and body image issues at a preventative and community level.

## Changes to EDV Support Group Locations

EDV has decided to relocate some of its support groups following feedback from convenors and attendees. The Malvern East support groups

will return to the EDV office in Glen Iris and the Collingwood support group is moving to an East Melbourne location.

For further information, including next year's dates turn to page 9 of Spread Your Wings.

## Mission Australia's Youth Survey Results

The 2008 Mission Australia Youth Survey has been released with Body Image still ranked as the number one issue concerning young people in Australia. This year's survey was completed by a record 45,500 young people between the ages of 11 – 24. When asked about their concern about 15 issues, body image was ranked most frequently in the top three.

For further information go to [www.missionaustralia.com.au](http://www.missionaustralia.com.au).

## Federal Government Announces Plans for New National Code on Body Image

The Australian Government has announced that body image is one of two top priorities of the newly formed Office for Youth. Headed by Youth Minister Kate Ellis, the Office for Youth has determined body image and civic engagement and electoral participation as the two initial issues to be pursued by the department.

In announcing the formation of the department, Minister Ellis announced her intention to develop a Voluntary National Media and Industry Code of Conduct on body image. Office for Youth is working in partnership with Departments of Health and Ageing and Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy on this issue.

The Federal Government has also committed

## EDV News

\$500,000 towards developing a comprehensive, coordinated national approach to eating disorders.

The new National Eating Disorders Collaboration will bring together eating disorder experts in research, education, health promotion, public health and mental health, as well as the media – to help develop a consistent approach to the prevention and treatment of eating disorders.

### EDV Library News

Now the EDV office refurbishment is largely complete, our library has relocated downstairs to make it much more accessible to members. An audit of the resources is currently underway, which will see some of the resources categorised into a Carer's category and an electronic search facility will be introduced in the new year.

We have also been supplied with an updated copy of hugely popular *Road to the Rainbow* by Meredith Seafeld Grant. This is one of our most popular titles, so we appreciate your patience in waiting for the book to become available.

### EDV Christmas Closure dates

The EDV office, Helpline and ChatRoom will be closed from Thursday 25th of December until Friday 2nd January inclusive. We will resume normal operations on Monday 5th of January

If you need assistance during this time call:

Lifeline	13 11 14
Suicide Helpline	1300 651 251
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800

Mensline 1300 789 978  
(open during the holidays)  
Hours: 24 hours, 7 days a week

Parentline 13 22 89  
(open during the holidays)  
Hours: 8am – midnight (weekdays)  
10am – 10 pm (weekends)

### Media Summary

It has been another busy period for EDV in the media. Highlights include:

- **SBS News** interviewed Kirsty Greenwood in response to the Federal Government formation of the Office for Youth and introduction of the Voluntary Media Code of Conduct on body image.
- EDV provided information on eating disorders and negative body image for an article for **Women's Health and Fitness** magazine.
- The **Geelong Advertiser** contacted EDV for statistics and general background information on eating disorders.
- Megan O'Connor was interviewed by the **Australian Education Union** newsletter on the role teachers and schools staff can play in the prevention and early detection of eating disorders.
- EDV contributed an article to **Active Education Magazine** also on the role teachers and schools staff can play in the prevention and early detection of eating disorders.
- EDV staff Marilyn Amendola and Natalie Wild met with a producer of an upcoming **ABC** drama series to assist with the development of a character in the program suffering from anorexia.

## *Tips for the festive season*

**We all know that Christmas can be both a wonderful and stressful time! Most of us feel pretty overwhelmed at Christmas at the best of times, but for someone with an eating disorder and their family and friends, the pressure can be quite unbearable.**

**Below are some tips for both the person with the eating disorder and for carers or family and friends, to help you cope with the festive season, when both food and social activities are the central focus.**

**Remember, like any other time of the year, communication can help reduce holiday stress. Surround yourself with your favourite people and allow yourself to feel whatever emotions you feel and lean on others for help and support.**

**If you are suffering from an eating disorder:**

- Talk to your counsellor, psychologist, dietitian, GP or support person about how to cope with family interaction by predicting and preparing for social activities.
- Telephone the Eating Disorders Helpline to talk about your concerns. (Remember to do this in advance of the Christmas Season, as we are closed from Christmas Day through to 2nd of January.)
- If you are inviting people to your home, plan what you will do to give yourself 'time out' from the crowd and contact your support person, if needed.
- Give yourself permission to say 'No' to invitations if you are feeling overwhelmed.
- Identify a person you know will listen to your concerns and that you are able to contact easily, especially when you are feeling overwhelmed.

- Think of responses you may give when meeting family members or friends you haven't seen for a while.
- Talk to your family, partner or support person about your fears, and concerns and how you can manage them.
- If you don't know what food will be served on Christmas Day ask the person who will be preparing the meal, or ask a family member to find out for you, to reduce your anxiety. Offer to take 'safe' food to share so you will feel comfortable knowing there is something you can eat.
- If you are going out with family or friends it may be helpful to have your support person go with you to the restaurant beforehand to see what is on the menu. If possible plan and discuss this with your dietitian or support person.
- Remember all eyes will not be watching how much or how little you eat; usually people are too busy enjoying their own meal and chatting.
- Most people overeat on Christmas Day and often comment on the quantity they have eaten. Remember their comments are not aimed at you.
- Throughout the day take time out to relax — listen to your favourite music, talk to a trusted person, go for a walk with a family member or friend or sit in the garden soaking up the atmosphere. It will be important to do something you can enjoy or relaxes you.
- Give yourself permission to enjoy the day. Remember you don't have to be happy and smile all the time – no one expects it
- Tensions often increase just prior to and on Christmas Day for many family members

reducing their ability to communicate and listen effectively. Remember you are not responsible for this!

- It is important to communicate in a calm and clear manner and don't place unrealistic expectations on any family member.
- Take a break from self criticism and comparing yourself to others. Instead try to relax and enjoy friends, family and activities – live in the moment.

### For carers

- Tensions often increase just prior to and on Christmas Day for many family members reducing their ability to communicate and listen effectively. Try to remain calm, consider what feelings may be behind an abrupt response, an angry outburst or their inability to be on time. Looking at the emotion behind the behavior will reduce your stress and help you to better understand their response to you. You may feel less attacked and be able to give some gentle guidance.

- Give yourself permission not to be the chief organiser - try a little delegation to reduce your stress. Use calm, caring, compassionate and clear communication with yourself and others. Give yourself time to think so you are sure of what you want to say. This may require you to do a little planning for yourself. To keep your stress, and that of others, to a minimum consider collecting funny stories to tell/read, a humorous DVD to watch, a fun game to play. Ask others in the family if they have ideas they'd like to contribute.

- It is important not to place unrealistic expectations on any family member or on yourself. Try to remember and accept that everyone deals with situations, emotions and feelings in different ways, it will enable everyone

to relax a little. Your response demonstrates your level of understanding of the emotions of others. It is not necessary to agree with their emotions however acknowledging their emotions is very helpful. You don't necessarily have to 'fix' or 'rescue' them.

- Refrain from commenting on anyone's appearance. If you wish to comment try 'it's great to see you here', 'lovely that you could make it', 'you seem much happier' or 'we have missed you'. Messages of love, care and joy are what we all need. Criticism, comparisons and comments on the physical appearance of anyone is unproductive. Enable everyone to enjoy this special giving time of year!

- Christmas celebrations rarely turn out as 'perfect' as we envisage them being at the outset. When things don't turn out as you imagine, just take a breath and realize that this 'detour' is what will make THIS year different from previous years. Keeping an open mind will ease the pressure to achieve perfection.

- Each year try making new traditions. This avoids trying to attain the success of previous traditions and keeps your special memories relevant and in proportion with the changes happening each year in your family.

- Don't go overboard with food. Better to do a few beautiful dishes well, than overwhelm your family/guests with abundance. And remember, people don't have to eat big to enjoy their Christmas time.

The joy of Christmas is about being with those you love.....it's never about the food.

## A Dad's story

The following story was written for us by a father whose daughter has recovered from anorexia.

Imagine ...

- someone smoking 10-15 cigarettes in a day and one day saying, "I quit!" ... then never touching another cigarette;

- this same person, having suffered depression and great unhappiness herself, giving support and encouragement to others;

I'm sure you would agree this is a person with extraordinary willpower. This is the story of my daughter and the part I played during her illness and eventual recovery....

My daughter was not quite 13 years old when she was diagnosed with Anorexia Nervosa. This came as a huge shock to all of us, but quite alarming for me as I had been out of the country for a period of four weeks. On my return I realised how much weight she had actually lost.

Soon after this my daughter had to be admitted to hospital and was required to have a naso-gastric tube inserted to force feed her and get her out of the danger zone. One of the hardest things to figure out was why? Why had this happened? None of it made sense to me but without knowing more, how were we to know what corrective action to take?

As time went by I was aware that this situation was entirely foreign to anything I had ever experienced. I recall feeling overwhelmed and it was as though we were dealing with a situation no parent had ever had to deal with before. Intuitively, you know this cannot be so and you think sooner or later, by good research and perhaps a lot of luck, you will encounter someone possessing the 'magic bullet'. Unfortunately, in the early days of our daughter's illness this did not happen and it was

possibly four to five months before we could get our daughter into a program that would provide appropriate support and treatment.

Mindful of the brick bats that could come my way, I suspect the irrational part of an eating disorder is generally hardest for men to understand and that is not to say women by contrast tend (generally) to be less rational than men. Men, after all, generally like to apply logic to most things and perhaps less emotion, especially in so far as relationships are concerned. I felt I was totally inept at times in the way I related to my daughter during the acute stage of her illness.

During this period she alternated from having episodes where screaming, yelling, anger and fear were the norm to not communicating at all. What had happened to our lovely daughter? Our youngest had now entered puberty but still had a child-like personality akin to a real life Peter Pan. But this new behaviour was totally foreign. How much was of our own making? How much was due to some other situation, unknown to us?

Why did the anger towards me appear the most violent? I felt powerless and couldn't fathom the fear and rejection I was getting from my own daughter. I was deeply upset. My own sense of self-worth and self-esteem had also taken a big hit.

I should mention here that during this time I found it was very helpful to talk to other parents and hear about their situation. I learnt of one sufferer, whom my daughter had befriended and was appalled to learn that she had been suffering from the illness for a total of 7 years.

I was at my wit's end one night when my

daughter's behaviour was out of control and I called the father of this sufferer for advice. I was most grateful for the reassurance received in calming the situation and getting over what was clearly a very stressful situation for my daughter.

I also learnt that a father tends to become the target for much of the anger. I think much of this has to do with how we are conditioned in our gender roles from an early age. I think it is also related to power relationships and how the sufferer perceives the parent/child relationship and particularly her own ability to express herself and make important decisions.

Of course, all of this would change when we found the support our daughter needed to aid her recovery. It was very slow however, and it took many months to see even a gradual improvement. I think as my wife got more involved I tended to withdraw into my own world.

During this time our daughter stopped speaking to anyone other than her counsellor (except in anger) for a period of eight months. Time passed very slowly until one miraculous day our daughter started talking again and shortly after we were aware our daughter was on the path to recovery.

My daughter is now aged 20 and I am pleased to say she is 'recovered' and our relationship has vastly improved since the dark days when the anorexia had her in its grip. We respect each other and enjoy each other's company.

I now say things to her in fun that I would never have said when she was ill. Although many of the questions remain unanswered it probably serves little purpose in thinking "how would I have acted if I had my time over again?" I have considered that this was something that was going to happen to her at some time in her life and it was fortunate we were there to support her when it happened.

If asked "what would I do differently?" my

answer would be something like this:

- I would want to understand the illness is very serious, life threatening and potentially very destructive to families;
- I would acknowledge an eating disorder is a mental health problem and needs specialist treatment and advice; and seek out the people who can assist the child in addressing the fundamental issues, not just expecting a 'quick fix', such as a naso-gastric tube to regain some lost weight;
- Be totally compassionate and understanding to the child and her needs (e.g. I wish from the start I was able to give a stress-free environment, awareness of the sensitivities now apparent in my daughter's mind and what is more likely to help her cope etc);
- I would not try to argue with or resist someone with an eating disorder as this, for me, was counterproductive. I needed to be firm and unequivocal in setting the boundaries, but also mindful of the sufferer's boundaries that can be at the heart of her issues;
- Working with my partner was vital in assisting the recovery.

# EDV Support Services

As we mentioned earlier, changes have been made to next year's schedule and location of some of EDV support Groups. The moves have been in response to feedback from support group attendees and convenors and we have tried to be mindful of the needs of all different support groups' needs.

## Inner Eastern Groups moving to EDV office in Glen Iris

Now that refurbishments at our office are complete, support groups that were held at The Uniting Centre, Sorrell Street, East Malvern are moving back to the EDV office at 1513 High Street, Glen Iris.

Below are the dates and groups that are to be held at the EDV office.

**Recovery Information and Support Groups** (open to persons with an eating disorder who have already taken the first steps towards recovery)

Fortnightly on Monday evenings:

Feb 2nd and 16th	Aug 3rd and 17th
March 2nd and 16th	Sept 7th and 21st
April 6th and 20th	Oct 5th and 19th
May 4th and 18th	Nov 2nd and 16th
June 1st and 15th	Dec 7th
July 6th and 20th	

**Family and Friends Support Group** (open ONLY to family members and friends of a person experiencing an eating disorder)

Monthly on Monday evenings:

Feb 23rd	July 27th
March 23rd	August 24th
April 27th	Sept 28th
May 25th	Oct 26th
June 22nd	Nov 23rd

**Combined Support Groups** (for people recovering from an eating disorder and family and friends)

Feb 9th	Sept 14th
May 11th	Nov 9th
July 13th	Dec 14th

## Collingwood Support Groups moving to East Melbourne

The Recovery and Combined Support Groups that have previously been held in Collingwood have now been relocated to 21 Lansdowne St East Melbourne.

Below are the dates for 2009

**Recovery Information and Support Groups** (open to persons with an eating disorder who have already taken the first steps towards recovery)

Feb 4th	Aug 5th
March 4th	Sept 2nd
April 1st	Oct 14th
May 13th	Nov 11th
June 10th	Dec 9th
July 8th	

**Combined Support Groups** (for people recovering from an eating disorder and family and friends)

Feb 18th	July 22nd
March 18th	August 19th
April 15th	Sept 16th
May 27th	Oct 28th
June 24th	Nov 25th

## Rural and Regional Support Groups

- **Leongatha** Support Group runs every first and third Thursday of the month in school terms. Contact Judy on 5674 3105.
- **La Trobe Valley** Family and Friends Support Group meets on a four-weekly basis. Contact Liz Jones on 5171 1407 or Julie Martin on 5127 9100.
- **NEADS** meets every second Wednesday of the month in Watsonia Neighborhood House. Contact Jacinta on 0409 588 551.
- **Ballarat** Support Group meets on the second Thursday of every month. Contact Nola Kervaree 5320 3635, Email: NolaK@bhs.org.au
- **Geelong** Group runs on the last Monday of each month at the Geelong Clinic. Contact Dr. Ross King on 5227 2781.
- **Albury Wodonga (ACORN)** Group, for Families and Carers of people with an eating disorder. Contact acornsupport@optusnet.com.au

## ENJOYED THIS NEWSLETTER?

If you enjoyed this issue of Spread Your Wings, you may like to become an EDV member and receive several issues per year.

Your support also helps us advocate for improved services for people with eating disorders. It help us raise our community profile, run our Helpline and support services, inform and educate the community and change the way body image and eating disorders are portrayed in the media.

Membership includes annual subscription to EDV newsletter, library borrowing card, voting rights at the AGM and reduced rates of entry to EDV events.

### EDV Membership Form – Tax Invoice

Complete the form below and mail it to:  
EDV, 1513 High Street, Glen Iris Vic 3146  
(All information is for EDV records only)

Surname: .....

Given Name:.....

Address: .....

..... Post Code: .....

Phone: (H)..... (W) .....

e-mail:.....

Do you wish to be contacted by e-mail about EDV news and events?

Yes  No

What is your interest in EDV?

Professional  Personal  Student

### Membership Subscription

In signing this form I understand that I am responsible for returning or replacing any items (books, videos, etc) that I borrow from EDV.

Date .....Signature: .....

All memberships and subscriptions are valid for 12 months from date of subscription. 10% GST included. ABN 24 010 832 192

- Individual/Family \$44.00
- Individual/Family Concession \$27.50
- Professional/Organisation \$55.00

**Membership** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Donation** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- My cheque/money order payable to EDV is enclosed OR
- Please charge my credit card:

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date ...../.....  Visa  Mastercard

Cardholder's Name (caps) .....

Cardholder's signature: .....

Amount \$ .....

### EDV wouldn't exist without its volunteers.

Please send me more information about:

- Volunteering for the EDV
- Becoming a member of the Board of Directors

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

EDV is a charitable organisation, and a Deductible Gift Recipient. All donations, major gifts and bequests will be used to support the direct services of EDV.

### Key areas of expenditure for funds donated:

- Eating Disorders Helpline
- Chatroom and Messageboard costs
- Eating disorders community education program
- Support for EDV volunteer training program
- Special projects

**Are donations tax deductible?** Yes (\$2 or more)

**Will I receive a receipt for my donation?** Yes, all donations of \$2 or more will be receipted. Donations of \$1,000 or more will be acknowledged in our newsletter and on our website (unless otherwise requested).

There are many ways to donate - select your donation method below.

### Donate Online

Donate through the "OurCommunity" secure online donations service. Donating online ensures 100% of your donation reaches EDV (less normal bank fees). OurCommunity takes no commission or fee for this service. Follow the link at [www.eatingdisorders.org.au](http://www.eatingdisorders.org.au).

### Donate by Phone

Call 03 9885 0318 / 1300 550 236 with your credit card details.

### Donate by Fax or Mail

Complete and fax this page to: 03 9885 1153; or mail to EDV, 1513 High St, Glen Iris VIC 3146

Surname: .....

Given Name:.....

Address: .....

..... Post Code: .....

Phone: (H)..... (W) .....

e-mail:.....

My donation: \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- My cheque/money order payable to EDV is enclosed OR
- Please charge my credit card:

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date ...../.....  Visa  Mastercard

Cardholder's Name (caps) .....

Cardholder's signature: .....

**Donating regularly can be an easy and effective way of supporting the EDV with minimal impact on your budget.**

Please send me more information about:

- Making a bequest
- Becoming a monthly/annual donor