

Gut Intuition: A Curriculum Designed to Help Adolescents Develop a Healthy Relationship with Food Through Intuitive Eating

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Background

- Society promotes an unrealistic, thin body ideal. Consequently, teens:
 - Feel pressure to conform.
 - Experiment w/ unhealthy means of weight control.
 - Develop disordered eating behaviors & body image concerns.
- Dieting leads to:
 - Unhealthy weight control behaviors.
 - Weight gain over time.
- A rising interest in separating the concepts of weight and health encourages:
 - Shifting focus away from weight.
 - Supporting a positive attitude toward body, food, & movement.

Project Objective

To design a 1-hour curriculum based on intuitive eating (IE) that instills in adolescents the knowledge & skills to allow for a flexible, positive relationship with their bodies and with food, despite external influences.

10 Principles of Intuitive Eating



Carlenefigments.wordpress.com

Workshops at Garfield High School

Intuitive Eating

- Non-diet approach to nutrition
- Characterized by:
 - Eating for physical rather than emotional reasons.
 - Awareness of hunger/fullness cues.
 - Respect for & acceptance of one's body.
- Removes "good"/"bad" labels from food
- Encourages flexible relationship w/ food
- Studies suggest:
 - When practicing IE, individuals demonstrate a preference toward and consume more nutritious foods.
 - A positive correlation between self-compassion and IE.
 - Increased body acceptance with IE.

Structure & Content

An Intuitive Eating workshop series was conducted in the Teen Health Center at Garfield High School as part of this project.

Objective: to better understand adolescent perspectives on diet culture and negative influences related to food and body image.

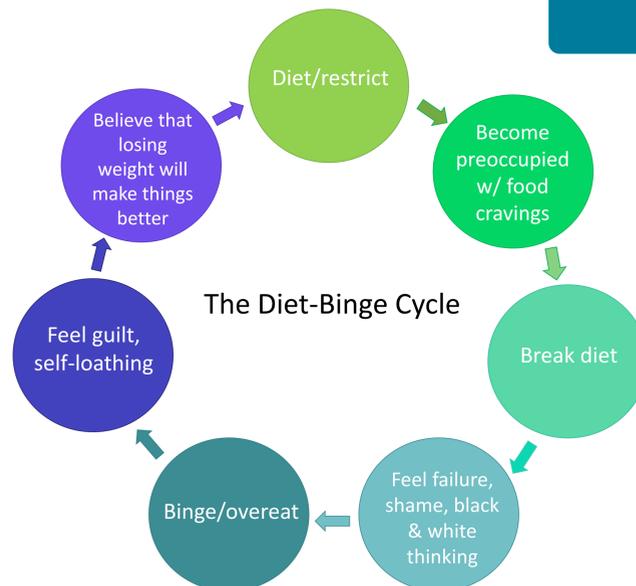
- 4 x 30- minute lunch sessions
- Motivational Interviewing approach
- Use of educational resources such as Diet/Binge cycle, Hunger-Fullness Scale, & 8-Hungers
- Incentives: gift card and weekly snacks
- Take-home resource booklet provided
- Pre- and post-evaluations collected

"I (like a lot of people) have experienced the diet/binge cycle and was hoping that I could learn a thing or two to avoid it."



"To have a healthy relationship with food means not putting a 'good' or 'bad' label on any food because all foods can fit into a healthy diet."

Educational Resources Used



The Hunger-Fullness Scale



1-Hour Intuitive Eating Curriculum

Title

Gut Intuition: Bringing our Minds and Bodies Back to the Basics with Food

Learning Goals and Objectives

Students will:

- Engage with an alternative to the diet mentality.
- Think critically about harmful messages promoting dieting and unrealistic body ideals.
- Reflect on food as a source of enjoyment and nourishment for their bodies.

Curriculum Outline

- Anchor:** Connect topic with learner's prior knowledge.
 - Food is fuel for our bodies & a source of enjoyment.
- Add:** Emphasize new and vital information.
 - Outline intuitive eating and its 10 principles.
- Apply:** Use a variety of activities to appeal to different learning styles to cement learning of the content.
 - Put the intuitive eating principles into practice.
- Away:** Send learners home with a worksheet to guide application of concepts in their own lives.
 - What do small changes look like in your life?

Lessons Learned

Consideration for future, similar endeavors:

- Market workshop as *separate* sessions, rather than as a series of sessions.
- Set small, realistic learning objectives for each session and tie discussions back to those.
- Advertise incentives to increase participation.
- Come with a prepared plan for a variety of scenarios, i.e. 1 student vs. 10 students.