

Summary Policy for the Prevention, Identification and Action on Disordered Eating CAT

DanceEast CAT is committed to creating a positive and supportive environment where students can develop a healthy relationship with food, exercise and their bodies. Our approach is based on early support, open communication and evidence-informed practice.

Prevention

We aim to promote healthy training habits by:

- Creating an environment where students feel comfortable asking for help.
- Providing staff with regular training and up-to-date knowledge of eating disorders and Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (RED-S).
- Offering students and families information about nutrition, wellbeing and sustainable training practices.
- Ensuring that all staff communicate consistent and supportive messages around food, body image and health.

The CAT Interim Manager is the nominated point of contact for any wellbeing concerns.

Recognising Concerns

Concerns may be identified through student conversations, observations from staff or families, or through the CAT wellbeing monitoring process.

No single behaviour automatically indicates an eating disorder. Instead, we look for patterns of behaviour or changes in physical health, energy levels, mood or training capacity that may suggest a student would benefit from additional support.

How we will respond

If concerns arise, our priority is always the student's wellbeing.
The CAT Team will:

- Speak with the student in a supportive and confidential way.
- Involve parents/carers where appropriate.

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- Signpost or refer families to qualified healthcare professionals when specialist support is needed.
- Continue to provide information and ongoing support throughout the process.

Students experiencing difficulties will never be blamed or punished. Our aim is to work alongside students and families to promote recovery and safe participation in dance. If a healthcare professional advises that a student should not participate fully in training, or if we have concerns about their safety, we may request medical confirmation before returning to full physical activity.

What to do if you are worried

If you are concerned about yourself or another student, please speak to a member of the CAT Team as soon as possible. Early conversations allow us to provide the right support at the right time.

Signs that may prompt further support

The CAT Team uses a wellbeing "flag" system to help identify students who may benefit from additional support. These signs are not intended to diagnose an eating disorder but to encourage timely conversations and, where appropriate, referral to healthcare professionals.

Red Flags

- 🚩 Student seeks help for themselves
- 🚩 A friend, staff or family member has expressed major concern regarding weight change or eating behaviour
- 🚩 Evidence of self-induced vomiting, pharmacological abuse or compulsive over-eating
- 🚩 Drastic or sudden weight change
- 🚩 Missing three or more consecutive periods in post-menarche girls (secondary amenorrhea), or not having reached menarche by age 15 (primary amenorrhea)
- 🚩 Fine hair growth (lanugo)
- 🚩 Diagnosed with stress fracture(s)
- 🚩 Experiences major physical symptoms or problems related to disordered eating (e.g. fainting, collapsing)
- 🚩 Excessive exercising inside and outside the CAT, or exercising under abnormal circumstances (e.g. when injured; in secret in their room)

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- 🚩 Social Media usage: excessive engagement with social media content that promotes unhealthy body standards or extreme diets. Use of weight-control apps: The use of apps or devices that track calories, weight, or exercise obsessively.

Yellow Flags

- 🚩 Two or more friends or staff members have expressed some concern regarding weight change or eating behaviour
- 🚩 Experiences several minor physical symptoms or problems related to disordered eating (e.g. sleep problems, dizziness)
- 🚩 Recurrent injury or illness
- 🚩 Secretive or evasive around food (e.g. repeatedly saying they "have already eaten")
- 🚩 Sudden changes in eating behaviours and patterns (e.g. becoming vegetarian, vegan, fussier about which foods they eat, new intolerances) A sudden and strict focus on "clean" or "healthy" eating, where the individual becomes increasingly restrictive and avoids foods deemed "unhealthy,"
- 🚩 Covers body and wears baggy clothing wherever possible. The dancer may say that they are always cold, and perhaps has discoloured or swollen hands and feet
- 🚩 Visits the toilet each time they have eaten
- 🚩 Lack of growth and/or sexual maturation
- 🚩 Dry, pale, and/or discoloured hair and skin
- 🚩 Poor teeth and raw knuckles (a result of self-induced vomiting)
- 🚩 Gets angry or distressed when asked about eating problems
- 🚩 Repeatedly displays failing concentration and fatigue in class
- 🚩 Avoids social interactions and/or otherwise changed in personality
- 🚩 Avoids screening and/or other physical tests and assessment