

Eating Disorder Safe principles: Whole-of-community approaches to do no harm in relation to eating disorders, disordered eating and body image distress

Section 3

Eating Disorder Safe How-To Guides Guidance for communicators, media and relevant platforms

Communicators, media and relevant platforms

The Eating Disorder Safe principles are aimed at changing social norms about health, food, mind and body on a wide scale, in the interests of eating disorder prevention and risk reduction. When considering actions for the communications, media, and social media sectors, we are addressing those who shape public discourse and influence societal attitudes. This goes well beyond coverage of eating disorders.

The suggested actions in this How-To Guide are relevant to:

- Journalists and reporters in print, broadcast, and online media
- Editors and content managers in news organisations and media outlets
- Social media managers and strategists across various platforms
- Influencers and content creators on social media
- Communication directors and public relations professionals in corporate and non-profit sectors
- Advertising and marketing professionals
- Organisational leaders and decision-makers in media and social media companies
- Media educators and trainers

If the Eating Disorder Safe concept is new to you or your team, we recommend starting with a focused approach. Consider organising a workshop or a training session to introduce one principle at a time. You could choose to run a series of stories or a campaign focused on one of the principles and build your internal expertise and external networks in that space. Once you feel confident in implementing one area, you can expand your efforts to incorporate additional principles.

Alternatively, you may choose to adopt a comprehensive approach, aligning efforts to target multiple principles simultaneously. You could create editorial guidelines or social media strategies that align with these principles. Coordinating actions across different principles can help create a more cohesive and impactful approach to building safer social norms.

If you do implement the Eating Disorder Safe principles in a communications or media context, NEDC would love to hear about it! Submit your case study to nationalstrategy@nedc.com.au, or contact us if you would like to test your ideas with a member of the team.

Getting started with Eating Disorder Safe actions

As a communicator or media professional, the stories and content you create shape public perception. In the context of busy news cycles and packed media schedules, you may want to choose a couple of simple steps to start making positive changes without a significant time investment. We suggest these two quick wins because they are easy to integrate into your work and can help promote a more inclusive and respectful narrative.

Quick Wins:

1. Use Inclusive Language and Imagery

Action: Ensure all content uses size-inclusive, non-stigmatising language and imagery.

Why? Creating respectful and supportive media narratives helps to reduce stigma and promote body positivity.

How? Develop a style guide for your team that outlines the use of inclusive language and imagery in all content. Refer to the [Mindframe Guidelines](#) for key considerations. Seek out and use stock images of diverse bodies from diverse content creators ([example here](#)).

2. Promote Educational Content on Body Diversity

Action: Feature content that informs audiences about body diversity, such as normalising the fact that bodies change as they age, or that most bodies don't "snap back" after delivering a baby, or that weight gain is necessary for healthy child and adolescent development.

Why? Highlighting diverse body types and real, normal body experiences raises awareness and fosters greater acceptance among the community of bodies that differ from dominant beauty standards.

How? Create a content calendar that includes regular features on stories that highlight diverse bodies and normalise body experiences. Seek expert input from the [NEDC](#), [Butterfly Foundation](#), [InsideOut Institute](#), [Australian Eating Disorder Research and Translation Centre](#), [Australia and New Zealand Academy for Eating Disorders](#), [Eating Disorders Neurodiversity Australia](#) or [the Embrace Collective](#).

Ready to make a bigger impact? Turn the page for more tips and strategies for safe, inclusive and impactful storytelling and larger structural changes your media organisation or platform can make to be part of the Eating Disorder Safe movement.

Eating Disorder Safe: Health

Principle	<p>Families are supported to experience and model positive relationships with food, bodies and movement from the earliest opportunity and across the lifespan.</p>
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop content to highlight positive relationships with food, body and movement. Focus on stories that celebrate diverse body types and health practices. • Ensure that all media content uses language that is inclusive, respectful, and free from stigma. Avoid terms that promote diet culture or unrealistic body standards. Refer to Guidelines on reporting and portrayal of eating disorders: A Mindframe resource for communicators for more information. • Include stories and perspectives from people of various sizes, shapes, ages, abilities, and cultural backgrounds. Highlight the importance of positive relationships with food and body across different communities. • Shift the focus of health-related content from weight loss to physical and mental health and overall wellbeing. Emphasise the benefits of balanced nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and social connections. • Work with dietitians, nutritionists, mental health professionals, exercise physiologists, fitness professionals, and diverse community members to ensure that health and wellbeing content is accurate and promotes health behaviours. Use community insights to create supportive messaging which avoids shame and blame and is culturally safe and relevant. • Actively challenge and debunk stereotypes and myths about food, bodies, and movement. Use media platforms to educate the public about the dangers of diet culture and weight stigma. • Feature role models who exemplify healthy relationships with food, body and movement. Use their stories to inspire and educate audiences. • Create and distribute materials that teach families how to model positive behaviours related to food and body image. Include practical tips and strategies for parents and caregivers. • Ensure that advertisements on media platforms promote healthy and positive messages about food and body image. Avoid promoting products that contribute to diet culture or unhealthy behaviours.

Eating Disorder Safe: Health

Principle	The unique relationships between eating, chronic illness, disability and experiences of healthcare are acknowledged and addressed.
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work on enacting this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share stories that explore the experiences of people with chronic illness or disability, focusing on their relationships with food, body image and healthcare. Ensure that these stories highlight the complexity and diversity of their experiences. • Use language that is respectful and inclusive when discussing chronic illness, disability, and eating habits. Avoid stigmatising terms and emphasise the individuality and dignity of each person. Ask the person whether they prefer person-first or identity-first language and uphold their preferences. • Develop content that emphasises holistic health approaches, recognising the interconnectedness of physical health, mental health, and nutrition. Highlight strategies that support overall physical and mental health and wellbeing for people with chronic illness or disability. • Create awareness about the barriers that individuals with chronic illnesses and disabilities face in accessing healthcare and maintaining positive relationships with food and body. Highlight the need to improve accessibility and inclusivity in healthcare settings. • Offer practical tips and resources for people with chronic illness or disability to help them navigate healthcare and their relationships with food and body. Include information on accessible nutrition, adaptive cooking techniques, and finding supportive healthcare providers. • Actively work to challenge and debunk stereotypes and misconceptions about chronic illness, disability, and eating challenges. Use your platform to promote accurate, nuanced portrayals. • Regularly assess the impact of your content on public perceptions and attitudes towards chronic illness, disability, and eating challenges. Use feedback and data to improve the inclusivity and accuracy of your reporting.

Eating Disorder Safe: Health

Principle	Communications use size-inclusive, non-stigmatising language and imagery in respect of health, food, minds and bodies.
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and implement guidelines that mandate the use of size-inclusive, non-stigmatising language and imagery in all communications. Ensure these guidelines are accessible to all staff and regularly updated. • Offer regular training sessions for all staff on the importance of size-inclusive, non-stigmatising language and imagery. • Review current content, including articles, advertisements, and social media posts, to identify and revise any non-inclusive or stigmatising language and imagery. Replace them with respectful, inclusive alternatives, or attach a notice that your organisation no longer uses these terms. • Ensure that all visual content, such as photos and illustrations, represents a diverse range of body sizes, shapes, abilities, and ethnicities. Avoid images that perpetuate stereotypes or stigmatise certain body types. • Develop editorial policies that prioritise size-inclusive, non-stigmatising content. Ensure all contributors are aware of and adhere to these policies. • Feature stories and perspectives from people of various sizes, shapes, and backgrounds. Highlight their experiences and expertise in discussions about health, food, minds, and bodies. • Involve the community in your efforts to promote size-inclusive, non-stigmatising content. Seek feedback and input from diverse groups to ensure your messaging resonates and is respectful. • Work with advertisers to ensure that ads on your platforms use size-inclusive, non-stigmatising language and imagery. Avoid advertising products or services that promote diet culture or unhelpful idealised body standards. • Regularly assess the impact of your content on audiences' perceptions and attitudes. Use feedback and data to make continuous improvements to your communications strategies. • Create a work environment that supports and values size diversity among your staff. Encourage a culture of respect and inclusivity within your organisation.

Eating Disorder Safe: Health

Principle	<p>People are supported to experience movement and exercise in ways that promote their overall wellbeing, including their emotions, social connections, and physical and mental health.</p>
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that language and imagery in your content represent people of all sizes, ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Avoid focusing solely on traditional fitness ideals and instead promote movement for overall wellbeing. • Partner with fitness professionals and mental health professionals to create content that emphasises the holistic benefits of exercise. Ensure information is accurate and supports physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing. • Feature stories of people who have experienced positive changes in their lives through movement. Highlight how exercise has improved their mental health, social connections, and overall happiness. • Promote community-based exercise initiatives, such as local walking groups, community sports leagues, and dance classes. Emphasise the social benefits of participating in group activities. • Develop content that is accessible to all, including tutorials and tips for people with varying levels of mobility and fitness. Ensure that everyone feels encouraged to move in ways that are comfortable and enjoyable for them. • Produce content that explains the connection between physical activity and mental health. Share information on how movement can reduce stress, improve mood, and enhance cognitive function. • Use your platform to advocate for policies that create safe and accessible spaces for physical activity. Promote the development of parks, playgrounds, and community centres that are inclusive of all abilities. • Launch campaigns that encourage people to view movement as a celebration of what their bodies can do, rather than a means to change their appearance. Promote the idea that all forms of movement are valuable. • Create content that supports movement across the lifespan: activities and advice for children, teens, adults, and seniors to help everyone find ways to stay active.

Eating Disorder Safe: Food

Principle	<p>Neutral language is used to describe food and its properties and food messaging is appropriate for its audience.</p>
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and implement guidelines for using neutral, non-stigmatising language when describing food and its properties. Ensure these guidelines are accessible to all staff and regularly reviewed. • Provide regular training sessions for staff on the importance of using neutral language in food-related content. Include examples of neutral language and common pitfalls to avoid. • Emphasise variety and balance rather than categorising foods as "good" or "bad." Highlight the role of different foods in a balanced diet without moral judgment. • Include content that celebrates a wide range of cultural food practices and dietary preferences. Highlight the nutritional and social benefits of diverse cuisines and food traditions. • Ensure food messaging is appropriate for the target audience. Consider factors such as age, cultural background, health conditions, and personal preferences. • Refrain from using sensational or alarmist language when discussing food and nutrition. Focus on evidence-based information and practical advice. • When discussing the nutritional properties of foods, avoid language that stigmatises certain foods or eating habits. Present information in a way that encourages informed choices and acknowledges systemic barriers. • Ensure that images accompanying food-related content are inclusive and representative of diverse populations. Avoid images that promote unrealistic body standards or reinforce stereotypes in connection to food. • Seek feedback from diverse community groups to ensure that food messaging is respectful and relevant. Use this input to continually improve the inclusivity of your content. • Promote content that encourages positive relationships with food, such as intuitive eating, enjoyment of meals, and social aspects of dining. Avoid messaging that promotes restrictive or punitive attitudes towards eating.

Eating Disorder Safe: Food

Principle	<p>Dietary advice is given in a weight neutral, culturally and developmentally appropriate manner, by people with appropriate qualifications and experience according to their scope of practice.</p>
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work on enacting this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all dietary advice and content related to nutrition is provided by qualified professionals such as dietitians and nutritionists. Clearly state their qualifications to build trust and credibility. • Reconsider coverage that implies that one person’s way of eating is accessible or appropriate for other people (e.g., ‘day on a plate’). • Reconsider publishing calorie/kilojoule content alongside recipes. • Create and adhere to guidelines for providing dietary advice that emphasise weight-neutral, culturally, and developmentally appropriate content. Regularly review them to ensure they align with the latest research and best practices. • Include content that respects and celebrates diverse cultural dietary practices. Work with cultural experts to ensure that dietary advice is relevant and respectful of different cultural traditions and preferences. • Provide dietary advice that is appropriate for different developmental stages, from children to older adults. Ensure that content is relevant to the specific nutritional needs of each age group and explained in terms that they can fully comprehend – seek advice from child development experts as needed. • Emphasise a holistic approach to nutrition that considers physical health, mental wellbeing, and social factors. Encourage balanced, flexible eating habits that promote overall health and wellbeing. • Refrain from using sensational or fear-based messaging about food and nutrition. Focus on evidence-based information and practical advice. • Collect feedback from your audience to ensure dietary advice is meeting their needs and expectations. Use this feedback to continually improve your content. • Ensure that advertisements related to food and nutrition on your platforms promote safe, weight-neutral messages. Avoid ads that endorse fad diets or weight-loss products.

Eating Disorder Safe: Food

Principle	Food security is addressed to support safe relationships with food and eating at individual and population levels.
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create content that raises awareness about food security issues and their impact on mental health and eating. Emphasise the connection between food insecurity and the risk of eating disorders. • Showcase community programs and initiatives that aim to improve food security. Highlight the positive impact of these programs on individuals and communities and encourage audience engagement and support. • Work with nutritionists, social workers, and public health experts to provide accurate information on the relationship between food security and eating disorders. Ensure that your content is evidence-based and community-informed. • Include stories and perspectives from people who have experienced food insecurity and its impact on their relationship with food. Use these stories to humanize the issue and illustrate its complexity. • Advocate for solutions to food insecurity that address the root causes, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to food, housing, education and healthcare. Emphasise the need for systemic changes to improve food security at both individual and population levels. • Ensure your content uses inclusive language and imagery that respects the dignity of those experiencing food insecurity. Avoid stigmatising or blaming language. • Create public awareness campaigns that highlight the importance of food security in preventing eating disorders. Use these campaigns to educate the public about the need for equitable access to nourishing food. • Share success stories of interventions that have effectively improved food security and reduced the risk of eating disorders. Use these examples to inspire and inform future efforts. • Highlight and support movements that advocate for food justice and equitable access to nourishing food.

Eating Disorder Safe: Food

Principle	<p>Diet culture and its far-reaching consequences are understood, reduced and ultimately eliminated, with actions based on contemporary evidence.</p>
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create content that educates your audience about diet culture, its origins, and its harmful effects on physical and mental health. Use evidence-based information to debunk myths and misconceptions. • Develop campaigns and content that celebrate body diversity and promote body esteem or acceptance. Highlight stories and images of people of all sizes, shapes, and abilities living healthy, fulfilling lives. • Avoid language that reinforces diet culture, such as terms that promote weight loss, thinness, or food moralization. Use neutral, respectful language that focuses on physical and mental health and wellbeing rather than appearance. • Actively challenge stereotypes and assumptions about body size and health. Use your platform to educate your audience about the complexities of health and the many factors that contribute to it. • Share stories and research about the negative impacts of diet culture on mental health, self-esteem, and eating behaviours. Use these narratives to build empathy and understanding. • Offer content that provides practical advice on developing a positive relationship with food and body image. Include tips for intuitive or responsive eating, self-care, and stress management. • Regularly review your content to ensure it does not inadvertently promote diet culture. Make necessary revisions to align with best practice. • Involve your audience in conversations about diet culture and its effects. Encourage them to share their experiences and perspectives, and use this feedback to inform your content. • Advocate for policies that reduce the influence of diet culture, such as regulations on diet product advertising and initiatives that promote body diversity in media. • Partner with conscious content creators who promote body acceptance and wellbeing. Use their platforms to expand your reach and amplify your message.

Eating Disorder Safe: Mind

Principle	Mental health stigma and its harms in relation to health, food, mind and body are of concern and must be eliminated.
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create content that educates your audience about mental health conditions, their impact on health, food, mind, and body, and the importance of seeking help. Use evidence-based information to reduce misconceptions and stigma. • Ensure all content uses language that is respectful and inclusive of people with mental health conditions. Avoid terms that are stigmatising or that reinforce negative stereotypes. • Provide information about mental health resources, including hotlines, support groups, and counselling services. Encourage your audience to seek help if they need it. • Actively challenge stereotypes about mental health in your content. Use your platform to educate the public about the realities of living with mental health conditions and the importance of compassionate support. • Ensure that content about health, food, mind, and body includes considerations of mental health. Highlight the interconnectedness of physical and mental wellbeing. • Emphasise the importance of a holistic approach to health that includes mental, social, emotional, and physical wellbeing. Highlight practices that support overall health, such as mindfulness, movement, and balanced nutrition.

Eating Disorder Safe: Mind

Principle	The bidirectional relationship between food, eating and mental health is recognised, within the context of individual, social, cultural and economic factors.
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create content that educates your audience about the relationships between food, eating, and mental health. Highlight how mental health can affect eating behaviours and how diet can impact mental wellbeing. • Feature stories from diverse individuals who share their experiences with the interplay between food, eating, and mental health. Include perspectives from various cultural, social, and economic backgrounds. • Ensure that all content uses language that is inclusive and sensitive to different cultural and socioeconomic contexts. • Emphasise the importance of a holistic approach to health that integrates physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing. Highlight the role of balanced nutrition and intuitive or responsive eating in supporting mental health. • Create content that discusses the social determinants of health, such as access to nutritious food, economic stability, and social support. Highlight how these factors influence the relationship between food and mental health. • Highlight community programs and initiatives that address food security, provide mental health support, and promote positive relationships with food. Encourage your audience to get involved or support these programs. • Actively challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about mental health and eating behaviours. Use your platform to promote understanding and empathy.

Eating Disorder Safe: Body

Principle	Settings where people live, learn, work, play and receive help are inclusive and welcoming for people of all sizes, shapes, weights, genders, sexualities, cultures, neurotypes and abilities.
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and share stories that highlight inclusive environments in various settings, such as schools, workplaces, communities, and healthcare facilities. Showcase examples of inclusivity and the positive impacts they have on people's lives. • Ensure that all visual content reflects a diverse range of people. Use images that represent various body types, ages, abilities, genders, sexual orientations, and cultural backgrounds. • Highlight personal stories of people from diverse backgrounds who have thrived in inclusive settings. Use these stories to illustrate the importance of inclusivity and to inspire others. • Partner with organisations that advocate for diversity and inclusion. Work with them to create content that promotes inclusive practices and raises awareness about the importance of welcoming environments. • Ensure that all written and spoken content uses language that is inclusive and respectful of all people. Avoid terms that may be stigmatising or exclusive. • Advocate for the design of physical spaces that are accessible to everyone. Highlight examples of architecture, urban planning, service delivery, teaching methods that welcome and empower people of all identities. • Regularly review your content, seek feedback from diverse audiences and make necessary adjustments to improve inclusivity. • Involve people from diverse backgrounds in the creation and review of your content. Ensure their perspectives are represented, valued and fairly rewarded. • Use your platform to advocate for policies that promote inclusivity in schools, workplaces, healthcare settings, and communities. Highlight the need for systemic changes to support diverse populations.

Eating Disorder Safe: Body

Principle	Neutral language is used to describe bodies at all ages and stages of development, all sizes, shapes, abilities and ethnicities.
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create clear guidelines for using neutral, inclusive language when describing bodies. Ensure these guidelines are accessible to all staff and regularly reviewed and updated. • Provide regular training for all staff on the importance of using neutral language to describe bodies. Conduct audits of current content, including articles, advertisements, and social media posts, to identify and revise any instances of non-neutral or stigmatising language. Replace them with inclusive alternatives or attach a notice that your organisation no longer uses these terms. • Ensure that all visual content reflects the diversity of bodies in terms of age, size, shape, ability, and ethnicity. Use images that promote positive, inclusive representations of all body types. • Feature stories and perspectives from people of different ages, sizes, shapes, abilities, and ethnicities. Ensure that their experiences and voices are accurately and respectfully represented. • Avoid language that categorises or judges bodies based on societal standards or biases. Focus on describing physical characteristics neutrally and respectfully. • Involve community members and advocates in the creation and review of content. Seek their feedback to ensure language and imagery are respectful and inclusive. • Regularly monitor and evaluate your content to ensure it adheres to inclusive language guidelines. Use audience feedback and engagement metrics to make continuous improvements. • Offer resources and tools for your audience to learn about the importance of neutral language in describing bodies. Include articles, videos, and infographics that explain how language impacts perceptions and self-esteem. • Actively challenge and counteract stereotypes about bodies. Use your platform to educate the public about the diversity and natural variation of bodies.

Eating Disorder Safe: Body

Principle	Size, shape or weight are not used as a standalone measure of health or wellbeing, used as a measure of skill, aptitude or performance, or a barrier to education, employment or civic participation.
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer regular training for all staff on the importance of using holistic measures of physical and mental health and wellbeing rather than basing assumptions on weight. Include practical examples and exercises to reinforce these principles. • Develop content that emphasises a comprehensive approach to health and wellbeing, considering physical, mental, and emotional aspects. Avoid content that links health exclusively to body size or weight. • Ensure that all content uses inclusive language and imagery that respects and represents people of all sizes, shapes, and weights. Avoid images that reinforce stereotypes or promote unrealistic body standards. • Actively challenge and debunk stereotypes that link body size, shape, or weight to health, skill, aptitude, or performance. • Highlight role models from diverse backgrounds who excel in their fields regardless of their size, shape, or weight. Use their stories to inspire and educate your audience without sensationalising their weight (e.g. don't tell it as a 'triumph over adversity' story). • Advocate for policies in education, employment, and civic participation that focus on inclusivity and do not discriminate based on size, shape, or weight. Highlight organisations that successfully implement these policies. • Offer resources and tools for your audience to understand and promote inclusive practices. Include guides, articles, and videos that explain why size, shape, and weight should not be measures of ability or barriers to work and education. • Involve diverse community members in content creation and review processes. Ensure their voices are heard and their perspectives are included and fairly rewarded. • Use your platform to advocate for legal protections against discrimination based on size, shape, or weight.

Eating Disorder Safe: Body

Principle	Weight stigma and its consequences are of concern and must be eliminated.
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and enforce guidelines that prohibit weight-stigmatising language and imagery in all content. Ensure these guidelines are accessible to all staff and regularly updated. • Offer regular training sessions for all staff on the harmful effects of weight stigma and how to create inclusive, respectful content. • Develop and share content that promotes body esteem and celebrates body diversity. • Actively challenge and debunk stereotypes and myths about body size and health. Use your platform to promote accurate, evidence-based and community-informed information. • Regularly review your content to ensure it does not perpetuate weight stigma. Use audience feedback to make continuous improvements. • Launch campaigns that raise awareness about the harms of weight stigma and promote body acceptance. Use these campaigns to educate and inspire change. • Work with community organisations and advocacy groups to ensure your content reflects diverse perspectives and promotes inclusivity. • Highlight and support research on the impacts of weight stigma and advocate for policies that reduce stigma and promote inclusivity in healthcare, education, employment and other settings. • Provide resources for your audience on how to combat weight stigma and promote body acceptance in their communities. Include tips for fostering inclusive environments.

Eating Disorder Safe: Body

Principle	System-level drivers of eating disorder risk, for example institutional weight stigma, diet culture, medical and health professional weight bias, are addressed.
Putting it into practice	<p>Reform: How can our work contribute to changes which uphold this principle at a population level?</p> <p>Investment: What human, intellectual, community, material and financial resources are needed to enact this principle? How are we advocating for safety, equity and fairness? What are the costs of inaction?</p> <p>Leadership: Who will lead our work to enact this principle? How can we inspire others to take action within their sphere of influence? Who else should be at the table?</p> <p>Continuous feedback: How are we checking if our efforts in implementing this principle are working? Who needs to hear about our findings? How are we integrating them in a continuous improvement cycle?</p>
Suggested actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create content that educates your audience about the system-level drivers of eating disorder risk. Explain how institutional weight stigma, diet culture, and medical bias contribute to the development of eating disorders. • Partner with health professionals, researchers and lived experience experts to ensure your content is informed by the latest research on eating disorders. • Ensure that all content uses neutral, non-stigmatising language when discussing weight, health, and eating behaviours. Avoid language that reinforces diet culture or weight bias. • Create investigative pieces that explore systemic issues contributing to eating disorders, such as biased medical practices, societal pressures, and the influence of diet culture in media and advertising. • Share stories from a diverse range of people who have experienced eating disorders and the systemic factors that contributed to their struggles. Use these narratives to humanise the issue and illustrate the impact of systemic drivers. Adhere to safe reporting guidelines. • Actively challenge and debunk diet culture myths in your content. Promote messages that encourage balanced, sustainable approaches to eating and health. • Use your platform to advocate for policy changes that address systemic drivers of eating disorders. Support legislation and policies that promote body diversity, food security, and access to comprehensive healthcare. • Launch campaigns to raise awareness about the systemic drivers of eating disorders. Use these campaigns to educate the public and inspire collective action to address these issues. • Partner with advocacy organisations working to address eating disorder risk. Use your platform to amplify their messages and support their efforts to create systemic change.

A note on Harm Minimisation

The Eating Disorder Safe principles includes a sub-set of principles focused on harm minimisation, that is, adopting approaches to working with people who are already experiencing an eating disorder, disordered eating or body image distress in ways which do not exacerbate disordered cognitions, behaviours or other symptoms.

While these principles are not directly applicable to communications and media, a responsible approach to handling sensitive topics in relation to health, food, mind and body for people who are already unwell is advised.

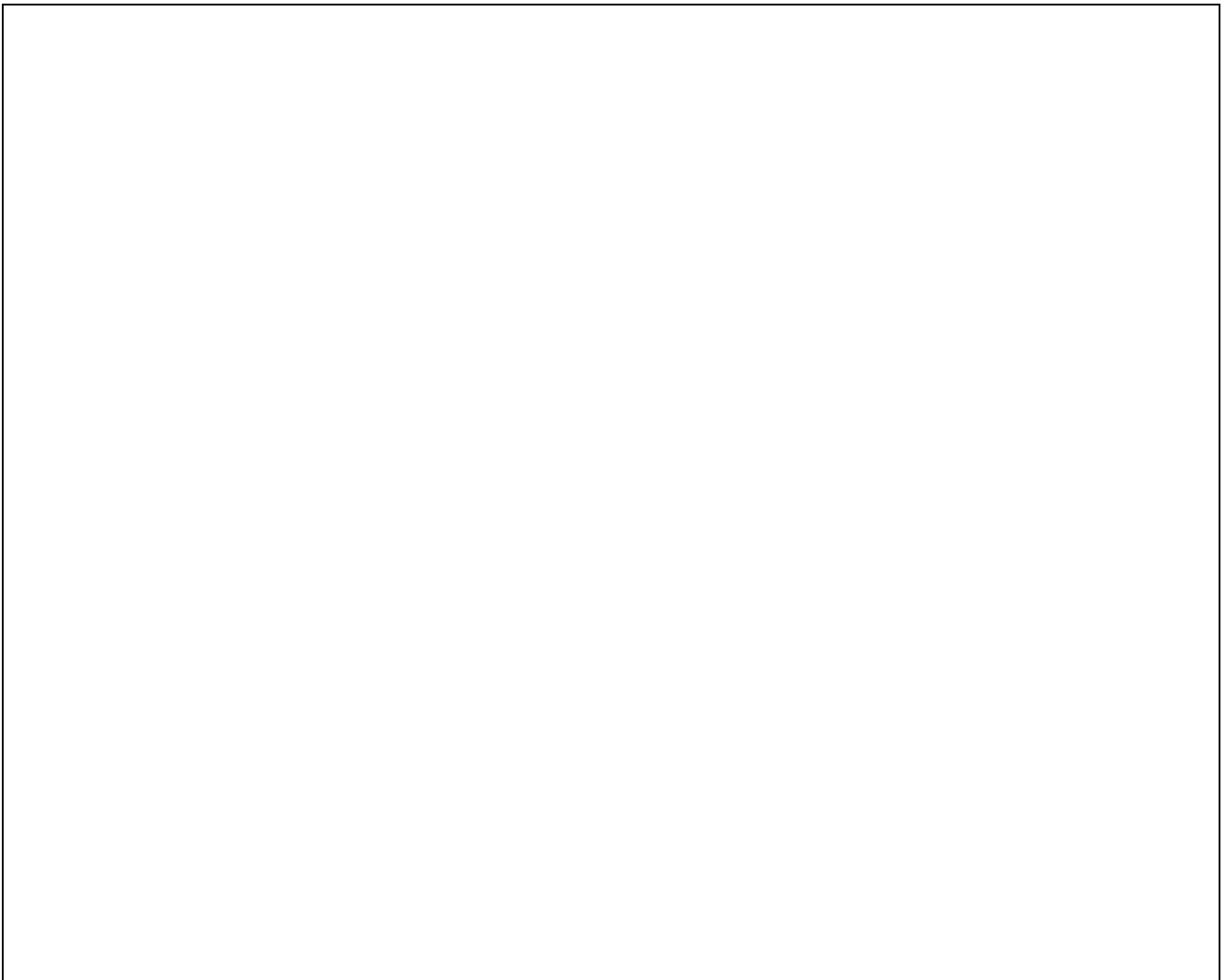
Refer to [Guidelines on reporting and portrayal of eating disorders: A Mindframe resource for communicators](#) for more information.

Next steps

Now that you've worked through all the examples in this How-To Guide, and possibly come up with a few of your own, it's time to start planning for action. Use the [Reflection Activity](#), [Self-check Tool](#) and an [Action Plan template](#) to develop your plan and then start practising.

Remember that making changes and learning new habits can take time, and that making mistakes will be a part of this. This is OK. You might choose an approach to handling mistakes as they occur, perhaps with your teammates, colleagues or a supervisor, so that you can support each other's learning without adding a sense of shame or blame.

The rest of this page is blank for you to jot down any other ideas.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write down their ideas or action plan.

Reflection activity, self-check tool and action plan

Reflection Activity

This activity is designed to help you engage in self-reflection regarding your relationships with health, food, mind and body, using the Eating Disorder Safe principles as a framework. The intent is to help get you thinking before you start developing your [Action Plan](#).

You may choose to complete this activity on your own, with a trusted friend or colleague, or as a family.

Note: the intent of this activity is not to delve into deep feelings of distress in relation to food, eating or body image. There is no requirement to undertake this activity if it doesn't feel right for you. If you do try this activity and find that it brings up troubling thoughts or feelings, please seek support from your care team or via [one of these Helplines](#).

If you want a quicker way to gauge your current level of Eating Disorder Safe practice, you can jump to the [Self-Check Tool](#).

Materials Needed:

- Paper or journal
- Pens or pencils
- A comfortable space for discussion if working in pairs or a group

Instructions:

1. Create an environment where everyone can sit together without distractions, or where you feel able to focus.
2. Provide each person with a piece of paper and a pen or pencil.
3. Briefly explain the purpose for the activity, for example:
 - "Today we're going to spend time thinking about our current relationships with health, food, minds and bodies. This will help us understand where we are now and where we want to be in the future."
4. Choose an Eating Disorder Safe principle to focus on. Read the principle aloud.
5. Allow some time for each person to go through these self-reflection questions and make any notes:
 - Where am I/are we at with this principle right now?
 - Where would I/we like to be a month or a year from now?
 - What concepts do I/we need to know more about?
 - Who can I/we learn from?
 - Who can I/we involve in these actions?
 - Who could lead the actions we take?
6. If working in pairs or a group, have a discussion for everyone to share reflections (only as much as they want to). You might like to use these prompts:
 - "What stood out to you as you answered these questions?"
 - "Did you notice any common themes or differences in our reflections?"
 - "What are some realistic steps we can take to move from where we are now to where we want to be?"
7. Based on the discussion, come up with a list of priorities, and add them to your [Action Plan](#).

Eating Disorder Safe Self-check tool

Use the information you have read on the previous pages, as well as any notes you have made, to run through this quick self-check tool to see where you or your organisation are up to in becoming Eating Disorder Safe. This isn't intended as a negative judgement if you're only just starting out. Rather, the purpose of this self-check is to see which areas might need more of your attention when you develop your Action Plan.

You could choose to keep a record of your results, and then re-do the self-check periodically to gauge your progress against each of the principles. You could then update your Action Plan, as you or your organisation gradually increase your level of confidence and range of approaches to being Eating Disorder Safe.

Date completed: _____ **Completed by:** _____

Principle	This is new to me/us	I/we do some of the suggested actions, or relevant equivalents	I/we do most of the suggested actions, or relevant equivalents
Health			
Families are supported to experience and model positive relationships with food, bodies and movement from the earliest opportunity and across the lifespan.			
The unique relationships between eating, chronic illness, disability and experiences of healthcare are acknowledged and addressed.			
Communications use size-inclusive, non-stigmatising language and imagery in respect of health, food, minds and bodies.			
People are supported to experience movement and exercise in ways that promote their overall wellbeing, including their emotions, social connections, and physical and mental health.			
Food			
Neutral language is used to describe food and its properties and food messaging is appropriate for its audience.			
Dietary advice is given in a weight neutral, culturally and developmentally appropriate manner, by people with appropriate qualifications and experience according to their scope of practice.			

Food security is addressed to support safe relationships with food and eating at individual and population levels.			
Diet culture and its far-reaching consequences are understood, reduced and ultimately eliminated, with actions based on contemporary evidence.			
Mind			
Mental health stigma and its harms in relation to health, food, mind and body are of concern and must be eliminated.			
The bidirectional relationship between food, eating and mental health is recognised, within the context of individual, social, cultural and economic factors.			
Body			
Settings where people live, learn, work, play and receive help are inclusive and welcoming for people of all sizes, shapes, weights, genders, sexualities, cultures, neurotypes and abilities.			
Neutral language is used to describe bodies at all ages and stages of development, all sizes, shapes, abilities and ethnicities.			
Size, shape or weight are not used as a standalone measure of health or wellbeing, used as a measure of skill, aptitude or performance, or a barrier to education, employment or civic participation.			
Weight stigma and its consequences are of concern and must be eliminated.			
System-level drivers of eating disorder risk, for example institutional weight stigma, diet culture, medical and health professional weight bias, are addressed.			
Harm Minimisation (where relevant)			
Alternatives to weight-focused activities and outcomes are prioritised as far as possible (e.g., other health, quality of life, performance, and wellbeing metrics).			
Recognising and responding to eating disorder warning signs and symptoms in all people and bodies is a responsibility of all people working in high-risk settings.			
Weight stigma has no place in the healthcare setting, no matter the condition being treated.			
Eating disorder risk is a consideration when making decisions around a person's health, care, learning, work or sports participation.			

Eating Disorder Safe Action Plan

Once you have read through the guidance material most relevant to your role and completed the self-check tool, this action plan template can help you define and prioritise the steps that you or your organisation will take to put the Eating Disorder Safe principles into practice.

We suggest you choose a number of principles to work on that is feasible within your setting and context. A family or an individual worker might choose to work on one principle at a time, whereas a large organisation might take a holistic approach to implementing all of the Eating Disorder Safe principles together.

If you would like advice on aligning your Eating Disorder Safe Action Plan within your other strategic or operational planning cycles, please contact info@nedc.com.au.

Date of plan: _____ **Plan prepared by:** _____ **Endorsed by:** _____

Our Eating Disorder Safe priorities

E.g. Focus on putting the Health principles into practice at home; Develop an ED Safe service charter; Address all weight stigma principles in our new policy; etc.

What actions will we take?	Who is responsible?	What help or resources do they need?	When will this be done?

What barriers might we encounter?	How will we address them?	Who is responsible?	What help or resources do they need?
E.g. Barriers might include feelings of resistance to change, financial barriers, time barriers, competing priorities, or lack of people-power.			

How will we know it's working?
E.g. Our family will feel less anxious about staying healthy; We will get positive client feedback about the ways that we support them to feel safe; Our policy will include tangible measures on weight stigma reduction; etc.

When will we check-in on our progress?	
Once we've achieved this priority, what do we think we will focus on next?	