INFORMATION ON EATING DISORDERS

Eating disorders are serious health problems that usually start in childhood or adolescence and affect both girls and boys. With early diagnosis, eating disorders are treatable with a combination of nutritional, medical, and therapeutic supports. Many adolescents feel increased social pressure about their appearance, and this can lead to eating disorders.

It is important to note that eating disorders are not diagnosed based on weight changes as much as behaviors, attitudes, and mindset. Symptoms may vary between males and females and in different age groups. Often, a young person with an eating disorder may not be aware that he/she has a problem or keeps the issues secret. Parents/guardians and family members are in a unique position to notice symptoms or behaviors that cause concern. Noting behaviors common to people with eating disorders may lead to early referral to the primary care provider. It is important for eating disorders to be treated by someone who specializes in this type of care.

More information on eating disorders can be found on the School Division’s website http://pwcs.edu Click on the Parents icon in the header and select Student Health & Wellness.

If you think your child may be showing signs of a possible eating disorder, please contact your primary health care provider, school nurse, or one of the resources listed below:

- Academy for Eating Disorders
  http://www.eatingdisorderhope.com/information/help-overcome-eating-disorders

- National Eating Disorders Association
  http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/

  Toll free, confidential Help Line: 1.800.931.2237

Additional resources may be found at:

- Virginia Department of Education