

# Parent–child eating disorder perceptions investigated

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Adolescents reported more severe eating disorder thoughts and beliefs than reported by parents. Credit: Amsurg Blog

Perth eating disorder specialists have uncovered a wide disparity in the reporting of eating disorder symptoms between parents and their children.

The study, recently published in the *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, utilised data from the HOPE (Helping to Outline Paediatric Eating Disorders) Project, a registry consisting of participants assessed at the Princess Margaret Hospital for Children Eating Disorders Program (PMH EDP) between 1996 and April 2013.

Dr Hunna Watson, Senior Research Psychologist at PMH EDP, was

interested in exploring parent-youth agreement in the reporting of [eating disorder](#) behaviours and cognitions.

Parents and youth were interviewed separately by experienced clinicians using the Eating Disorder Examination (EDE), to obtain data on eating disorder symptoms.

The EDE measures behavioural symptoms, such as self-induced vomiting, binge-eating, laxative and diuretic misuse, and intense exercise for weight control; as well as cognitive symptoms, such as eating concern, weight concern, shape concern and restraint, within the previous 28-day period.

The sample for the study was 619 parent-youth pairs of [children](#) (

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