

HARVARD RESEARCHER RECEIVES NEDA GRANT TO ADDRESS DISORDERED EATING IN THE PERINATAL PERIOD

NEDA Feeding Hope Fund Has Awarded Dr. Rachel Vanderkruik a \$125,000 Grant to Conduct a Pilot Project Focused on Pregnant Women, Body Image, & Eating Disorders

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, April 4, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) announced today that Dr. Rachel Vanderkruik, a Staff Psychologist at Massachusetts General Hospital and a member of the Faculty at Harvard Medical School, has been awarded a \$125,000 NEDA Feeding Hope Fund grant. The grant will cover further clinical research on pregnancy, post-partum, and the struggle women experience with body changes that can lead to body dissatisfaction and the risk of disordered eating or relapse of an eating disorder.



National Eating Disorders Association

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Dr. Rachel Vanderkruik

According to Dr. Vanderkruik, “We know that pregnancy can be a trigger for body image concerns and relapse in disordered eating behaviors, particularly for women with a history of an eating disorder.” Participants for the study are being recruited nationally with aims to include a diverse sample and hard-to-reach populations.

The study will engage participants in a 4-week virtual group intervention during pregnancy and then follow up again 3-months post-partum. The funds from NEDA will allow for a

2-year pilot project, which Dr. Vanderkruik and her team hope will lead to larger scale study. “To date, there hasn’t been any intervention to prevent eating disorder relapse in this high-risk perinatal population. This research aims to address that gap by adapting one of the most

evidence-based eating disorder prevention programs, The Body Project, for pregnancy, and pilot test this adapted intervention among pregnant women with histories of an eating disorder,” stated Dr. Vanderkruik.

“The risks of disordered eating or eating disorders to moms and babies are real. A study published in the American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology found that women with anorexia and bulimia have babies with low birth weights, which can lead to a host of complications, including heart disease, asthma, diabetes, and sudden infant death syndrome. Anorexia is associated with very premature birth, stillbirth and neonatal death, and bulimia is linked to the need for resuscitation after birth and poor health,” stated Elizabeth Thompson, NEDA’s CEO. Thompson continued, “We believe this pilot project may offer a critical intervention to ensure women with disordered eating or eating disorders have healthier pregnancies and babies---an outcome we can all celebrate.”

To learn more about body image and eating disorders, please [CLICK HERE](#).

If you think you or a loved one may be suffering from an eating disorder, please consult NEDA’s Eating Disorders Screening Tool [HERE](#).

If you would like to learn more about eating disorder research, please [CLICK HERE](#).

For more information about eating disorders and where you can find treatment and help, please visit NEDA’s web site at: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org. If you or someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder, call the National Eating Disorders Association Helpline at 1-800-931-2237.

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About the National Eating Disorders Association

The National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) is the largest nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting individuals and families affected by eating disorders. NEDA supports individuals and families affected by eating disorders, and serves as a catalyst for prevention, and access to quality care. Through our programs and services, NEDA raises awareness, builds communities of support and recovery, funds research and puts essential resources into the hands of those in need. For more information, visit www.nationaleatingdisorders.org.

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