

By ~~Artur Anitei~~ Artur Anitei, Science Editor

[The Way Anorexia Impacts the Others](#)

Severe physical, social and psychological effects

Anorexia is not all about food. More than an eating disease, this is a mind problem with deep impact upon the people around. A new study, whose results were published in the new book 'Inside Anorexia: The experiences of girls and their families', and carried out by a team at the University of Western Sydney, reveals the long term impact of anorexia nervosa on the physical, social, and psychological well-being of the whole family. "The study found that the impact of anorexia on the family unit is considerable and often long-term. Families can find it difficult to live with a loved one who has anorexia, as their behavior is often distressing and incomprehensible. It places a constant strain on the entire family unit and parents and siblings often struggle with feelings of guilt, helplessness, anger, frustration and isolation," said lead researcher Professor Christine Halse. "It is common for parents to become consumed with feelings of guilt and helplessness as they devote all of their time and energy to caring for the child with anorexia, often at the expense of their own needs and the needs of the rest of the family," she added. For the other brothers and sisters, the impairment of their daily routine and the ongoing familial conflict and tension can result into the appearance of sentiments of isolation and abandonment, with severe effects on their emotional balance, psychical health and academic results. In their book, the authors also describe eight real stories of families who tackled this issue each one differently. "It is easy for parents and families to lose sight of their own needs as they struggle to care for a child or sibling with anorexia. By publishing this research and sharing these experiences, families can learn that they are not alone and that it is possible to get through this difficult time," said Halse.