



**National Eating Disorders Association**  
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## **NEDA and the White House**

At the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA), we are working as hard as we can to be the voice of individuals and families struggling with eating disorders. Publicly, and also behind the scenes, we express concerns to various constituency groups and policymakers. We want you to know that your dollars are at work in many ways, including our programs and services, as well as advocating for our issue where it matters.

In March 2009, the White House opened an Office for Women and Girls. Of course, NEDA was excited. Our CEO, Lynn Grefe, immediately wrote a letter of congratulations – along with concerns about the lack of attention being placed on eating disorders nationally. She requested a meeting and was invited to sit down with Executive Director, Tina Tchen and Deputy Assistant Jenny Yager Kaplan in May.

At the White House, they spent an hour discussing the issues, the concerns about how the war on obesity relates to eating disorders, and more. Since that time, Lynn has been invited to have an open line of communication with the White House’s Office of Women and Girls. This kind of connection can make a tremendous difference and ensure that eating disorders are “at the table” so to speak.

National organizations that we partner with – The Academy for Eating Disorders (AED), The International Association of Eating Disorder Professionals (IAEDP), The Eating Disorder Coalition (EDC), and the Binge Eating Disorder Association (BED) – wanted to reach out to the White House and a wonderful letter was drafted by the leadership of all of these organizations. NEDA joined in and ensured delivery to the appropriate decision-makers. As recently as February 5, 2010, our CEO was invited back to offer her thoughts at a meeting of 13 national groups, representing diverse populations, prior to the First Lady’s launch of an initiative to curb childhood obesity.

Once again, Lynn delivered the talking points and information developed in collaboration with our Partners, and spoke directly about our concerns with Mrs. Obama’s Chief of Staff.





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As the meeting ended, Lynn was encouraged to continue providing feedback as they unfold the efforts. Tina Tchen assured us that they wanted to continue to work with us and that progress and change are possible. A direct quote from Ms. Tchen: “this ship has not yet sailed,” meaning that these efforts are a work in progress and they want to do it right.

We are grateful for this opportunity to make a difference and invite you to join us in monitoring the program to ensure that, while working to decrease the problems of obesity, these efforts do not inadvertently increase triggers for or the prevalence of eating disorders.

We would encourage anyone interested in eating disorders advocacy to join the EDC for Lobby Day, April 26-27, 2010 in Washington, DC, and also get involved with our [STAR](#) (States For Treatment Access and Research) program in their own states.

To stay up-to-date, please be sure you are on our email and mailing lists:  
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