



HOPE WITH EARLY TREATMENT

Getting help early will lead to a better and faster recovery and may prevent the onset of mental illness.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Those experiencing early signs of mental illness are not always able to understand or explain what is happening to them. Many fear they will be labeled as "psycho" and do not seek help on their own. If you think that you or someone you know is experiencing early signs of mental illness, it is important to get help as soon as possible.

HOW DOES A PERSON MEET CRITERIA FOR PIER?

The person must be between the ages of 12 and 25, live in the Greater Portland area, sign an informed consent agreeing to participate in the research project and:

- be experiencing some of the early symptoms or
- be struggling or slipping in some areas of their life

WHEN SHOULD I CALL?

When in doubt, call 1-877-880-3370 even if it is just to talk with an experienced clinician over the phone. There is convincing evidence that early intervention reduces the impact and disruption in a person's life and may prevent the onset of psychosis altogether. Do not take the "wait and see" approach.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PERSON CONTACTS PIER?

People are screened by an interview process to determine if the problems they are experiencing are caused by early symptoms. A consultation may offer great relief – helping young persons, their families or their doctors to understand what is happening and to learn more about what can be done about it. Once a young person is found to be at risk, he/she is offered services and immediate medical treatment to get them on the road to recovery.

WHAT IF THE PERSON WON'T AGREE TO COME TO THE PIER OFFICE?

PIER can make other arrangements. Our clinicians understand that some people do not want to participate immediately. We try to meet the person wherever he/she feels most comfortable. Treatment is individualized to have the best chance of success.

DOES PIER USE MEDICATIONS?

In many cases, yes. Some newer, low-dosage medications effectively improve thinking and combat early symptoms. Research also suggests medications may have a protective effect against changes in the brain that cause mental illness.

THE PHASES OF PSYCHOSIS

