

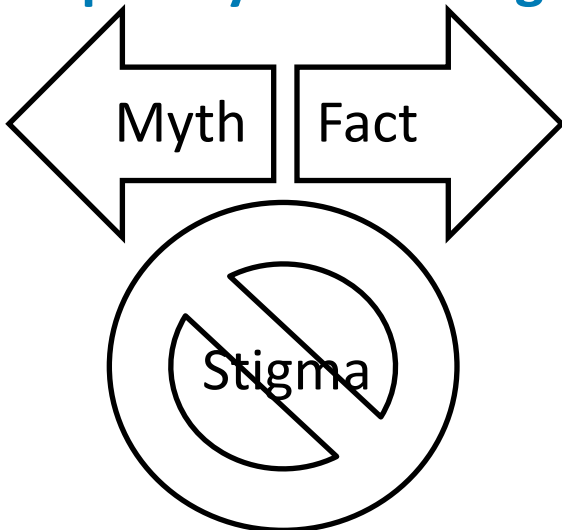
What can you do for Students with Psychosis

If you think a student is experiencing early warning signs of psychosis:

- ✓ Take time to listen and don't argue with any unusual beliefs or ideas
- ✓ Don't dismiss the changes as being adolescent behaviour or substance misuse
- ✓ Express your concern, but don't feel you need to investigate the cause of the behaviour change
- ✓ Consult with a school mental health professional, guidance counsellor, and/or principal
- ✓ Let the student know your door is open
- ✓ Check-in with the student: *"I notice you're having difficulties, what can I do to help?"*
- ✓ If the student might be a threat to themselves or others, follow your school board's emergency protocol
- ✓ Provide a positive, hopeful and encouraging attitude toward the student

How to support the student's return to school:

Dispel myths and stigma



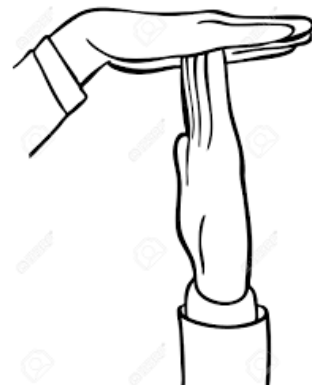
Remember: Psychosis is a brain disorder



Support re-integration



Provide breaks



Allow for difficulties with concentration and thinking



Consider the effect of medications



What you can do to support the student's return to school*

Dispel myths and stigma

- Keep words like “psycho” or “crazy” out of the classroom.
- Address misinformation immediately.

Remember: Psychosis is a brain disorder

- Difficulties learning and socializing are often due to illness.
- Motivation, thinking, fitting in, confidence, and spontaneity are all affected. Improvement will be gradual, with temporary set-backs.

Support re-integration

- Have a designated staff person to check in with the student.
- Anticipate that the student may be embarrassed about psychosis.
- Remind the student that it's up to them to decide if they want to disclose their psychosis to anyone, and that their mental health provider should help them make this decision. Help the student with what to say to maintain privacy.
- Be patient with the student's gradual return to social functioning.

Provide breaks

- Modify schedules to allow for one or more study blocks.
- Find a low-stimulation “safe place” for the student to take breaks.
- Strike a balance between encouraging the student to stay in the classroom and providing a refuge when they're feeling overwhelmed or anxious.

Allow for difficulties with concentration and thinking

- Reduce homework demands, especially initially.
- Provide a quiet room and/or more time for exams.
- Allow the student extra time or alternate ways to respond to questions or instruction (e.g., oral vs. written).
- Use varied teaching techniques and modalities.
- Provide tutoring, if possible.
- Access resource teachers, if available.

Consider the effect of medications

- Psychosis medications have side effects, such as dry mouth and drowsiness, that lessen with time.
- Gum or hard candy can help with dry mouth.
- If a student has extreme drowsiness, suggest they talk to their doctor.
- Medications may cause metabolic side effects, such as weight gain.

Treatment

- Treatment is a combination of medications and other supports (such as psychotherapeutic interventions and case management).
- Family and other social support involvement is also a crucial component for optimal recovery.

*Adapted from www.hopevancouver.com



EARLY PSYCHOSIS INTERVENTION
ONTARIO NETWORK

The Early Psychosis Intervention Ontario Network (EPION) is a network of specialized service providers, clients, and their families. Our goal is to provide early treatment and support to all Ontarians dealing with psychosis.

HELP IS AVAILABLE. VISIT WWW.EPION.CA TO FIND YOUR
LOCAL EARLY PSYCHOSIS INTERVENTION PROGRAM

