



The EARLY Report

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Welcome to the first edition of The EARLY Report. This newsletter will be coming to you on a quarterly basis with information about early identification of and intervention for serious mental illnesses. In it we hope to provide tips on early detection of psychotic disorders, guidelines for treatment, updates on our program, the latest research in the field of prodromal psychosis and prevention, and information from the community.

1-888-NM-EARLY

early@mrn.org

www.earlyprogram.org

The EARLY Program

What is EARLY?

EARLY is a treatment research program with the mission of identifying and treating adolescents and young adults who may be in the earliest stages of developing a psychotic illness. Early identification and intervention may prevent or delay the onset and decrease the severity of a serious mental illness.

EARLY is a collaboration between the University of New Mexico Department of Psychiatry and The Mind Research Network and is part of a 6-site national treatment research project named EDIPPP – Early Detection and Intervention for the Prevention of Psychosis Program.

As a research program, all of the services provided by EARLY are free with the exception of lab work and medications (if indicated), which may be covered through the individual's health plan. If the client does not have a medical provider, we will work with them to help find one.

Services We Offer

EARLY provides confidential assessment, education, treatment, and assistance for young people at risk for psychosis and their families. Once a young person is assessed as appropriate for the program, EARLY provides the following services:

- Multi-family group therapy
- Individual/single family therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Supported Education/Employment
- Medication as needed

Who Qualifies for EARLY?

Individuals appropriate for EARLY must meet the following basic criteria:

- Showing signs/symptoms of possible psychosis (see below);
- Between the ages of 12-25;
- Living within certain areas in Albuquerque

Contact the EARLY staff for more detailed program qualification information.

Symptoms to Look For:

Look for a combination of the following symptoms:

- Heightened sensitivity to sights, sounds, smells or touch
- Being fearful for no reason
- Thinking others wish you harm or think poorly of you
- Difficulty concentrating, reading or understanding conversations
- Forgetfulness and jumbled thinking
- Declining interest in people and activities
- Loss of motivation; inattention to appearance
- Changes in sleeping or eating habits
- Difficulty with schoolwork or job duties
- Hearing sounds or voices/seeing things

What Happens When You Call?

Young people and/or their families participate in a screening process to determine if the symptoms or problems they are having may be caused by early psychosis. If the screen is positive, a more in-depth assessment will follow to determine level of risk.

How to make a referral

Professionals may call to consult about an individual or they may refer an individual/family to call directly. EARLY is available to speak to families over the phone, in our office, or at a location of their choice.

**Call: 1-888-NM-EARLY
(1-888-663-2759)**

Email: early@mrn.org

Website: www.earlyprogram.org



The EARLY Program is available to make presentations about the early warning signs of psychosis and serious mental illness. Call 1-888-NM-EARLY to schedule a presentation.

For more information, referrals, questions/consultations, or to request an outreach presentation:

Call: 1-888-NM-EARLY
(1-888-663-2759)

Email: early@mrn.org

Website:
www.earlyprogram.org

EARLY Staff Presents to Over 1500 People

A critical component of the EARLY model is outreach and education. Research shows that when the public, educators and health professionals have information about the early warning signs of psychosis, young people who are at risk get help earlier. As a result, their chances greatly improve for staying in school, working, maintaining relationships and planning for a successful future.

In the past year the EARLY staff have made nearly 70 presentations to over 1,500 community professionals.

If you know of a group that would benefit from learning more about early identification and intervention, please contact our program at 1-888-NM-EARLY (1-888-663-2759). At this time, we are particularly interested in meeting with teachers, parent groups and young people ages 12-25.

A Word from the Principal Investigator and Medical Director of EARLY

In a report released in February, the National Research Council (NRC) and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) urged the federal government to make early prevention of mental, emotional and behavioral (MEB) disorders in young people a national priority. According to the report "interventions before the disorder occurs offer the greatest opportunity to avoid the substantial costs to individuals, families, and society that these disorders entail."

It is estimated that 1 in 5 youth struggle with mental health issues and that the cost to the US of these disorders is calculated at \$247 billion annually. Further, half of all mental health conditions have their onset prior to the age of 14 (Kessler, 2005). Unfortunately, most young people in need of mental health services are not identified and remain untreated. Thus, prevention efforts aimed at children and youth can have the greatest impact in either preventing a MEB disorder entirely or in significantly reducing its impact on the individual and their family.

At the EARLY Program, we are attempting to reduce the potentially devastating impact of psychotic disorders through such early recognition and intervention. We invite you to join us in this important endeavor as together we work to maintain the promise and hope of the lives of our young people.

Steven Adelsheim, MD

For further information on the Institute of Medicine report, go to:

<http://www.iom.edu/CMS/12552/45572/64120.aspx>

Our Staff

Steven Adelsheim, MD
Kent Kiehl, PhD
David Graeber, MD
Melina Salvador, MA
Margaret Migliorati, MA, LPCC
Margaret King, BS
Brian Jonkman, BA
Brian Isakson, PhD
Douglas Fraser, CPST
Kellie Primm, MOTS
Melissa Calderon, BA

Principal Investigator and Medical Director
Co-Principal Investigator, Brain Imaging & Genetics
Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
Associate Research Scientist
Clinician
Clinical Research Coordinator
Research Technician
Post-Doctoral Fellow
Consumer Consultant
Occupational Therapy Student
Administrative Assistant