

the symptoms

Psychosis affects everyone differently, with symptoms including changes in feelings or behaviour. Young people might experience confused thinking, unusual thoughts or ideas, hallucinations or behave in a way that is out of character.

They may feel it is getting harder to function at home, school or work and their family may comment on this too. It's important to remember, that the earlier psychosis is diagnosed, and a young person is referred, the sooner they can get back to leading the life they choose.

support for family and friends

Family and friends are an integral part of the treatment team and play an important role in helping young people get back on track.

As part of the **headspace Early Psychosis** program, families receive support, information, and education about psychosis. They can attend family meetings and group sessions to get support from other families. They can also access after-hours support, through eheadspace.

refer a young person for professional help and support

headspace offers early intervention services to help young people experiencing psychosis.

Use the GP referral checklist to consider whether a young person could be experiencing psychotic symptoms.

To learn more about how to recognise early psychosis symptoms or refer a young person for support, visit:

headspace.org.au/earlypsychosis

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**HELP TURN
PSYCHOSIS
AROUND**

**headspace
Early Psychosis**

**Spot the symptoms early and
refer a young person at risk.**



psychosis is a confusing and often misunderstood illness that can turn a young person's world upside down.

But it can be treated. Most people who experience psychosis make a good recovery and go on to lead healthy, productive lives.

who is at risk of developing psychosis?

Like lots of mental health difficulties, psychosis is caused by a combination of different things. Genetics and/or a history of tough times can make a person more vulnerable to psychosis. As can someone's life experiences, including grief and loss, drug use or difficult times with family, friends, school or work.

In a specific group of young people who are help seeking, clinical research identified that those at 'ultra-high risk' of developing psychosis demonstrate a decrease in their functioning and:

- have a parent or sibling who has experienced psychosis, or
- are already experiencing some changes in their thoughts or sensory perceptions (e.g. puzzling experiences) but less intense than full psychosis, or
- have briefly experienced changes in thoughts, sensory perceptions or behaviour which have resolved.

Put simply, this means that a person in this group has a higher chance of experiencing psychosis compared to the broader population.

help is available through headspace Early Psychosis

headspace is Australia's leading youth mental health organisation, providing early intervention mental health services via more than 110 centres across Australia, and online and over the phone via eheadspace.

headspace Early Psychosis is a specialist program available at selected headspace centres. It provides early intervention services to help young people experiencing an early episode of psychosis or at risk of developing psychosis.

This is a free and confidential program and our holistic approach offers tailored and effective clinical treatment as well as practical support to help young people to live their best life.

our program

As part of the program, young people can access:

-  **Counselling with specialist mental health professionals**
-  **Psychiatrists who advise on treatment, including medication**
-  **Support to get back to study or work**
-  **Support with everyday life skills, (e.g. shopping, travelling)**
-  **Creative therapy (e.g. art or music groups)**
-  **Social group activities (e.g. going to the movies) with other young people who have had similar experiences.**

case managers and specialists are on hand to help

A case manager will talk with the young person about the key things that they can do to help themselves. They will work with them to develop a treatment plan that outlines their goals and any difficulties they want to work on, including changes in mood, substance use and managing stress.

Everyday support is also provided by a range of peer support and family workers. **headspace Early Psychosis** also have Mobile Assessment Treatment teams who provide outreach and support after-hours. These specialists undertake initial assessments and treatment for young people and their family.