



Washington Early Recognition Center



## An Evidence-Based Clinic for Early Stage Psychosis



**W**ashington Early Recognition Center (WERC) is a specialized treatment clinic for young people who are experiencing early signs of psychosis or who have recently been diagnosed with a psychotic disorder.

Psychosis affects the ability of the brain to process information and to make out reality. Recognizing its early signs is important in order to get appropriate treatment as early as possible. Earlier treatment of psychosis has been shown to lead to improved brain development and better long-term outcomes. There are many symptoms that may indicate early psychosis, including:

- Recent change in thinking or speech
- Bizarre behaviors
- Unusual or irrational beliefs
- Social withdrawal
- Increased suspiciousness of others
- Decreased personal hygiene
- Hearing voices or misperceiving sounds
- Visual hallucinations

Anxiety or depression also occur commonly early in the course of psychosis. Symptoms can be frightening, confusing and distressing to the person affected and his/her family.

### Who We Serve

WERC provides services for young adults and adolescents, ages 13 to 25, who are either:

- At **clinical high-risk** for a psychotic disorder, based on progressive symptoms and meeting diagnostic criteria  
OR
- Within **3 years of the onset of a psychotic disorder**, such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder or bipolar disorder with psychosis

Interventions are designed to meet the needs of those with IQ's of 70 or greater.



### What We Do

WERC offers a variety of comprehensive services to meet the unique needs of our patients and families:

- Psychiatric evaluation
- Detailed psychological assessment
- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Medication management
- Group psychotherapy
- Family support and psychoeducation
- Case management
- Community outreach
- Research opportunities (e.g. brain imaging)

### Our Mission

WERC is the only clinic in the St. Louis region specialized in early psychosis. Our goal is to accurately identify young people early in the course of their illness, and provide evidence-based interventions to reduce symptoms and improve social, educational and vocational functioning.

At WERC, licensed counselors, social workers, psychiatric physicians and other clinicians work collaboratively to develop a personalized treatment plan. We strive to provide the most effective clinical interventions, and will investigate novel approaches to care. We are also exploring if advances in brain imaging could help identify psychosis earlier, customize treatment and monitor brain changes.

WERC is supported by foundation, institutional and philanthropic funds. With continued support, we hope to make early psychosis care widely available in the region and broaden the types of services provided.

For more information or to determine eligibility,  
call: **314-362-6952**  
email: **werc@wustl.edu**



**For information or an appointment,  
contact:**

**314-362-6952**  
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