

# Have you noticed changes in a young person you know?

Are they between the ages of 12-25 and suddenly experiencing the following:

- Increased sensitivity to light, sound or touch
- Difficulty with concentration, memory and attention
- Difficulty communicating with and understanding others
- Feeling suspicious or fearful of others, including people they have trusted before
- Hearing sounds or voices, seeing visions, or experiencing strange sensations that others do not perceive
- Odd or unusual behaviors or beliefs that are new and uncharacteristic for the person
- Difficulties in school or work that are new, significant and progressive
- Social withdrawal from friends and family

One of these symptoms at a time may be a temporary reaction to a stressor. However, when symptoms cluster together and worsen over time, the young person may be experiencing the early symptoms of *psychosis*. Psychosis refers to the changes that occur in the brain that alters how an individual experiences their world. Early psychosis is very treatable, especially when treated early.

**The PIER  
Early Psychosis Program  
can connect young people  
to the help they need.**

**The PIER Early Psychosis Program**  
is a Prevention and Early Intervention program  
funded by the Los Angeles County  
Department of Mental Health and  
the Mental Health Service Act.



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**DEPARTMENT OF  
MENTAL HEALTH**  
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For general inquiries about the  
Los Angeles County PIER Program,  
please contact Samantha Wettimuny, Psy.D.,  
Countywide PIER Practice Lead at  
EarlyPsychosis@dmh.lacounty.gov



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# What if it's not just a phase?



# PIER PROGRAM

Helping youth and  
young adults ages 12-25 with  
early psychosis symptoms stay on  
track and reach their goals.

## What is the PIER Program?

The PIER Early Psychosis Program is an outpatient mental health program that helps young people and their families\* learn how to build their coping skills, reduce their stress and stay on track with their life goals.

A network of PIER Clinical Teams throughout Los Angeles County have been trained to assess and provide treatment and support to youth and young adults between the ages of 12 and 25 who may be experiencing the early warning signs of psychosis. PIER Clinical Teams provide:

### Community Outreach

Educating the community about the signs of early psychosis greatly improves the chance that a young person can be identified and receive treatment early. PIER Clinical Teams provide educational workshops to the community upon request. Staff and professionals who work with youth and young adults in educational settings and community agencies as well as the general public will learn about the signs that a young person may be developing symptoms of psychosis and how to link them to a PIER Clinical Team for screening.

*\*Family can mean biological family, adoptive family or anyone a young person feels is a support to them and is willing to participate with them in treatment.*

### Screening and Assessment

Youth and young adults can be referred for a confidential phone screening with a PIER Clinical Team member. Youth and young adults who meet program criteria receive a full assessment and an individualized treatment plan.

### Specialized Mental Health Treatment

Youth and young adults receive 12-24 months of specialized treatment to help them stay on track with their life goals while learning to manage their symptoms and maintain support from their families. Treatment can include:

- Multifamily Education Group
- Medication Support
- Supportive Education
- Supportive Employment
- Case Management
- Peer Support



## How do I get connected?

For information about the PIER Early Psychosis Program, to schedule an educational workshop or to refer someone you know for treatment, please contact the supervisor of your local PIER Clinical Team:

### The Help Group

12099 Washington Blvd. Suite 200  
Los Angeles 90066

rsanchez@thehelpgroup.org  
(310) 751-1189

### Institute for Multicultural Counseling and Education Services (IMCES)

1730 W. Cameron Ave. Suite 200  
West Covina, CA 91790

PIER@imces.org  
(213) 381-1250

### Institute for Multicultural Counseling and Education Services (IMCES)

3580 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 2000  
Los Angeles, CA 90010

PIER@imces.org  
(213) 381-1250

### San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Center, Inc.

14535 Sherman Circle  
Van Nuys, CA 91405

PIER@sfvcmhc.org  
(818) 901-4930

### The Whole Child

10155 Colima Rd.  
Whittier, CA 90603

PIER@thewholechild.org  
(562) 692-0383