



# When Someone You Care About Has a Severe Mental Illness

## How can I help?

Let them know you really care. Don't judge them as inadequate or evil. Encourage your friend or loved one to get professional help.

## What is the first step?

The first step may be for your friend or loved one to talk with a family doctor, a school counselor, a social worker, a nurse or a psychologist.

Don't take responsibility for making your friend or family member well or keeping the illness a secret. This secret could be deadly.

## What else can I do?

Learn as much as you can about severe mental illness so that you can be a reliable source of information when your loved one is not thinking clearly.

Stand by your loved one while they are going through treatment, rehabilitation and recovery. Be optimistic that treatment will be successful.

For more information, call:

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