

## **When a Brother or Sister Develops Psychosis: What Siblings Need**

### √Information

- 1 What's happening? How can I help? What can I expect?
- 2 The amount and type of information desired will vary by person

### √Someone to talk to who will listen and not make things worse

- 3 Usually resist talking openly with parents

### √Minimization of trauma

- 1 Need to have a place to process this soon after it happens

### √Honesty and reassurance

### √Normal family activities and special occasions

### √Support for normal developmental needs

- 2 Safety
- 3 Individuation
- 4 Educational/vocational
- 5 Extracurricular/fun
- 6 Spiritual, emotional
  - Special attention to grief, trauma
- 7 Physical
- 8 Family time

### √Parents to take care of themselves and be OK

### √Support for setting limits or figuring out how to relate

### √Impact is affected by:

- 1 Birth order, age of siblings
- 2 Personalities and prior relationship with ill sibling
- 3 Nature of sibling's symptoms
- 4 Whether and how long they live in the home
- 5 Course of sibling's illness

### √Common reactions

- 1 Becoming the "well" child; being there for everyone else
- 2 Withdrawal
- 3 Anger/ getting into trouble
- 4 Fearfulness about developing illness themselves

### √Long-Term Effects: Can affect spirituality, relationship choices, role in family, career choices; without assistance, extended grief process is common.