



Improving the mental health of the community through awareness, advocacy, and support.

Mental Health America of Northeast Florida

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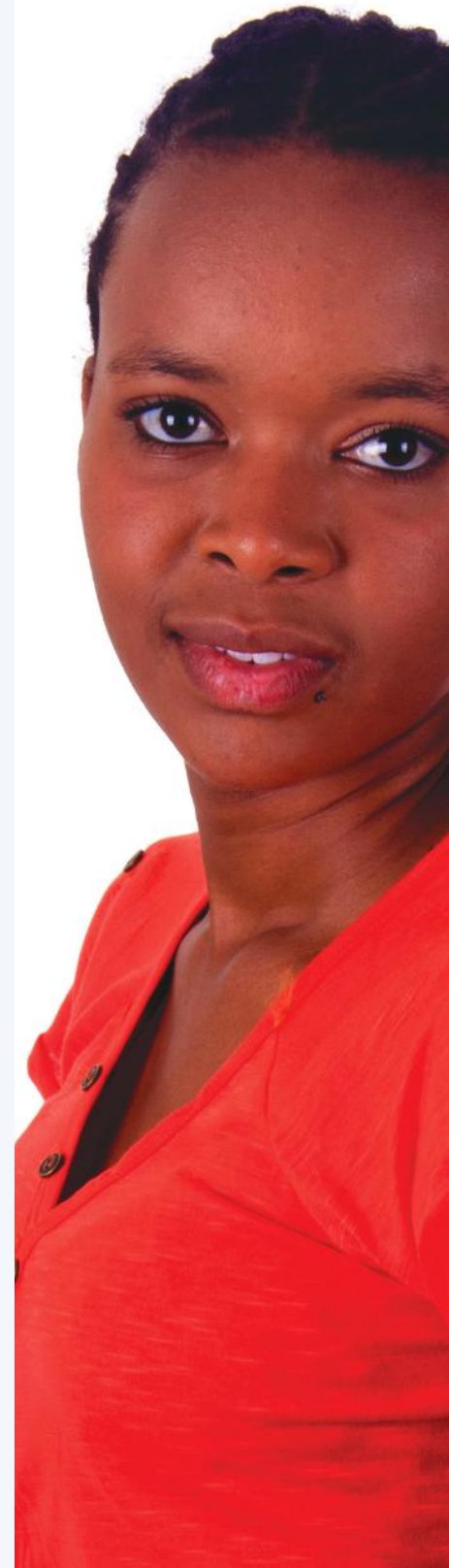
If you or someone you know is in crisis now, seek help immediately.
Call United Way crisis center **211**. Or dial **911** for immediate assistance.



Living with
SCHIZOPHRENIA 



We all have something
special to give.





Did you know that schizophrenia affects about one percent of the world's population? That's nearly 2.5 million people in the United States alone who are living with the disease. Symptoms of schizophrenia typically appear between the ages of 13 and 25, but they often appear earlier in males than females.

WHAT IS SCHIZOPHRENIA?

Schizophrenia is a mental disorder that affects how a person thinks, feels, and acts. A person with the illness may have difficulty distinguishing between what is real and what is imaginary. It can even cause unresponsive or withdrawn behavior as well as difficulty expressing normal emotions in social situations. There are various forms of schizophrenia, including paranoid, disorganized, catatonic, residual, as well as schizoaffective disorder. There is no cure for schizophrenia. However, with the right treatment, people with the disorder can lead rewarding and meaningful lives.

WHO GETS SCHIZOPHRENIA?

While the cause of schizophrenia is still unclear, studies have shown that everything from genetics to an imbalance in the brain's chemistry could cause the disease. Similar to some other genetically related illnesses, symptoms of schizophrenia typically appear for the first time in the young adult years.

SYMPTOMS

The signs of schizophrenia are different for everyone. The following are symptoms of schizophrenia, which could develop slowly over months or years or happen abruptly:

- Hearing or seeing something that isn't there
- A feeling of being watched
- Peculiar or nonsensical way of speaking or writing
- Strange body positioning
- Deterioration of school or work performance
- A change in personal hygiene and appearance
- A change in personality
- Increasing withdrawal from social situations
- Irrational, angry, or fearful response to loved ones
- Inability to sleep or concentrate
- Inappropriate or bizarre behavior

TREATMENT

While no cure for schizophrenia exists, people with the illness can lead productive and fulfilling lives with the proper treatment. This may include medication, as well as a variety of rehabilitation programs such as therapy, counseling, and self-help groups.



HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

MHA offers online screenings to help identify symptoms, and to find the help you need to feel your best and healthiest. To learn more about our screenings, visit the MHA website at www.mhajax.org. Our screenings are confidential, online, and will take just a few minutes of your time.