

## Cross the circle statements

### Confusion between what's real and what's not

Cross the circle if.....

- ❖ You've heard someone call your name but there's no one there.
- ❖ You've had a vivid, realistic dream..
- ❖ You've felt a shudder down your spine
- ❖ You've felt a cobweb across your face but can't get rid of it.
- ❖ You've jumped at your own shadow.
- ❖ You've felt a spider crawl across your face just before going to sleep.
- ❖ You've heard someone laughing and felt they were laughing at you.
- ❖ You've had the feeling of eyes in the back of your head.

**USUAL**

**UNUSUAL**

**Hearing voices**

**Talking to yourself**

**Believing you have special powers**

**Believing you are being spied on**

**Laughing**

**Crying**

**Staying in bed all day**

**Stopping brushing your teeth**

**Not being able to get to sleep**

**Lost your  
mobile phone**

**Have  
the flu**

**Split up  
from partner**

**Death of close  
friend/relative**

**Passed  
driving test**

**Just booked a  
holiday abroad**

## Hearing Voices Script

- ❖ Go on then, try to think of something interesting to say.
- ❖ This is so boring. I'm bored, why do you have to talk about holidays anyway?
- ❖ Change the subject. You don't have to do what they tell you to.
- ❖ They're not interested in anything you have to say.
- ❖ What you're saying is stupid and pointless.
- ❖ You are boring and confusing them.
- ❖ They're not listening to you.
- ❖ Do something interesting, say something interesting.
- ❖ Why don't you stop talking, go on - see what happens.
- ❖ Listen to me now and do what I'm telling you.
- ❖ Close your eyes -don't let them look at you.
- ❖ Don't let them get in your head.
- ❖ Don't listen to them and don't answer their stupid, pointless questions.

# Assessment Task

Name ..... Class .....

What sort of things might people be feeling / doing if they were experiencing psychosis?

What might you notice about a person if you thought they were experiencing psychosis?

What could you do to help them?

## Teacher's notes

### What sort of things might people be feeling / doing if they were experiencing psychosis?

- ⇒ Seeing or hearing things which others can't see or hear.
- ⇒ Jumbled up, slowed down, speeded up or interfered with thoughts.
- ⇒ Feeling as if they have been taken over, controlled or changed in some way.
- ⇒ Believing there are special messages and signs in things around them.
- ⇒ Paranoia – thinking others are watching/talking about them.
- ⇒ Managing these experiences by behaving in ways which appear unusual to other people.

### What might you notice about a person if you thought they were experiencing psychosis?

- ⇒ Confusion, irritability, anxiety or depression.
- ⇒ Distracted, unable to concentrate, work things out or remember things.
- ⇒ Behaving in an unusual way, expressing unusual beliefs...
- ⇒ Suspicious, tense, threatened, untrusting
- ⇒ Isolating themselves
- ⇒ Rapid, constant speech..
- ⇒ Lots of pauses in speech, lose train of thought, jump from one topic to the next mid-sentence
- ⇒ Moody.
- ⇒ Struggling to cope with work or study..

### What could you do to help them?

- ⇒ Encourage them to speak to a trusted adult/GP
- ⇒ Speak to a trusted adult about your concerns.
- ⇒ Contact GP or the Early Intervention Service for more information about psychosis.



## What is Psychosis?

Psychosis is an umbrella term used to describe mental health problems where a person loses touch with reality. Common symptoms are paranoid beliefs – e.g. believing that others or organisations are in some way out to harm you; hearing voices when there is no one around speaking to you. It can also sometimes seem as though someone can't put their thoughts and words together in a way that makes sense to others.

### What Effect Does it Have

About 3% of people will experience a psychotic episode at some stage in their life (about the same as diabetes), although a first episode usually occurs in teenage years or early adult life (mainly between the ages of 14 – 35). The experience of psychosis varies a great deal between individuals and episodes (when symptoms interfere with everyday life) can last from a few days to months. So some individuals may have a very brief experience whilst for others it lasts longer and starts to effect everyday life.

Psychosis can be treated and this is most effective if started early. This usually shortens the duration of an episode. Treatment from an Early Intervention Team includes talking therapy, medication and making sure that education and relationships with friends and family continue.

### What Causes Psychosis?

Although psychosis is seen across all cultures it is not known exactly what causes it or how it arises. It is likely (like many conditions) to be caused by a combination of genetic factors and environmental, social and psychological stresses.

Some drugs such as amphetamines or cocaine can induce a short psychotic episode. Other drugs like cannabis may trigger psychosis in someone who might be vulnerable to developing psychotic symptoms. There is also some evidence that smoking cannabis before the age of 16 can increase the risk of having a psychotic episode.

### Get Help Early

It is important to get help early. Psychosis often occurs at a key time in a young person's life; when they are developing relationships and making plans for the future. Getting help as soon as possible from an Early Intervention Team greatly increases the chances of preventing another episode and keeping life on track.

### Information and Contacts

Local contacts for AWP NHS Trust Early Intervention Teams  
**[http://www.awp.nhs.uk/templates/Page\\_\\_\\_\\_2888.aspx](http://www.awp.nhs.uk/templates/Page____2888.aspx)**

Psychosis Sucks – a Canadian website with lots of helpful information  
**<http://www.psychosissucks.ca/epi/whatispsychosis.cfm>**

Staffordshire Early Intervention Website – good information and videos  
**<http://www.ei-team.org.uk/psychosis.php>**