

Family-Focused Treatment for Bipolar Adolescents

The Colorado Family Project (Dr. David Miklowitz, Dir.), based at the University of Colorado at Boulder's Psychology Department, is conducting a study of the effectiveness of family education for teenagers with bipolar disorder.

Participating families will be assigned randomly (by chance) to one of two family educational treatments, one that is intensive (26 weekly, biweekly, monthly, and trimonthly sessions) and one that is less intensive (3 weekly sessions). Both treatments are educational and focus on helping family members to understand and cope better with bipolar disorder, develop plans for preventing relapses, communicate more effectively, and solve family problems. There are no monetary costs for the program.

Participation in the study lasts for two years. Adolescents must be willing to be seen by a physician affiliated with the study who administers and monitors their medications. Medication treatments are determined by the needs of the adolescent. Once in the study, participating adolescents and their parents take part in regular research interviews and fill out questionnaires concerning their individual and family functioning. The family receives compensation for each of these research visits.

Families may participate if they have a teenager between the ages of 13 and 17 who may have bipolar disorder and who has had an episode of mania, mixed disorder, hypomania, or depression within the last 3 months. The adolescent cannot be simultaneously in weekly individual or family therapy with another provider, or have substance or alcohol abuse or dependence problems that require immediate treatment. Family members must be willing to participate in regular treatment sessions.

If the adolescent:

- is between 13 and 17 years old
- possibly has bipolar disorder
- has had symptoms in the past 3 months
- does not have substance or alcohol abuse or dependence problems

...you may be a good candidate to participate in our study. Please contact Dr. David Miklowitz at (303) 492-8575 or Miklowitz@colorado.edu; or Dr. Elizabeth George at (303) 207-1161 or egeorge@colorado.edu.