

## THE IMPORTANCE OF ADDRESSING

# MEDICATION SIDE EFFECTS

## WITH YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

Children and adolescents are **most at risk of gaining weight** as a side effect of prescriptions.<sup>i</sup>

- Use of antipsychotics in children and adolescents has **INCREASED SHARPLY** in the past few decades
- Gaining weight impacts physical health and mental health in young people — including issues with **BODY IMAGE** and **SELF-ESTEEM**
- The **CURRENT INTERVENTIONS** recommended for antipsychotic-induced weight gain include lifestyle management, switching medication to a drug with a lower propensity for weight gain, and pharmacologic (particularly metformin) treatment

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up to one third of children and youth (10%-36%) who took antipsychotic drugs for the first time became overweight or obese in as few as 11 weeks<sup>ii</sup>

**TAKE ACTION**  
on the next page!



# TAKE ACTION

(for medical, mental health, and substance use disorder providers):

- **DISCUSS THE SIDE EFFECTS** of any medication with youth and young adults (YYA) from the regimen's start<sup>iii</sup>
- Strategies like **EARLY INTERVENTION** and **GROUP SUPPORT**, involving family or a trusted friend, and incentivizing results may be helpful when addressing weight gain in YYA
- In the event the YYA is already taking medications that have resulted in weight gain, consider a **SAFE STRATEGY FOR SWITCHING** to a weight-neutral medication

<sup>i</sup> Sheidow, A.J., McCart, M.R. & Davis, M. (2016). Multisystemic therapy for emerging adults with serious mental illness and justice involvement. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 23, 356-367. doi: 10.1016/j.cbpra.2015.09.003.

<sup>ii</sup> Correll, C.U., Manu, P., Olshanskiy, V., Napolitano, B., Kane, J.M., Malhotra, A.K. (2009). Cardiometabolic risk of second-generation antipsychotic medications during first-time use in children and adolescents. *JAMA*, 302(16), 1765-1773. doi:10.1001/jama.2009.1549

<sup>iii</sup> Advocacy Resource Center. (2015). Issue Brief: Addressing childhood obesity. American Medical Association. <https://www.ama-assn.org/sites/default/files/media-brower/specialty%20group/arc/addressing-childhood-obesity-issue-brief.pdf>

