



DBT Helps Adolescents

DBT: A Life-Saving, Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment

Although Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) was originally developed for use with adults, it has since been adapted and found to be effective with adolescents (ages 12-18). DBT for adolescents includes the same treatment strategies and primary targets as DBT for adults, while also including parents in treatment and targeting difficult behavior patterns common to adolescents and their families. In addition, DBT for adolescents is typically briefer than DBT for adults, lasting approximately 16-24 weeks. DBT for adolescents has been evaluated in randomized clinical trials with teens with repeated suicidal and self-harming behaviors, as well as teens with bipolar disorder.

These studies have found DBT for adolescents to be superior-to-usual-care in reducing self-harm, suicidal ideation, and depression. Additionally, these improvements have been found to last for at least one year after treatment has ended, suggesting DBT for adolescents is likely to lead to long-term change.

Emerging evidence indicates that DBT may also be effective for adolescents with eating disorders, oppositional defiant disorder, and problem behaviors in juvenile justice settings. Recent randomized clinical trials have also demonstrated strong results for DBT for suicidal college students (ages 18-25) and children (ages 6-12) with severe emotional and behavioral dysregulation.

How DBT Helps

DBT is intended to help people who experience pervasive emotion dysregulation, which means frequent, intense emotional responses that the individual finds difficult to change. In DBT, most problem behaviors are viewed as attempts to change intense emotions or as outcomes of emotion dysregulation. For example, suicidal and self-harming behaviors are often used to reduce painful emotions, whereas difficulty controlling intense emotions may lead to impulsive behaviors and unstable relationships. DBT works by helping clients learn effective strategies for regulating emotions in order to achieve more balanced emotions, behavior, and thoughts.

DBT for adolescents includes four primary modes of treatment. Individual therapy is provided to the adolescent with periodic family sessions for both the adolescent and their parents/caregivers. Parents participate with the adolescents in multi-family group skills training to learn the DBT skills of mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness. Teens also receive coaching from their individual therapists between sessions when they need help using DBT skills or for crisis situations. DBT therapists also participate in therapist consultation team focused on helping them to provide the most effective treatment possible.



Learn DBT with Behavioral Tech

Behavioral Tech is the original DBT training company founded by Dr. Marsha Linehan, who developed DBT. We have provided DBT training based on the latest research developments since 1997 to over 40,000 people. Whether you are an individual practitioner or the administrator of a complex system, our expert trainers and varied learning formats can help you meet your DBT training goals. We work with you to implement comprehensive DBT according to the evidence-based model while adapting it to the specific needs of your clinic and clients.

Levels of Training

Four levels of training help you navigate the process of learning DBT. If you have any questions, please contact us at 206-675-8588 or info@behavioraltech.org.

Level 1 - Introductory

Learn about DBT and assess if DBT is right for your practice and your clients.

Level 2 - Essentials

Level 2 options address the essentials of behavior therapy, DBT, and other treatments. These courses are appropriate for clinicians and providers at every stage of professional development.

Level 3 - Comprehensive Training in Standard DBT

Level 3 trainings are the best choice for individuals and teams who seek in-depth training to start a DBT program or train new staff members. These options also meet criteria for DBT certification and are required for anyone interested in Level 4 training.

Level 4 - Advanced Training and Adaptations

Level 4 trainings allow experienced DBT therapists to advance and sustain their DBT knowledge. Learn how to adapt DBT for specific client populations or choose an advanced training designed to address the needs of seasoned DBT clinicians. Advanced trainings are led by world-renowned DBT experts who have pioneered clinical adaptations and research in highly requested, specialized content.

Learning Formats

In-Person Training

In-person events offer participants the chance to learn directly from our first-class training experts. Trainers mix lecture with more experiential learning methods such as role plays, review of footage from real DBT treatment sessions, and discussion. Our current public training calendar can be viewed at behavioraltech.org/events/.

Contact us to discuss private training options and how Behavioral Tech can support your agency as you implement DBT.

Consultation

Consultation services are a personalized way to enhance individual's clinical skills or grow DBT programs. Consultants can provide support at any level of learning. Schedule consultations as needed or on an ongoing basis.

Online Training

We offer seven self-paced courses that allow you to learn the essentials of DBT and other therapies from work or home. The online training courses work on desktop or laptop computers.

Supplemental Resources

We carry books, CDs, and DVDs to support your learning. These resources are a blend of clinician- and client-focused content.

Webinars

Live webinars feature DBT experts speaking from their areas of specialty. Webinars offer informative overviews of DBT as it is practiced in various settings and populations.