

DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY (DBT)

Teen DBT - Skills Group for Teens ages 13-19

DBT was Developed by Dr Marsha Linehan

The Teen DBT group is a skills training group designed to help teens ages 13-19 build practical skills for managing intense emotions, improving relationships, and coping with stress in healthier ways. DBT is an evidence-based approach that combines acceptance AND change strategies, supporting participants in creating more stability and balance in their lives. The group teaches a different skill each week. In-depth sharing about personal history is not the focus of this group, though members do provide support for each other through the shared process of working on improving coping skills.

In this structured, supportive group setting, members learn and practice skills in four key areas:

Mindfulness – *Staying present and aware without judgment*

Distress Tolerance – *Getting through difficult moments without making things worse*

Emotion Regulation – *Understanding and managing strong emotions*

Interpersonal Effectiveness – *Communicating needs and maintaining healthy relationships*

The group studies from the manual, *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets*, written by Marsha M. Linehan, who developed Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT). You can purchase the manual online at www.thriftbooks.com, www.amazon.com, etc.

This therapy group meets once a week and is an open group. This means that new members join when there is an opening in the group, and therefore there are members at all different skill levels. The teen group has a maximum of 6 members. It is required that each member agrees to participate in group for at least one year. Some teens end their time in group after the one-year commitment; others choose to stay longer, which is allowed based on medical necessity. The teens commonly share that they want to stay because they find the skills and positive peer support beneficial, and they want to keep improving their skills. We ask the teen to discuss this with their individual therapist, parents, and the Teen DBT group leader as their one-year anniversary is approaching.

The Teen DBT Skills Group is educational and skills-focused, and includes guided instruction, discussion, and real-life application. It is appropriate for individuals experiencing anxiety, depression, emotional overwhelm or outbursts, anger or aggressive behavior, impulsivity, difficulty in relationships, self-harm or suicidal ideation or urges, as

well as those who want to strengthen their coping skills for handling emotions and responding to life's difficult moments.

The Teen DBT group meets on Monday, 4:00pm to 5:30pm, facilitated by Teresa Lenzen, MA, LIMHP, NCC, a licensed mental health therapist.

Each week the teens complete a worksheet from the manual to share in group the following week, regarding how they practiced using the skill. There is a new skill introduced each week. Aside from sharing the worksheet, each teen can engage at their own pace. By sharing how they practiced the skill and listening to others, they learn that they're not alone in their struggles, and they hear real life scenarios where healthier coping was possible.

DBT protocol requires participants to attend weekly individual therapy while attending the group to support integration and implementation of skills. While it is strongly encouraged to have a therapist who has a working knowledge of DBT, it is not required. Due to space limitations, it is also not required to see a therapist at ATCN for the individual therapy.

Teresa Lenzen has been providing a Teen DBT group since 2004. She is an in-network provider for most insurance companies. The group cost is \$70.00 per group session. What a person pays out of pocket will vary based on their insurance plan. If the teen/family does not have insurance, a self-pay rate can be offered, based on financial need.

If you are interested in your teen joining the group, please email teresa@atcnebraska.com or call 402.403.0190 ext 2, to inquire about space availability and how to start your process of joining. There is a waitlist for the Teen DBT group at ATCN.

To have a teen considered for the waitlist, a parent (or guardian) should contact Teresa Lenzen to express their interest, and request records be sent to Teresa from the teen's current or most recent individual therapist: initial assessment and last three notes. A psychological evaluation is helpful but not required. After the records have been sent, the parent should contact Teresa again to see if the records have been received and reviewed, and they can ask to have their teen placed on the waitlist at that time.