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Tween & Teen DBT Group Services

Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for considering DBT group services with Wynns Family Psychology. We understand contacting a provider can be an intimidating but important step. It takes insight and courage to admit either you and/or your family needs outside help. We hope these FAQs will answer some of your initial questions and provide reassurance that you're in expert hands and on the right path to a positive and fresh start. If you have any further questions or would like to schedule an appointment after reviewing this document, feel free to call **919-467-7777** or **919-805-0182**, or email us at Groups@WynnsFamilyPsychology.com. We're always happy to help!

Q: What is DBT and how is a DBT Skills Training Group helpful for my tween/teen?

A: Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is a treatment designed for individuals who are experiencing difficulties with emotional regulation, impulsivity, stress, and/or adaptive coping. DBT skills training offers concrete coping skills that are best taught in a group situation. Research has shown that groups have the benefit from providing peers support from other individuals who have similar problems, which can be a powerful component of treatment.

Q: I've read that DBT is helpful for individuals with a history of suicidal ideation or self-harming behavior. My tween/teen doesn't struggle with these issues, but can they still benefit from the group?

A: Great question! DBT has been shown to be helpful for a variety of challenges. Although DBT can be helpful for someone who is struggling with self-harming behavior and/or suicidal ideation, tween/teens who struggle with anxiety, depression, emotional regulation, family conflict, and/or poor peer relationships can also benefit from learning DBT skills.

Q: Will talking to other tweens/teens give my child more ideas about acting out or self-harm?

A: DBT Skills Training is highly structured around finding more effective ways to cope with problems. If/when the topics of self/harm and acting out come up, the focus is quickly redirected to how situations could have been handled more effectively. Group leaders will not allow for detailed discussions surrounding the actual acts of self-harm. Generally, the adolescents quickly become skilled at providing positive suggestions for other members, which in turn, help to modify their behaviors.

Q: Can my tween/teen exclusively attend the DBT Skills Training Group? (Or are additional services necessary)?

A: DBT is a two-pronged approach to help change your adolescent's behaviors. Research has shown that both skills training and individual therapy are equally important components to treatment. In addition, as the DBT group is primarily educational in nature, we require that all group members participate in individual therapy at the same time at the provider of your choosing. We request that you complete an authorization form on file in order to allow the group leader to check in with your tween/teen's individual therapist about progress and to consult about any issues that may arise during the course of group.

Q: When you say "educational in nature," what exactly does that mean?

A: The DBT group is a structured group in which group members are taught the various DBT skills. Group leaders will model and teach the skills in each session. Group members will also have the opportunity to practice the skills and receive feedback. While the group leader will help group members understand how skills are relevant and can be effective in their own life, the structure and nature of the skills training group does not allow for individual "processing" or "talk therapy." Rather, group members can use their individual therapy time to process the material on a deeper level. The DBT skills training group does not provide crisis management.

Q: What is the typical size of the DBT group? Do we get personalized feedback?

A: We keep groups small so your tween/teen can feel comfortable and receive personalized feedback "in the moment" from the group leader. At the conclusion of each module, a brief written summary will be provided to you. The customized feedback will review your adolescent's strengths and areas that could use further improvement. Provided you have a signed authorization form on file, we will also make this summary available to your tween/teen's individual therapist. Should you desire additional time, you will need to schedule a separate appointment with the group leader for further feedback (Additional fees apply).

Q: Can my tween/teen join the DBT Group at any point? How long is the group?

A: If space is available, we allow new members to join in at the start of a new module. There are four different modules, each one lasting four weeks. Some clients opt to repeat the modules in order to feel more comfortable with the material.

Q: Do you offer virtual or telehealth sessions? How does that work?

A: Yes! The teen DBT group is currently offered virtually via a HIPAA compliant system for clients who are located in North Carolina at the time of session. About one week prior to the group, we will then send you a link via email that will directly connect you to your provider at the time of your scheduled appointment. We ask that all group members have a strong wi-fi connection and private location for sessions. We do recognize that telehealth may not be an appropriate fit for all clients. For those clients looking to have in-person group appointments, please speak with your group leader or let us know.

Q: What if my tween/teen says they refuse to come to the group?

A: Because our DBT group encourages your tween/teen to confront their stress and/or behavior, the idea of attending may provoke anxiety. A socially awkward, anxious, or defiant adolescent may insist on NOT coming (or returning). But it's important to push past this common, initial reaction and commit to bringing your teen to all of the sessions so they can conquer these fears and maximize their overall success. We strongly recommend making attendance "mandatory," while explaining to your teen that this group can help improve their quality of life, especially if they come into it with an open mind.

Q: How do I know the group is working?

A: Although it's not always easy to see skills generalize immediately outside of the group setting, as your adolescent gets more and more practice, you should start noticing improvement in behavior, self-control, and interpersonal relations in general. And even though different tweens/teens will make progress at different rates, by the end of our groups, we typically get overwhelmingly positive feedback about the results.

Q: What is the format of the group? Will my teen be stuck in a chair, listening to boring lectures the whole time?

A: No. Your adolescent's DBT group is designed to be both educational and fun. All meetings will begin with a mindfulness exercise. Sessions will include a teaching component, including hands on, experiential exercises, handouts, videos, music, and assignments to complete between classes. Sessions will end with another brief mindfulness or relaxation exercise to model calming skills your adolescent can use at home. Your tween/teen will be given homework assignments and self-monitoring worksheets that will be reviewed the following week. These are designed to help him/her in applying the skills to "real world" situations.

Q: Why is DBT homework important? How can I help my teen further develop his DBT skills at home?

A: Research shows that DBT skills generalize best with lots of practice and positive reinforcement. Therefore, we strongly encourage you and your tween/teen to complete the homework assignments. Homework is also a helpful way for you, your adolescent, and your group's leader to track progress. Please note, that group members will be held responsible for completing assignments in group, should they not complete them at home.

Q: What is the cost of the DBT Group?

A: For the virtual 60-minute DBT group, the fee is \$340 per module (\$85 per week). The in-person 90-minute DBT group fee is \$400 per module. Most insurance plans will reimburse a percentage of these fees. We require the module to be paid in full prior to the start of each module. In addition, each group member must complete a sixty minute consult prior to joining the group (fee varies).

Q: Will insurance pay for DBT Groups? When will I receive receipts?

A: Parents/ clients receive a receipt for all sessions at the end of each module. Most insurance plans reimburse for DBT groups under the group therapy code 90853 (we add on the (95) code for virtual groups).. We can provide an insurance “cheat sheet” that guides you through how to determine your specific benefits. Also, we accept Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Cards and Health Savings Account (HSA) Cards in our office. (Most FSA’s and HSA’s cover therapy, testing, groups, and custody services.)

Q: Do you offer refunds for deposits or missed classes?

A: Because our groups are popular and we limit the number of group members (to maintain a manageable and effective class size), there is often a waiting list of interested members. In order to make space available to clients who want to get the most out of our services and are committed to attending each session, payments and deposits for groups are non-refundable, no exceptions.

Q: What about COVID-19?

A: WFP continues to monitor the current pandemic. At this time, all three WFP locations are operating on a modified schedule and our office has increased/ implemented a variety of health sanitation/ cleaning procedures. We have also revised our office procedures in order to help mitigate the spread of the virus. In the event that you are concerned, we want you to know that our office will continue to offer telehealth services, and will continue to do, even as our state continues to re-open the economy. Should you seek in-person appointments, we will ask you to follow a set of protocols which are outlined in our in-person informed consent form. If you ever have a question regarding our protocols or your modality of treatment, please don’t hesitate to ask. Should the teen DBT group return to an “in-person” format, you will be notified and options will be provided.