

# SURFING THE WAVE

## DBT Emotion Skills Group

### INFORMATION SHEET FOR EDUCATION & SUPPORT SERVICES

Do you know someone who feels as though their emotions are like waves, sometimes calm and easy to surf and other times unpredictable and overwhelming? Would it be useful for them to learn helpful skills to surf the waves ...to manage difficult emotional situations, cope with stress, problem solve, make better decisions, and be more mindful and accepting of themselves and their life? Learning DBT skills will take them a few steps closer to important goals and a life worth living.

#### WHAT IS DBT?

DBT is an evidence-based therapy that combines standard Cognitive Behavioural Therapy techniques for emotion regulation and reality testing with concepts of acceptance, skills to tolerate distress and mindful awareness. It specifically targets suicide and self-harm behaviours and views them as being a solution to distress.

DBT is effective with mood disorders (e.g. depression), drug and alcohol problems, binge eating disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), emotion dysregulation and traumatic brain injuries.

There is also a growing body of research indicating the importance of learning these skills early in life to learn ways to navigate the world and be skilful in understanding and managing emotions.

#### WHATS INVOLVED?

Over 15 sessions, the DBT skills are taught in four modules: Mindfulness, Distress Tolerance, Emotion Regulation and Interpersonal Effectiveness (Relationship) Skills. They walk side-by-side with their peers on their learning journey.

In these group sessions they will learn ...

- How to understand, accept and manage strong and challenging emotions, to change emotions they want to change
- To find helpful ways to problem solve tricky situations.
- How to calm emotions if they are overwhelming
- To stop and pause when they are highly distressed, then figure out how best to deal with the situation rather than acting without thinking which may lead to hurting themselves or others
- How mindfulness can help in daily life – to practice being fully aware and “in this present moment”
- To value themselves and their emotions
- How to be better at saying no when needed, ask for what they want skillfully and keeping their self-respect and relationships with others.

Groups will run weekly for 2 hours. Commitment to coming to all 15 sessions is expected and super important. Group leaders will assign skills practice ... if they are willing to practice the skills in their everyday life in between group sessions they will get so much more out of group!!

#### WHANAU/FAMILY SESSIONS

There are also 4 DBT evening whanau zoom sessions where whanau members or support persons are invited to attend, these sessions are spread throughout the 15 sessions. In these sessions they will:

- Increase understanding regarding rangatahi wellbeing needs and what the whanau can do to support
- Learn about a selection of DBT skills and the application of these to their own lives to improve wellbeing
- Support the practice of skills and building resilience
- Learn skills of validation and understand how to change behaviour

## REFERRAL PROCESS, INTRODUCTIONS AND ELIGIBILITY

Young persons aged 12 to 24 years living in the Te Whatu Ora Counties Manukau area are funded and eligible to participate in the programme. The skills group is designed to provide a primary care level of intervention.

Introductions can be made via any of the following pathways:

- Email: [dbt@tpgroup.co.nz](mailto:dbt@tpgroup.co.nz)
- Website: [www.tpgroup.co.nz](http://www.tpgroup.co.nz)
- Telephone: (09) 535 6624
- ENIGMA portal referral (via Waypoint)
- Secure voicemail (sent via email) available for messages.

Contact will then be made within 48 hours of the referral. A suitability assessment is completed where they are screened for fit to a primary care level service. Screening includes a brief assessment of wellbeing needs (including mental health and risk). In this contact, the expectations of group participation and the process of the group therapy is outlined, and any questions may be answered

We will ensure we have correct contact details, and they will be informed that these details will be entered into the Cliniko and ENIGMA databases. Reminders for group will be automatically sent from the Cliniko database.

If there is an agreement to participate and the group is deemed suitable to meet their wellbeing needs, then they will be accepted.

While there will be some parameters to attendance to ensure the safety of all young people, attending group will be widely accessible.

The Skills Groups are planned to commence throughout the year in two age categories can be found on the website [www.tpgroup.co.nz](http://www.tpgroup.co.nz)

## REGISTERED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

All DBT Group Leaders are Registered Health Professionals from a variety of disciplines: Psychology (Clinical and Registered Scopes), Occupational Therapy and Family Therapy. All hold updated Practising Certificates and are registered with their relevant Professional Association, receive monthly clinical supervision and fortnightly team supervision, and are covered with Indemnity Insurance. Confidentiality of client data is of utmost importance and the different disciplines have their own code of ethics they abide by as well as that of the practice.

