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Dialectical behavior therapy for pre-adolescent children: Treatment targets, strategies and application of procedures with a pediatric population**Francheska Perepletchikova**

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Severe emotional and behavioral difficulties in pre-adolescent children can manifest in multiple ways, including verbal and physical aggression, suicidality, non-suicidal self-injury, and irritable/angry mood. Consistent with a biosocial theory, these children may have an inborn sensitivity to emotions and may be raised in an invalidating environment. Dialectical Behavior Therapy adapted for pre-adolescent Children (DBT-C) aims to improve functioning in affected children by teaching adaptive coping skills and helping parents create a validating and a change-ready environment. DBT-C has been examined in two Randomized Clinical Trials and the results indicated feasibility and efficacy of this intervention for children with severe emotional and behavioral dysregulation. DBT-C retains the theoretical model, principles and therapeutic strategies of standard DBT, and incorporates almost all of the adult DBT skills and didactics into the curriculum. However, the presentation and packaging of the information are considerably different to accommodate for the developmental and cognitive levels of a pediatric population. Further, an extensive parent training component has been added to the model. One of the major departures from adult and adolescent DBT is the treatment target hierarchy, which has been greatly expanded from four to ten main targets, to incorporate DBT-C's emphasis on the parental role in attaining child's treatment goals. DBT-C views parental emotion regulation, creation of a validating environment and practice of skills with children as the main mechanisms of change.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this training, participants will be able to:

1. Characterize the population to be targeted by DBT for children
2. Describe adaptations to the DBT model when delivered with children
3. Understand the basic structure and procedures of DBT for children
4. Understand the treatment target hierarchy
5. Describe the parent training component of DBT for children
6. Describe the skills training component of the DBT-C

Biography

Francheska Perepletchikova, Ph.D., DBT-Linehan Board of Certification Board Certified Clinician is an Assistant Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychiatry, Weill Cornell Medical College. Dr. Perepletchikova received her B.A. degree at St. John's University and graduated with gold medal for the highest academic average. Dr. Perepletchikova received graduate training in two disciplines, developmental and clinical psychology. She obtained M.A. in Developmental Psychology from Teachers College, Columbia University in 1996 and received Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Yale University Department of Psychology in 2007 with James B. Grossman Best Dissertation Prize. During her internship and post-doctoral training at Yale University School of Medicine, Dr. Perepletchikova gained expertise in Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). Her research focuses on childhood psychopathology, psychotherapy development, and evaluation of treatment integrity in treatment outcome research. Dr. Perepletchikova developed Dialectical Behavior Therapy for pre-adolescent children with severe emotional and behavioral dysregulation and evaluated its feasibility and efficacy in several randomized clinical trials. This line of research has been funded by the grants from NIMH, NRSA and private foundations. Dr. Perepletchikova authored 28 journal articles and book chapters and a book Treatment Integrity in Treatment Outcome Research (2009). She conducted over 60 lectures, presentations and workshops around the world. As a clinician, Dr. Perepletchikova maintains her practice at Weill Cornell Medical College, where she is a Founding Director of Youth-Dialectical Behavioral Therapy Program and a Director of Outpatient Adolescent DBT Program.

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