Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Skill-based approach helps at-risk teenagers

What is Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)? It’s the evidence-based treatment model that Riverbend staff use in their work with adolescents who have multiple problems, including suicidal thoughts and self-injuring behaviors. It is a highly effective approach for helping adolescents retool their lives by learning new skills. DBT also engages the important people in the adolescent’s life—parents, guardians, and others—and presents opportunities for everyone to learn together.

“The benefits for me were mostly about learning some new skills myself,” said one participant’s mother. “I now understand a lot more about how my actions can either help or hinder my son’s ability to comprehend and communicate how he feels.”

At Riverbend, the DBT clinical team employs both individual therapy and a 16-week “multi-family skills group” in its work with these high-risk adolescent clients. When necessary, individual family therapy is also integrated into the treatment plan.

“DBT is a collaborative treatment approach for clients who exhibit high-risk behaviors, and it is the most effective treatment for this group of adolescents,” said Amy Stultz, PsyD, DBT team leader and one of the 12 mental health professionals at Riverbend who are specialists in using DBT techniques with adolescents. “It is an intensive therapy, requiring a serious allocation of resources,” said Chris Cummings, Director of Riverbend’s children programs. “But it is worth this investment to help these emotionally fragile adolescents learn to thrive and be healthy.”

To learn more about DBT, and the DBT program at Riverbend, please visit our website: www.riverbendcmhc.org.

Riverbend recognized with the Pinnacle Award

Riverbend is the proud recipient of the 2012 Nonprofit Pinnacle Award from the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce. The award recognizes management excellence, and commitment to the Chamber and community.
Do You Know About The Rainbow Fund?

Do you want to make a difference? If so, supporting the Rainbow Fund is a great place to start. Over the years, private contributions to the Rainbow Fund have helped Riverbend offer some special services and experiences to many children who face economic barriers to participation.

Since 1987, small stipends from the Rainbow Fund have enabled hundreds of children to have a summer camp experience, participate in after school programs and activities, take music lessons, horseback riding lessons, and participate in other recreational and skill-building activities that help a child develop self-esteem, confidence, and social skills.

More recently, the Rainbow Fund supported valuable clinical training for members of the DBT team (see below), and strengthen this effective evidence based treatment model for our highest at-risk adolescent clients.

To learn more about the Rainbow Fund and how you can help, please visit our website: [www.riverbendcmhn.org](http://www.riverbendcmhn.org). You can also make an online contribution to support the Rainbow Fund at [www.riverbendcmhc.org/giving](http://www.riverbendcmhc.org/giving).

Rainbow Fund Supports DBT Team Training

Riverbend’s commitment to the DBT approach was clearly demonstrated in the recent decision to invest $10,000 from the Rainbow Fund to send four DBT clinicians to an intensive 10-day training.

“It was great to be able to bring these new clinical intervention skills back to the entire team, and then work on developing and refining them together,” said Amy Stutz, DBT team leader and one of the four clinicians who participated in the 10-day intensive.

Riverbend welcomes Dr. Osvaldo J. Evangelista to medical staff

Riverbend is pleased to welcome Dr. Evangelista to our work with adults living with mental illness. “He is a valuable addition to our team,” said Dr. Robert Murray, Riverbend’s Medical Director.

“I have received a warm welcome, and I am pleased to be in a community setting where I can make a real contribution working with consumers with such a wide variety of complex needs.” Dr. Evangelista said.

Dr. Evangelista is a graduate of the University of Buenos Aires School of Medicine, and board certified in psychiatry. He completed his residency in psychiatry at The Roosevelt Hospital and practiced in New York City before moving to New Hampshire.

Please join us!

The 2012 Champions for Mental Health will be presented with their Rainbow Awards on Wednesday, October 10. Visit our website ([www.riverbendcmhc.org](http://www.riverbendcmhc.org)) for more information and sponsorship opportunities.
The Governor, legislative leaders, and the Commissioner of Human Services have decided to put the care of all consumers receiving Medicaid under for-profit managed care. This change is supposed to save the state money while improving the quality of care. As I write this message, we are waiting for the federal government to approve the change that will turn on the new system in January 2013.

This change will be transformational for Riverbend and those we serve—about 65 percent of all Riverbend funding comes from Medicaid. Traditionally, managed care saves money by restricting the use of services or cutting reimbursement to providers. In our case, New Hampshire already reimburses mental health centers so poorly that it is unlikely that they will cut what we are paid right away. Instead, the three for-profit managed care companies who will be administering the program will start to restrict the services we can provide to consumers and families.

Besides the expected administrative hassles that are built into the business model for managed care, what is really at stake here is the recovery model. New Hampshire has long believed that it is not enough to treat consumers’ symptoms. We need to support people to live a successful, stable life in the community. We believe employment matters. Community connections matter. Under managed care, will any of these value driven services and supports be “medically necessary?”

Riverbend is working to engage the three managed care companies in thoughtful dialogue on how to meet their business objectives and consumer and family needs and expectations. I believe that there can be a “win-win” for those we serve if each side is willing to be creative and put consumers and families first.

As always, Riverbend will do its best to preserve recovery-oriented, family- supportive services. But we all need to be vigilant as we move to this new business model. We will also need to be ready to be vocal with our political leaders if we experience overly negative impacts. Stay tuned!

“What is really at stake here is the recovery model.”
NHPR’s Giving Matters features
Riverbend consumer

“I’m living proof that people can have problems and that it’s possible — with the right resources — to overcome difficulties,” said Brian Ross, a Riverbend consumer who was recently featured on NHPR’s “Giving Matters.” Brian moved from homelessness and confusion to economic and social self-sufficiency with help from Riverbend.

“Riverbend is that resource,” Brian said. “They certainly helped me overcome my difficulties and achieve all the goals that I’ve achieved so far. Everything has been going really well for me.”

You can listen to the full story at the NHPR website (www.nhpr.org/programs/giving-matters).

Each year, Riverbend helps nearly 9,000 children, adolescents, and adults in the greater Concord area find their path to recovery, and a better life. Can you help Riverbend in this important, community-building work?

To learn more contact Gayle Kimball, Director of Development, at gkimball@riverbendcmhc.org or call 603-226-7510, ext. 4333. Give online at www.riverbendcmhc.org/giving.