

## Why DBT STEPS-A in Schools?

A Comparison Between the CDC's Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) Recommendations for Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in Schools and DBT STEPS-A

DASH Recommendation	DBT STEPS-A
Multi-tiered system of support	DBT skills can be taught within classes to all students (Tier 1), in small groups for kids needing support for skill development (Tier 2), or 1:1 with clients as part of an IEP or to address difficulty in functioning (Tier 3)
Increase Students' Mental Health Literacy	Uses specific language to teach adolescents the skills needed to discuss and promote psychological health
Promote Mindfulness	One skill unit focuses specifically on mindfulness
Promote Social, Emotional and Behavioral Learning, specifically offer targeted education focused on teaching social skills and emotional development	Skills sets include emotion regulation and interpersonal effectiveness
Enhance Connectedness Among Students, Staff, Families	DBT STEPS-A offers a shared language and when used between teens and adults can increase understanding and connection
Provide Psychosocial Skills Training and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions, specifically:	
Promote acceptance and commitment to change	The core dialectic that underpins all of the interventions/skills taught in DBT is acceptance and change
Provide cognitive behavioral interventions	All skills taught within DBT are a cognitive behavioral intervention
Engage students in coping skills training groups	All lessons within the DBT STEPS-A curriculum can be taught in groups
Support Staff Well-Being	DBT STEPS-A offers clarity and a resource to staff that can help increase their effectiveness

**Note:** DASH Recommendations taken from Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in Schools: An Action Guide for School and District Leaders, December 2023, Division of Adolescent and School Health, CDC  
[https://www.cdc.gov/mental-health-action-guide/media/pdfs/DASH\\_MH\\_Action\\_Guide\\_508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/mental-health-action-guide/media/pdfs/DASH_MH_Action_Guide_508.pdf)