



Psychology Skills Group for Adolescents (PSGA)



Group format

The Psychology Skills Group for Adolescents (PSGA) is a psychological group therapy for young people who are experiencing a range of mental health difficulties. This group aims to support young people to learn new ways of coping that can help them manage distress and difficulties with emotions, and navigate their relationships more effectively.

This group is centred on learning a mixture of skills from Dialectical Behavioural Therapy for Adolescents (*Miller, Rathus & Linehan, 2006; Rathus & Miller, 2014*), Radically Open Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (*Lynch, 2018*) and Group Radical Openness (*Egan, Long, McElvaney & Booth, 2021*).

We invite parents or caregivers to attend the group alongside their young person to help support them in learning and practising new coping skills. Parents or caregivers are supported in further developing their understanding of their young person's experience.

We understand that starting the group can be a hard thing to do. We encourage young people to be gentle with themselves during this transition and to reach out to the group facilitators for support. Young people choose what and how much they wish to share in the group.

There are five modules outlined on the opposite page.

Modules

Difficulties	Modules
Confusion about yourself <i>Not always knowing what you feel or why you get upset; having trouble focusing your attention.</i>	Mindfulness (Four sessions)
Emotional dysregulation <i>Fast, intense mood changes with little control; or steady negative emotional state.</i>	Emotion regulation (Five sessions)
Impulsivity <i>Acting without thinking it all through; mood-dependent behaviour.</i>	Distress tolerance (Four sessions)
Interpersonal difficulties <i>Struggling to be assertive in your relationships; feeling respected; loneliness; ups and downs in your relationship.</i>	Interpersonal effectiveness (Five sessions)
Family challenges <i>Polarised thinking, feeling and acting; giving and receiving validation; being mindful in our relationships.</i>	Walking the middle path (Four sessions)



Who is this group for?

- Young people aged 14-18 years.

- Young people experiencing a range of mental health difficulties such as emotional dysregulation, low mood, anxiety, or eating disorders.

- Young people with an under-controlled emotional regulation style, where they might struggle to manage their emotions, experience intense relationships, or have a history of deliberate self-harm, suicidal ideation, and suicidal behaviours.

- Young people with an over-controlled emotional regulation style, where they might inhibit expression of their emotions or express unvaried emotions, avoid risk, or appear distant and aloof in relationships.

- Young people who are willing to engage in behavioural change and practise new skills.

- Parents or caregivers who are willing to support their young person with new skills and practise new skills for themselves.

Who runs the groups?

This group is run by a team of two psychologists and an assistant psychologist.

When and where?

The group takes place via Microsoft Teams on Mondays from 3.30pm to 6pm for 22 weeks. Parents or caregivers join the young people in the group from 5pm to 6pm each week for 18 weeks. During the 'Walking the middle path' module, young people and parents/caregivers attend the group from 3.30pm to 6pm.

How are referrals made?

Any young person or parent that would like to attend this programme can discuss it with their St Patrick's Mental Health Service's clinician, who will refer them to the psychologist on the team to assess whether the group is a good fit for their needs.

GPs can also refer directly to the programme using referral forms on stpatricks.ie, or by contacting the Referral and Assessment Service by email at: referrals@stpatricks.ie or Tel: 01 249 3635.

Please do not hesitate to contact us:

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Feedback from past group members

Previous group members share their thoughts for those thinking of joining the programme:

Young people:

"It's so worth it. It's hard and challenging but practice the skills and they will benefit you."

"It's not as scary as it sounds."

"Very good skills that everyone can learn to apply to their life no matter what their experience of mental health."

"It's hard but it helps."

Parents:

"The course has improved my relationship with my child. We participated together and heard each other's point of view on the topics discussed."

"I would stress the positive impact it has had on us as a family. I would try to encourage them to be open and positive about the process."

"Hugely valuable and worthwhile. Life-changing. Give it time. Not easy but worth it completely."

www.stpatricks.ie

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