

ACT Guide for Adolescents Provides Online Mental Health Program for Teens | CEHS

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Psychologists at the Utah State University Sorenson Legacy Foundation Center for Clinical Excellence have developed a new online mental health program for teenagers struggling with anxiety and depression.

The program, called Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) Guide for Adolescents, teaches teenagers key ACT skills like being more present, accepting difficult thoughts and feelings, and moving towards the things that matter to them. ACT is an evidence-based psychotherapy method that has been found to be effective for a wide range of mental health problems.

ACT Guide for Adolescents is based on ACT Guide, which is designed for adults and has been accessed by over 1,600 people worldwide since it was released last year.

Dr. Michael Levin, the primary developer of ACT Guide, is a leading ACT researcher and an associate professor in the Department of Psychology of the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services at USU. Over the past decade, Levin has been working to translate the skills clients typically learn in therapy into an online self-help format. "These programs provide a way for teenagers to learn skills we normally teach in therapy to improve their mental health privately, at their own pace," Levin said. "I'm hoping that ACT for Adolescents will provide a useful resource for teenagers struggling with depression, anxiety, or other mental health challenges."

Right now, ACT Guide for Adolescents is only available by participating in a research study. "We want to get feedback from teenagers on what we've made so far so we can

be sure it's helpful and improve it even more before we release it to the public," said Levin.

The ACT Guide for Adolescents study is currently recruiting participants. Study participation involves completing 3 online surveys and using the online self-help program over the course of 8 weeks. To be eligible, you must be 12-17 years old, live in Utah, have symptoms of anxiety or depression, be interested in testing a self-help website, and have reliable internet access.

You can learn more about the study at utahact.com/TeenHelp.