

Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Children, Young People and Families - Anna Freud Centre/UCL (2014 to 2016)

The diploma provides training for practitioners from a wide range of disciplines, and working in different contexts in using CBT with children, young people and families. The two year course involved attending 8 -12 teaching days per year at the Anna Freud Centre, which consisted of professional practice group tutorials and seminars on different clinical topics in CBT.

The practice groups were particularly helpful as they involved students showing videos of their CBT practice and reflecting on technique with a supervisor experienced in CBT. These sessions helped me develop my skills in engaging adolescents and young people, as well as putting into practice CBT skills such as developing a shared formulation and using cognitive strategies and behavioural techniques.

We were very fortunate to receive seminars from experts in the field, which covered theoretical aspects and how this relates to practice. I particularly enjoyed the session on OCD and the session on being creative in CBT practice.

Another key aspect of the course was the written and video assignments. Through writing case reports I was able to reflect in some depth on my CBT practice and explore underlying theory. I completed case reports on a young person with an Autism Spectrum Disorder and OCD, and a young person who was depressed. The video assignments helped me reflect on various aspects of my practice over the course of a full CBT session – including my engagement skills, and collaborative working, management of time, use of materials and specific CBT techniques.

The course involved a lot of hard work, but was very enjoyable. The tutors were knowledgeable and approachable, and I also learnt a lot from other students. As a clinician in an NHS CAMHS setting, I was particularly interested in the experience of teachers using CBT in educational settings.

I am already using my CBT skills in my practice as a Child Psychiatrist in the NHS. I am also teaching some of the techniques I have learnt around working with adolescents to trainee doctors.

I am immensely grateful to the Foundation for Professional Services in Adolescents for the support it gave me in completing this course.

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