

ABFT Certification Process

The ABFT Training Program has a defined process for certifying therapists in ABFT. The certification process takes approximately 1 year and consists of didactic work, video consultation with individual feedback, and group consultation. Before completing the certification process, therapists in training may say they are conducting ABFT informed work. Therapists that have been certified may refer to themselves as ABFT certified therapists. **Therapists can choose to take longer than 1 year to complete certification.

Therapists participating in a supervision group, can chose to have their contact information listed on the ABFT Training Program website as an ABFT Trained (not certified) Therapist. Once certified, their contact information will be moved to the ABFT Certified Therapist list. Please contact Suzanne Levy, Ph.D. (slevy@drexel.edu), Training Director of the ABFT Training Program if you are interested in pursuing Therapist Certification or have any questions.

Training Timeline	
Timing	Content
Start	3-day Introductory Workshop
0-3 months post workshop	Obtain cases and begin group consultation
0/3-12 months	Participate in group consultation
3-6 months	3-day Advanced Workshop
6 – 12 months	Submit tapes for tape review (approximately 2 tapes per month)

Therapist Requirements: Therapists in the U.S. need to have at least a master’s degree in social work, mental health counseling, clinical or counseling psychology, or couple’s and family therapy. If therapists are not licensed, they need to be employed somewhere where they are receiving supervision. Internationally, therapists need to have local certification or licensure allowing them to practice therapy. In addition, therapists must ensure they have sufficient clinical time to treat ABFT clients (at least 2-3 clients at a time).

Readings

Therapists are required to read the entire treatment manual titled, “Attachment-Based Family Therapy for Depressed Adolescents” which was published by the American Psychological Association (Diamond, Diamond & Levy, 2014). It is recommended that therapists read the manual prior to attending the 3-day introductory workshop, but is not required.

Workshops

Therapists must attend a 3-day introductory workshop. On Day 1, lecture and videotape are used to provide a complete overview of the theoretical principles and clinical strategies of ABFT. Days 2 and 3 build on Day 1, with the use of case discussion, tape review, and role-play to deepen participants’ understanding of the approach. Throughout Days 2 and 3, therapists are also taught how to use the ABFT adherence checklists.

Therapists must also attend an advanced 3-day workshop approximately 3-6 months after the introductory workshop. This workshop, will help advance therapist’s ABFT skills. Participants discuss person of the therapist issues as they relate to ABFT and learn about the use of emotion-deepening skills in the context of ABFT. During the advanced training, a certified ABFT trainer provides supervision via live supervision (when possible), and role-play. In preparation for the training, we ask therapists to think about their biggest challenges in utilizing ABFT with families in Tasks 1-5. As many live supervision sessions as possible are scheduled during the 3-day advanced training.

Supervision

Starting after the initial workshop, trainees attend bi-weekly, 60-90 minute (depending on group size) group supervision video conferencing calls for one year. Trainees are expected to discuss their current cases in which they are applying ABFT using the ABFT Case Presentation Outline. Therapists are required to send a short case write-up on cases they present each week using the ABFT Case Write-up Outline. In addition, they are expected to present video clips of their work via videotape. At least one ABFT Certified Supervisor attends these calls and provides supervision for the cases.

Videotape Review

After attending the Advanced Workshop, trainees begin submitting videotaped complete ABFT sessions for review by certified supervisors. Trainees should submit one to two videotapes a month, for a minimum of 10 tapes. These tapes should be of recent sessions so that therapists can demonstrate their use of feedback from the group supervision sessions. The ABFT supervisor will inform the therapist of which tasks or portions of a task to submit. When submitting tapes, therapists must submit a case write-up (template provided). Therapists must also provide self-feedback on their tapes with suggestions for how to improve portions of their tape that are not consistent with ABFT or could be improved. ABFT Certified Supervisors review the tapes and provide in-depth written feedback, as well as 20 minutes of phone consultation (as needed) regarding the tape. In addition to the in-depth feedback, supervisors rate the tapes using our adherence measures. Therapists are also expected to rate their own tapes which they submit using the adherence measures. Completing all 10 tapes does not guarantee that someone is certified. A therapist may need to submit additional tapes (at additional cost) if they have yet to sufficiently develop certain skills. However, we have found that with the level of feedback we provide, most therapists are ready for certification review after 10 tapes.

TIME COMMITMENT

Below is a breakdown of the hours that each therapist would be expected to invest in order to obtain certification.

1 –Year Option

Total hours are 85 if partaking in 60-minute group consultation OR 96 if partaking in 90-minute group consultation. This includes 24 hours for the introductory workshop, 24 hours for the advanced workshop, 22 hours for 22 60-minute group consultation OR 33 hours for 22 90-minute group supervision calls, and 15 hours for self-review of the 10 tapes sent to supervisor (estimated time to review is 90 minutes).

ADDITIONAL TRAINING/SUPPORT

Mechanism for ongoing Supervision/Support

If therapists desire supervision beyond their 1 year contract, they may pay for ongoing supervision.