“Our mission matters because kids matter.”

FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS, Lad Lake has provided highly individualized care for at-risk youth and families in southeastern Wisconsin. Focusing on four core program areas – Residential, Education, Independent Living, and Outreach – all of our services share the common goal of fostering life skills development in each of our clients, as well as successful independence within their respective communities. Serving more than 1,800 youth, young adults, and families every year, Lad Lake continues to commit to guiding growth and changing lives.
"At Lad Lake, we’re investors of hope. We’re proud of our history, because we’ve spent it preparing youth for successful tomorrows."

**EDUCATION** Lad Lake offers four specialized academic programs, two school sites in Milwaukee and two sites located on our Dousman campus, each specifically suited to meet the needs and challenges of different school-age students and provide the greatest opportunity for success. Key to such success is our highly individualized classroom environment, where teachers focus on providing targeted skill development and a positive educational experience in preparation for a successful return to his or her regular school.

**INDEPENDENT LIVING** Lad Lake’s Independent Living program assists youth and young adults in preparing for, and transitioning to, living on their own. From our central office in Milwaukee, staff assist both male and female clients in obtaining suitable housing, employment, and support services in southeastern Wisconsin counties. With the guidance of a specially trained staff, participating youth and families are taught self-sufficient life skills to achieve successful community living, which continues beyond our involvement.

**OUTREACH** So much of what we do at Lad Lake focuses on youth and young adults. But our Outreach services extend to young men and women, single parents, children, and families, often by providing services in the client’s own home or community. Mentoring, in-home therapy, and parent training are examples of the broad spectrum of services offered by our trained therapists and counselors. Services are delivered in a timely manner in order to assess, stabilize, and educate clients, with the goal of maintaining their self-sufficiency in the community.

**RESIDENTIAL** Located in Dousman, Wisconsin on 365-acres of rural land, our Residential treatment facility offers 24-hour care, treatment, medications management, and education to male youth (ages 10 through 20). Dedicated staff use a multidisciplinary team approach to help stabilize resident behavior, create the motivation for positive change, and develop the necessary pro-social skills to prepare youth for a successful return to their home communities.

**FOR US, IT'S NOT ABOUT CHANGING THE WORLD. IT'S ABOUT INITIATING POSITIVE CHANGE FOR INDIVIDUALS IN OUR OWN SMALL CORNER OF IT.**

That's our mission. It shepherds our every action and interaction. Because at heart, Lad Lake is all about relationships ... positive, rewarding, enduring relationships. Each staff member has the power to become a catalyst for change in the lives of our clients; to shape a positive experience rooted in the strong values of family, faith, community, and education. The potential for change exists within each and every person we serve, because an inherent goodness dwells within them, a light that desires to shine. Our job is to uncover that light. To nurture it. To kindle it. And to teach our clients how they can shine on their own.
What is DBT?

- Dialectical Behavior Therapy was developed initially for the treatment of borderline personality disorders.

- Dialectical means that there is more than one way to look at a situation or behavior. Truth is found in the synthesis of different perspectives.

- DBT was created primarily for the treatment of individuals who engage in self-harm.

- DBT strives to reduce problem behaviors and increase skillful behaviors.

- DBT has been demonstrated as an effective treatment for people who have difficulty controlling their emotions and behaviors.

Is DBT suitable for adolescents?

- Teens engage in self-harmful behaviors including substance abuse.

- Teens struggle with regulating their emotions and act impulsively.

- Teens engage in current behaviors that are interfering with long-term goals.

- Teens are confused about themselves and their emotions or behaviors.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Guiding adolescents, young adults, and their families on their life’s journey.

An evidence-based treatment for adolescents who struggle with regulating their emotions, interpersonal relationships and distress tolerance.

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**What are the goals of DBT?**

- Move from being out of control to in control of one’s behavior.
- Reduce, then eliminate, life-threatening behaviors, behaviors that interfere with treatment, and behaviors that destroy the quality of life.
- Teach skills that help people to:
  - Control their attention so that they stop worrying about their future or obsessing about their past; increase awareness of the present moment in order to learn to identify and effectively manage their emotions.
  - Start new relationships, improve current relationships, or end bad relationships.
  - Understand what emotions are, how they function, and how to experience them in a way that is not overwhelming.
  - Tolerate emotional pain without resorting to self-harm or self-destructive behaviors.
  - Move from emotionally shutting down to experiencing emotions fully.
  - Build an ordinary life and solve ordinary problems.
- Develop new skills in Mindfulness, Distress Tolerance, Emotional Regulation, Interpersonal Effectiveness, and Walking the Middle Path.

**What Makes DBT different from other forms of treatment?**

- Balances change with acceptance & validation.
- Teaches new skills to replace the old, problematic behaviors.
- 24/7 phone coaching by the individual therapist and/or skills trainers to assist clients and parents with practicing skill in the moment, and in their environment.
- Uses diary cards to track target behaviors and skills used.
- Identifies precipitating events (i.e. the event that started the problem), vulnerability factors (e.g. tired, hungry, etc) that might intensify reactions, and consequences resulting from the behavior.
- Weekly consultation team meetings for the therapists and skills trainers to provide support to each other and continue furthering their educational and therapy skills.
- Provides effective transfer of new learning to the client’s environment.

**What are the assumptions of DBT?**

- The lives of suicidal, depressed, anxious, and/or angry clients are painful as they are currently being lived.
- All people must learn new behaviors in different situations in their lives (e.g. home, school, neighborhood).
- There is no absolute truth. DBT strives to find balance between different perspectives.
- Clients may not have caused their own problems, but will have to solve them anyway.

**Why do people engage in self-destructive behavior?**

- Self-destructive behaviors are learned coping techniques.
- Some people’s brains are “hard-wired” to experience stronger, more intense emotions; they are more vulnerable to quick, intense, and difficult to control emotional reactions.
- Some people are slow to return to their emotional baseline following an upset.
- Some people experience invalidating environments. With DBT, the environment (significant others) learns to accept, understand, appreciate, and assist with the client’s reality.