

# A New Approach to SEL: A Scoping Review of DNA-V



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## Background

DNA-V is an approach that merges principles of **cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)**, **acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)**, **dialectical behavior therapy (DBT)**, and **positive psychology**

### Discoverer (D)

The discoverer represents **trial-and-error** behavior; asking questions, being open-minded and curious, and unafraid of making mistakes.

### Noticer (N)

The noticer represents one's **awareness**, including internal states like anxiety, depression, stress, interpersonal conflict, and distorted cognition.

### Advisor (A)

The advisor represents one's "inner voice" or moral compass, helping to **guide** behaviors and thinking patterns to protect oneself.

### Values (V)

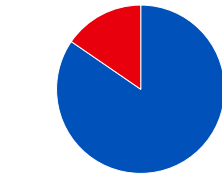
One's values represent what's **important** to them, like being a good friend, making good grades, saving money toward a goal, or getting into a preferred university.



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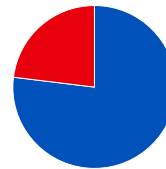
## Findings

Geographical Locations



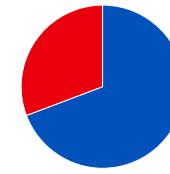
■ Outside the U.S. (k = 11)  
■ Within the U.S. (k = 2)

Samples



■ Adolescents (k = 10)  
■ Others (k = 3)

Study Settings



■ Within schools (k = 9)  
■ Outside of schools (k = 4)

Outcome	Measures	Range of effect sizes
Psychological Acceptance	Avoidance and Fusion Questionnaire for Youth (AFQ-Y; k = 4) Cognitive Fusion Questionnaire (CFQ; k = 1)	$d = -0.11$ to $1.60$ ( $n = 160$ ) Nonsignificant ( $k = 3$ )
Mindfulness	Children and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure (CAMM; k = 2)	Nonsignificant ( $k = 2$ )
Anxiety	Chinese Secondary School Students Anxiety Scale (CSSSAS; k = 1) Revised Child Manifested Anxiety Scale – Second Edition (RCMAS-2; k = 1) Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS; k = 1)	$d = -0.06$ to $0.20$ ( $n = 147$ )
Stress	Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS; k = 1) Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; k = 1)	$d = -0.33$ ( $n = 8$ ) Nonsignificant ( $k = 1$ )

Three studies were conducted with **healthcare providers** and **teachers**

Across all three studies, **intervention vocabulary** was noted as, at times, being **difficult to understand** for both youth and adults, **disconnected** from the **predominating culture**, and **less effective** for students across developmental stages

Overall, stakeholders had **positive opinions** of the effects of the programming  
Improvements in **self-efficacy, attitude, confidence**, and **willingness to engage** were noted

## Implications

DNA-V shows promise toward improving **social and emotional learning** in students, especially by targeting **internalizing behaviors** and implementing **positive psychology** practices.

DNA-V as a whole, and specific adaptations (BOLD, Connect), show **positive preliminary evidence** toward supporting youth, especially within existing MTSS frameworks as **Tier 2 interventions**.

However, most outcomes have **not been replicated** across DNA-V studies, suggesting differences in **intervention fidelity**, differences in **appropriate settings** in which to deliver the intervention, or simply **cultural differences** that affect outcomes across youth and the effectiveness of a Western-based intervention.

Ultimately, **DNA-V research is emerging but trending positively**, which positions this intervention as a **tool for school-based mental health professionals**, though much more research is necessary before making definitive claims.

To view citations, please visit  
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