

# The FAB Times 2

A feasibility study of a randomized controlled trial of a family focused treatment (FFT-A UK) in the management of early onset Bipolar Disorder



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## Study Update

The FAB study has been going now for over 1 year. The good news is that 21 families have signed up to take part. Furthermore, 2 families in the 'delayed treatment' group have just started their treatment. Thank you so much for waiting!

We're very happy with recruitment and retention figures so far and would like to thank all the Consultant Psychiatrists who have helped to date and also all the families who have agreed to participate.

### What's next

Dr Sharma is presenting some of this research at a symposium at the 17th Annual Conference of the International Society for Bipolar Disorders in Toronto, Canada on 6th June 2015. He will be presenting alongside Prof David Miklowitz and Dr Aysegul Ozerdem on the topic of 'Cross cultural issues in family interventions for Bipolar Disorder'.

# Reflections from a FAB study participant

We are very grateful to a study participant who has allowed us to publish an inspiring and very moving poem about her experiences

## You will survive by AC (FAB study participant)

I am a person of survival  
But last year, that was not really my title  
A dead soul who was screaming for revival  
A young girl who became suicidal

I felt the pain, because of the comments of society,  
Probably the reason, why I've suffered from anxiety  
I've never been close or the definition of perfection  
But at the time all I needed was protecting

They called me names from gap tooth, to fat slag,  
To other shit I won't bring up, because to be honest it's that  
sad  
They'd call me thick, they'd say I was fucked up,  
I wanted to fight back, but instead I kept my mouth shut

Getting told to die, getting called worthless  
It's like people thought, their words would be hurt less  
Every time the school mornings came  
I thought to my self here we go again,  
Same shit different day, will I be crying by the time the  
clock hits ten

I felt so alone,  
The only place I felt safe was when I was home  
But it wasn't always possible, I felt like I had no friends  
I wanted to give up I wanted everything to come to an end  
And it didn't, it never did, it was like something was hold-  
ing me back,  
something was keeping me here

Every time I felt good, something would remind me and  
make me feel like nothing  
Every time I was down, something would kick me even  
further,  
It was horrible I felt like I was drowning, and there was no  
way up,  
It tore me apart, took all the fight I had in me,  
everything was just getting too much

I had enough, I was so fucking done,  
I had suicide plans I was ready to run  
I couldn't face anything anymore,  
I never went out the house, I never opened the door

I ate to comfort myself, as I piled on the weight  
I looked at my self and thought what's not to hate  
I was self harming making a mess of my arm,  
I knew I needed help, but I didn't know how to raise the  
alarm

I realised I couldn't hide forever, eventually I'd get tired,  
But I stared at the bottle of pills while running the razor  
down my arm,  
Trying to cry silently without being noticeable like an  
alarm  
I thought fuck it, I really am nothing

So I took the pills, one by one,  
Whilst listening to the sound of a depressing song  
I got scared, told my friend what I had done,  
She told me to call child line,  
to stay calm and to listen and not run

I hung up on child line, fell asleep thinking everything  
would be alright,  
When my mam bursted in to my room, later that night,  
She said wake up darling what have you done she said  
I'm not gonna be mad at you  
I said nothing, she said I'm on the phone to the police,  
I know you've overdosed and tried to forget it by going to  
sleep

Later that night I was lying in a hospital bed, throwing up  
my guts,  
while my body was fighting, trying not to shut.  
watching the tears stream down my mam's face  
whilst her heart was breaking like thunder and lightning

In my head thinking what have I done, to put myself in  
this place  
How could I be so selfish, how could I think I was noth-  
ing,  
If God kept me on this earth, he must have thought I was  
something

Now I pray, pray for the people who never saw the light,  
Pray for the people, who are still suffering and crying  
themselves to sleep at night  
And those people will think of my word like protection  
I hope they see the light, and learn smile again,  
I hope they find the strength to fight depression

Cos I know what it's like, I've been there before  
But for every closed room, I'm here to open a door,  
I'm here to open a door.  
Keep your chin held high don't give up,  
be proud of who you are and don't end up  
being one of those angels in the sky  
Chin up, you're perfect the way you are

### *End of treatment for some*

Some families have now finished their treatment and we hope they have found it useful. We would still like to hear what you thought about the process, the research and randomisation and any improvements you think might benefit the treatment manual. A member of the research team will be keeping in touch over the next few months and hopefully some of you will want to have your say.



**Many thanks to all our participants, supporters and collaborators who have contributed to the excellent progress to date!**

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