

# Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

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## Summary

TF-CBT is a structured, short-term therapy (4 – 6 months) for kids (age 3-18) who have experienced trauma & are having symptoms of traumatic stress. The treatment is appropriate for many types of traumatic experiences including but not limited to the following: sexual abuse, natural disasters, physical abuse, medical trauma, traumatic grief, witnessing domestic violence, and community violence. A trained therapist will meet with the child & caregiver once per week, sometimes with the child & caregiver individually & sometimes with the child & caregiver together.

Research on how children heal after experiencing a trauma has shown that one of the best predictors for a healthy recovery is caregiver involvement & attitude. Based on this knowledge, we believe it is very important for caregivers to be involved & supportive.

TF-CBT has been proven in multiple research studies to be extremely effective in helping traumatized kids get better in only a few months. Research also suggests that symptoms of traumatic stress need to be addressed as early as possible to prevent long-term difficulties. Additionally, TF-CBT has demonstrated improved mental health for the caregiver as well.

### **Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy includes:**

- ✓ Education about traumatic event(s) and common reactions
- ✓ Help with parenting and behavior problems
- ✓ Relaxation/Stress Management training
- ✓ Learning about feelings and how to express them appropriately
- ✓ Learning about the connection between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors
- ✓ Developing creative ways for kids to tell their stories about what happened
- ✓ Changing any inaccurate or unhelpful thoughts about the trauma
- ✓ Family sessions to help the family talk together about the trauma
- ✓ Learning and practicing safety skills