

# Hope and Healing:

## *An Overview of Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy*

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# Traumatic Stress and Foster Care [The “Why”]

A recent study and a task force found about **\*46 million children** per year in U.S. (6-10) will be exposed to violence, crime, abuse, and maltreatment

- Advised that advocates and those serving these kids learn about / provide trauma informed / focused services
- Kids in foster care more likely to be exposed to traumatic experiences (PA, SA, neglect, family & comm. violence, trafficking, sexual exploitation, bullying and loss of a loved one among many others)
- Besides trauma/abuse leading to removal -have further stresses by entering and being in the system (separation, uncertainly, multi-placements, etc.)

Attorney General's Task Force Children's Exposure to Violence 2012, National Survey: Children's Exposure to Violence 2011

\* More than entire estimated pop. of California (37 Mil)

# What is Trauma Focused-CBT?

- A hybrid model incorporating CBT, attachment, family, psychodynamic and empowerment principles
- Goals: resolve PTSD, depressive, anxiety, behavior and other trauma and loss-related symptoms in children and adolescents
- Support adaptive functioning, safety, family communication and future developmental trajectory

# Evidence That TF-CBT Works

*20+ randomized controlled trials (Gold Standard) with sexually abused/multiply traumatized children age 3-18 comparing TF-CBT to other active treatments.*

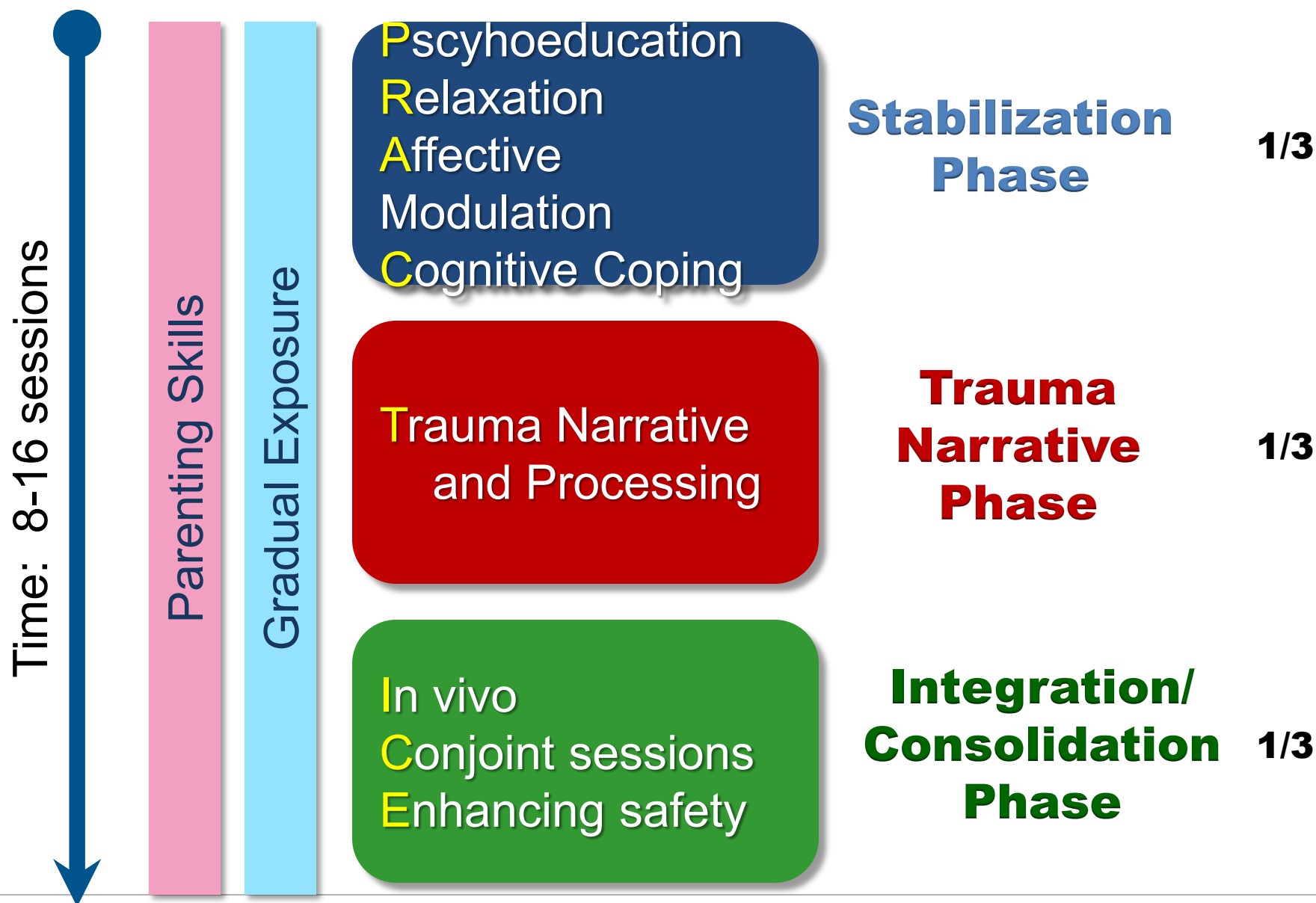
- Most rigorously tested treatment for youth trauma
  - In all studies, children receiving TF-CBT experienced significantly greater improvements in a variety of symptoms, both at immediate post-treatment, and up to 2 year follow-up. (average # of traumas = 3.5)
  - PTSD symptoms consistently improved significantly more in the TF-CBT groups.
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# TF-CBT Components: P-PRACTICE

- **P**sycho-education
- **P**arenting
- **R**elaxation
- **A**ffect identification and regulation
- **C**ognitive coping
- **T**rauma narration and cognitive processing of traumatic experiences
- **I**n vivo mastery of trauma reminders
- **C**onjoint child-parent sessions
- **E**nhancing safety and future development

Trauma Screening and Assessment are crucial for **ALL CHILDREN** receiving any Physical or Mental Health Services

**Typical TF-CBT Pacing**  
(We modify for complex trauma)



# Psycho-education

- Provide information about trauma, PTSD and any additional disorders the child is experiencing.
  - Provide information about the child's traumatic experience.
  - Educate about treatment / diagnosis, etc.
  - Normalize the child's and parent's trauma-related reactions
  - Provide hope for recovery.
  - Explains what will happen in treatment
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# Paren**t**ing Component

- Parents/caregivers receive parallel interventions for all of the **PRACTICE** components. Engagement is KEY
  - Parenting skills to enhance child-parent interactions including:
    - Appropriate use of praise
    - Selective attention/redirection
    - Time-out procedure
    - Contingency reinforcement schedules
    - TF-CBT is widely used with children in foster and residential care or other situations without consistent caregiver involvement.
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# Relaxation

- Develop individualized relaxation strategies for child and parent which may include ideas such as;
    - Focused or belly breathing
    - Progressive muscle relaxation
    - Exercise
    - Yoga / mindfulness
    - Songs, dance, blowing bubbles, reading, prayer, whatever is relaxing to them
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# Affective Identification and Modulation

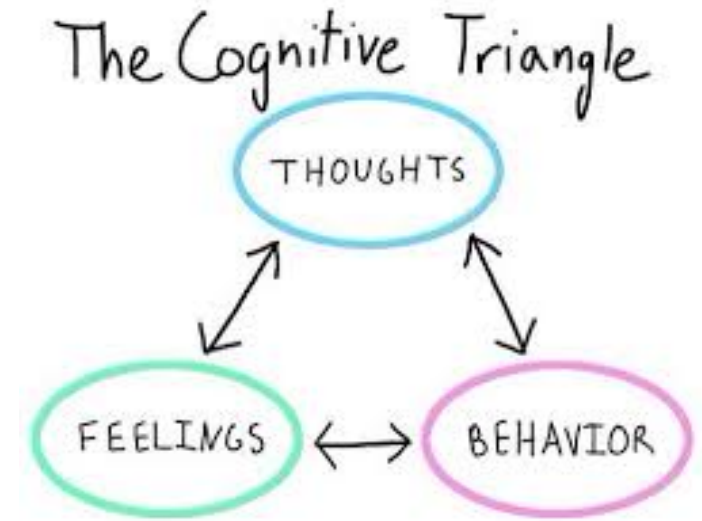
Managing feelings with activities such as:

- Exercises to identify a variety of feelings
- Skills practice for feelings expression
- Individualized strategies to modulate upsetting affective states including:
  - Problem solving
    - Anger management
    - Present focus
    - Obtaining social support

# Cognitive Coping

## Can include such skills as:

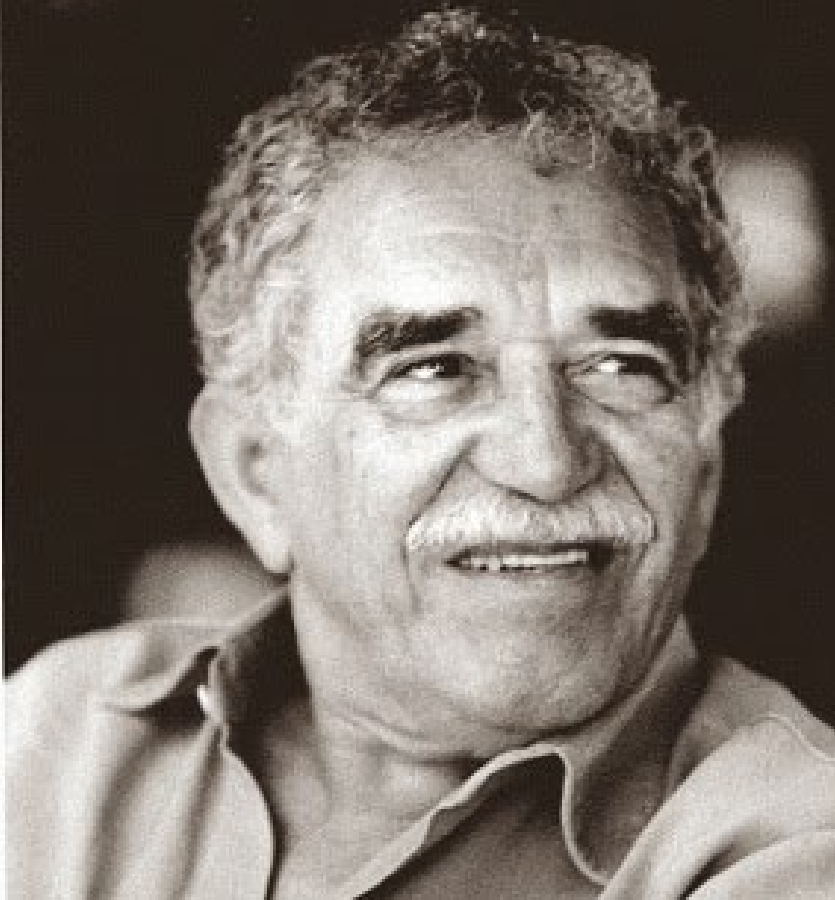
- Cognitive Triangle: Connections among Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviors
- Cognitive Restructuring: Replacing inaccurate/unhelpful thoughts with more accurate/helpful ones.
- Learning Optimism: “Being your own cheerleader”, Recognizing what you are doing well right now.



# Trauma Narration and Cognitive Processing

## **Helps kids tolerate painful memories**

- Gradually develop a detailed narrative of the child's traumatic event(s).
  - Process these events using the cognitive strategies learned earlier (changing inaccurate/ unhelpful thoughts about the traumatic events).
  - Helps with mastery
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*"What matters in life is  
not what happens to you  
but what you remember  
and how you remember  
it."*

*Gabriel Garcia Marquez*

Author: One Hundred Years of Solitude, Love in the Time of Cholera,  
Nobel Prize in Literature 1982 (1927-2014)

# In Vivo Mastery of Trauma Reminders

- Another layer of therapy used only if a child is reactive to specific reminders AND the feared reminder is innocuous (NOT if it is still dangerous).
  - “Gradual exposure” to innocuous reminders which have been paired with the traumatic experience (similar to overcoming a phobia or school refusal).  
(literally “out of the living” –outside the person)
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# Conjoint Parent-Child Sessions

Some of the most powerful, healing sessions!

- Joint sessions with the youth and parent/caregiver
  - Activities may include:
    - Coping skills development and practice
    - Sharing the child's trauma story
    - Safety skills development
    - Developing child & family safety plans
    - Discussing healthy sexuality (for children impacted by sexual abuse)
  - Enhancing child/caregiver communication
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## Enhancing Safety and Future Development

- Individualized additional components as needed for each child
  - Safety plans continued for individual situations
  - Social skills, problem solving, drug refusal, sexual safety, relationships, etc.
  - At the end particularly for sexual abuse or at beginning for community or DV
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# Summary of TF-CBT

- Trauma-focused treatment for children 3-17 exposed to a variety of traumas and their parents/caretakers
  - May be provided in as little as 8-18 sessions or adapted if needed for longer term therapy (complex trauma)
  - Components-based hybrid treatment which incorporates principles of a variety of theoretical frameworks
  - *Has additional grief-focused components for Child Traumatic Grief*
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## Training materials:

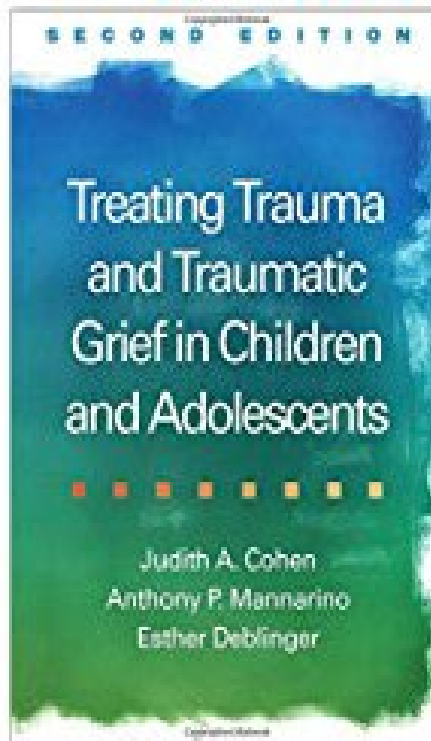
**TF-CBT Web**<sup>2.0</sup>

A course for Trauma-Focused  
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Access at:

[www.musc.edu/tfcbt2](http://www.musc.edu/tfcbt2)

11 CEUs



### TF-CBT Text / Manual

Cohen, J.A., Mannarino, A.P., Deblinger, E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (2017).  
*Treating Trauma and Traumatic Grief in Children and Adolescents*. New York: Guilford Publications, Inc.

- Web-based learning
- Learn at own pace
- Concise explanations
- Video demonstrations
- Clinical scripts
- Cultural considerations
- Clinical Challenges
- Resources
- Links

# TF-CBT Therapist Certification Program

National Certification program for Therapists

Website:

[www.tfcbt.org](http://www.tfcbt.org)

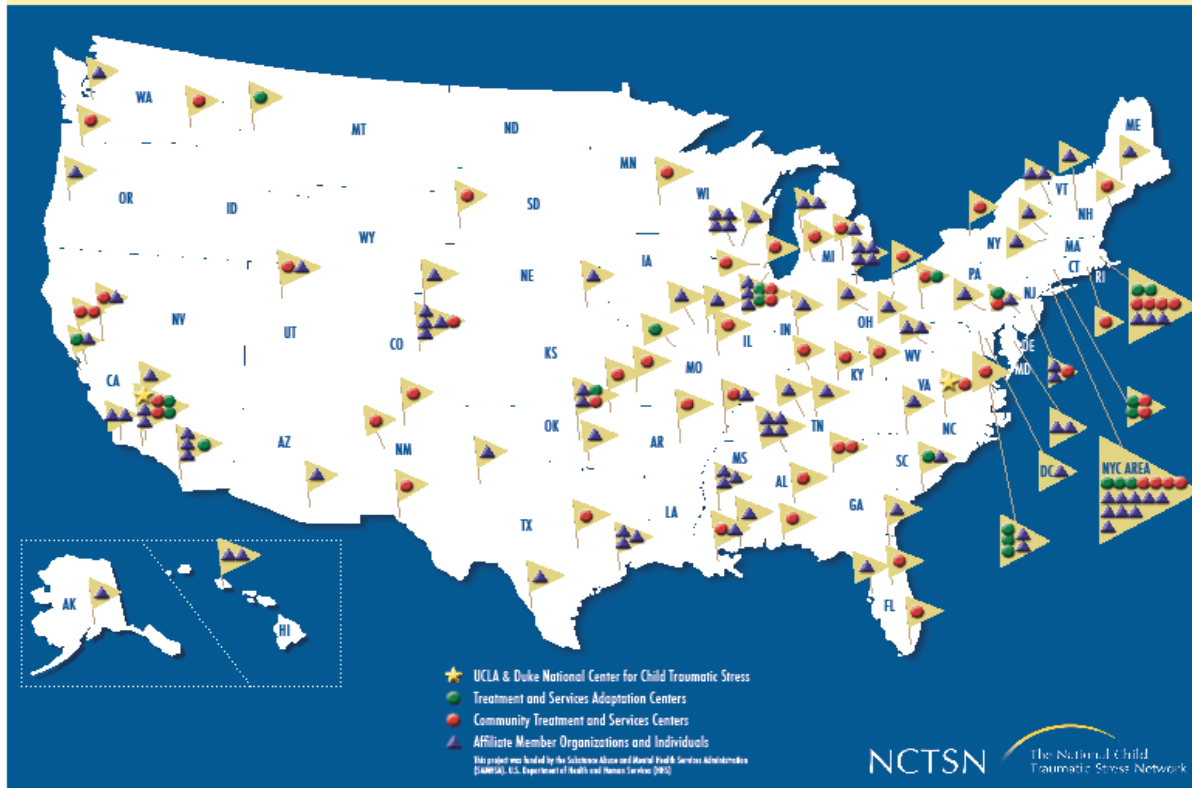
Site has numerous model related resources and can help *locate certified therapists in any state*



# NCTSN

The National Child  
Traumatic Stress Network

## National Child Traumatic Stress Network Centers



## Mission

To raise the standard of care and improve access to services for traumatized children, their families and communities throughout the United States.

**[www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)**

**An invaluable resource**

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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