



Yale University School of Medicine

THE CHILD AND FAMILY TRAUMATIC STRESS INTERVENTION (CFTSI): AN EARLY INTERVENTION MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

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The Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention (CFTSI) is an evidence-based trauma-focused mental health treatment with proven effectiveness in reducing traumatic stress symptoms and reducing or interrupting PTSD and related disorders in the aftermath of traumatic experiences. Developed by Carrie Epstein, LCSW-R and Steven Marans, PhD of the Yale Child Study Center, Yale School of Medicine, CFTSI was created specifically for implementation with children, adolescents and their caregivers during the peritraumatic/acute period and early phase of PTSD of trauma response, in the days or weeks following a traumatic event or after the recent formal disclosure of physical or sexual abuse (such as in a forensic interview).

CFTSI focuses on increasing caregiver support of the child/adolescent by enhancing communication between the child and caregiver about the child's trauma symptoms, and providing strategies to help children and families cope with and master trauma reactions. In addition, CFTSI improves screening and initial assessment of children impacted by traumatic stress, and offers an opportunity for early symptom reduction and a seamless introduction to longer-term treatment when indicated.

CFTSI is a manualized treatment that is accompanied by a standardized training protocol. Treatment applications of CFTSI for young children, ages 3 to 6 years old, as well as for children recently placed in foster care have also been developed.

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM CFTSI?

CFTSI can help children and adolescents who have been exposed to many different types of potentially traumatic events—whether exposure is a single event or chronic—including sexual or physical abuse, domestic violence, community violence, rape, assault, motor vehicle accidents, gun violence, or other mass casualty events.

CFTSI can be used effectively to benefit children and adolescents who are:

- 7 years of age and older
- 3 -6 years of age (using the CFTSI Treatment Application for Young Children)
- Living with their families of origin
- Living in out-of-home/foster care placements
- Cognitively delayed children and adolescents



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CFTSI CAN BE IMPLEMENTED WITH CHILDREN SEEN BY:

- Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) and Multi-Disciplinary Teams
- Hospital pediatric emergency department settings
- Law enforcement agencies
- Mental health clinics
- Schools

“The Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention (CFTSI) is an evidence-based treatment for children and adolescents who have experienced traumatic events and meets National Standards for Accreditation for trauma-focused, evidence-supported mental health treatment. NCA has been impressed with the difference this is making in the lives of abused children in CACs around the country and we encourage you to consider how it may complement the array of services offered in your CAC.”

- Teresa Huizar, Executive Director, National Children’s Alliance, overseeing almost 800 Child Advocacy Centers in the United States

CFTSI GOALS ARE TO:

- Reduce traumatic reactions or symptoms related to the upsetting event
- Strengthen communication between caregiver(s) and child to enhance emotional support
- Teach and practice coping skills and strategies to help reduce trauma reactions
- Help families address practical needs including safety concerns, legal issues or medical care
- Assess whether the child needs longer-term treatment

BILLING AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR CFTSI:

CFTSI is provided by Master’s, PhD and/or MD level mental health clinicians. Because CFTSI is a mental health treatment, CFTSI providers can bill for CFTSI sessions similar to any mental health treatment.

To inquire about CFTSI training opportunities, please contact:
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