Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS)

TARGET AUDIENCE

This program is for students in 5th through 12th grade who have witnessed or experienced trauma, their parents, and teachers.

SUMMARY

Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS), a school-based program, is designed to help diminish symptoms, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression, anxiety, and behavioral problems in participants who have been exposed to traumatic experiences.

EVIDENCE

Research on CBITS indicates that, while there is some evidence to suggest that it can decrease trauma and depression symptoms in children, these effects are limited by other evidence that shows limited sustainability of effects and low clinical significance. In addition, there is limited replication of findings with rigorous research designs.

COMPONENTS

CBITS intends to reduce symptoms of trauma and related behavior problems, improve youth functioning, enhance peer and parent support, and strengthen coping skills. The program uses a combination of group, individual, parent, and teacher sessions. The following techniques are used to assist students with their academic performance, coping skills, and overall functioning:

- Cognitive behavioral techniques: Gain awareness of thoughts and feelings and the links between them.
- Relaxation techniques: Reduce anxiety by teaching relaxation methods.
- Psychoeducation: Discuss causes and types of trauma and common reactions.
- Social problem-solving skills: Perform analysis and practical application activities.
- Exposure techniques and development of trauma narratives: Use imagining, drawing, or writing.

PREVIOUS USE

Since 2001, CBITS has been implemented in the United States and in several other countries in various settings, including urban, rural, suburban, and tribal. The program is available in Spanish, has been used with low-literacy youth and foster children, and has been modified for use by non-clinicians.
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TRAINING

This program is facilitated by mental health professionals who possess a master's or doctorate degree in counseling, social work, or psychology. On-site and off-site, 2-day training and online training are available. Two days of on-site training for up to 15 participants costs $4,000. For more information about training and costs, please email info@cbitsprogram.org or call 1-213-821-4398.

CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations for implementing this program include recruiting suitable facilitators and ensuring they obtain training; acquiring buy-in from youth, parents, and teachers; and securing a location to hold sessions.

The Clearinghouse can help address these considerations. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

IMPLEMENTATION

If you are interested in implementing CBITS, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you! Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

The CBITS program is comprised of 10, 50- to 60-minute weekly group sessions; one to three 30-minute individual sessions for students; two parent psychoeducational sessions; and one teacher educational session.

Costs associated with implementing the CBITS program vary depending on the materials selected. Please visit the program website using details in the Contact section for more information.

EVALUATION PLAN

To move the CBITS program to the Promising category on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence, at least one evaluation should be performed demonstrating positive effects lasting at least one year from the beginning of the program or at least six months from program completion.

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

CONTACT

Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program. Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: Clearinghouse@psu.edu

You may also contact Lisa Jaycox by mail RAND Corporation, 1200 South Hayes Street, Arlington, VA 22202, phone 1-703-413-1100 EXT 5118, email jaycox@rand.org, or visit http://cbitsprogram.org/

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