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What is TF-CBT?

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is an evidence based treatment for children and adolescents who have experienced any type of traumatic event, including experiencing or witnessing any forms of abuse, interpersonal violence, traumatic grief, violence, disasters, terrorism, accidents, medical traumas, or other events or losses. TF-CBT has been found to be effective with children as young as 3 years old to adolescents as old as 18. TF-CBT addresses a variety of emotions, symptoms, and behaviors individuals experience after a traumatic event. Through this treatment, the child or adolescent learns how to identify and express their emotions, how to communicate and cope with their feelings, relaxation skills, and then how to look at their perceptions and find helpful ways of thinking about situations (cognitive behavioral techniques). The child or adolescent then discusses and processes their memories of the traumatic events and their thoughts and feelings. The treatment focuses on each child's individual needs, but most children learn that the trauma was not their fault, that they deserve to be treated well, that there are safe adults in the world, and how to know who to trust and how to build relationships. Many scientific studies have shown this treatment reduces children's posttraumatic stress, depression, and externalized behaviors and to improve their sense of self. The child or adolescent's non-offending caregiver has a very important role in this treatment. The therapist will meet with the caregiver(s) each session and they will receive information about how the traumatic events have impacted their child and how best to support them through the treatment and beyond. Parenting skills are also discussed and enhanced. The healing process begins during this treatment, and will continue after graduation with the support of the safe adults in the child's life.

There are very specific requirements for a therapist to complete in order to provide this treatment. At the minimum, a therapist must complete prerequisite training, a face-to-face training with a developer or an approved national TF-CBT Trainer, receive consultation/supervision from an approved provider, among other steps. All therapists at Heather Risk, PsyD & Associates, PLLC are certified to provide TF-CBT or are working toward certification under the supervision of Dr. Risk.

Dr. Risk is a certified TF-CBT therapist and an approved national TF-CBT Trainer. She has received additional training and approval from the developers to provide TF-CBT Trainings, Supervision, and Consultation. Dr. Risk has over a decade of experience providing this treatment to children and adolescents, many of whom have experienced multiple traumas.

For more information about TF-CBT and the criteria for therapist to provide this treatment, please see www.tfcbt.org.

To refer a client for this treatment, or to request training or consultation, contact: Heather Risk PsyD & Associates