

Problematic Sexual Behavior Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (PSB-CBT)

Strengthening the mental health workforce. **Changing children's lives.**

WHAT IS PSB-CBT?

Problematic Sexual Behavior – Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (PSB-CBT) is an evidence-based treatment model for children and youth ages 3-18 who have engaged in problematic sexual behavior (PSB). Typically, children participate in a treatment group based on their age (preschool, school-age, and adolescents), while parents participate in a concurrent caregiver group. PSB-CBT effectively addresses a wide range of problematic and illegal behaviors, including:

- Failure to recognize socially acceptable physical boundaries
- Excessive masturbation
- Preoccupation with pornography and other sexualized content
- Generation and/or dissemination of sexualized images of self or others
- Coercive and/or aggressive sexual acts

TREATMENT GOALS

- Eliminate or reduce problematic sexual behaviors
- Improve coping skills and self-control strategies
- Enhance social competence skills
- Develop appropriate psychosexual knowledge and boundaries
- Improve caregiver monitoring, supervision, and behavior management skills
- Reduce out-of-home placement risk

SERVICE DELIVERY

PSB-CBT may be delivered in a variety of community, residential, and confined settings, including; outpatient clinics, schools, homes, group homes, inpatient psychiatric and juvenile justice facilities. Additionally, PSB-CBT can be offered through a variety of service delivery models, including: outpatient, enhanced outpatient, intensive in-home, day treatment, and residential psychiatric services.

Treatment consists of 12-23 sessions, depending on the age of the child. The model may be adapted for individual (family) therapy.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

- The majority of children and youth who participate in PSB-CBT cease to engage in problematic sexual behaviors; the recidivism rate among school age children is 2% ten years following completion of treatment.¹
- Children and youth who participate in PSB-CBT also show significant improvement in non-sexual behavior problems, emotional difficulties, and trauma symptoms.²
- Most children and youth benefit from outpatient PSB-CBT, avoiding the cost and disruption associated with out-of-home placement. The approximate annual costs (2018 dollars) for placement in a North Carolina psychiatric residential treatment facility or a juvenile justice facility are greater than \$50K and \$100K, respectively (J. Steinberg, personal communication, October 1, 2019).

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¹ Carpentier, M. Y., Silovsky, J. F., & Chaffin, M. (2006). Randomized trial of treatment for children with sexual behavior problems: Ten-year follow-up. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 74(3), 482-488. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.74.3.482>

² Silovsky, J.F., Hunter, M.D., & Taylor, E.K. (2019) Impact of early intervention for youth with problematic sexual behaviors and their caregivers. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 25(1), 4-15. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13552600.2018.1507487>