



THE FUERTE PROGRAM



(Families United in Respect, Tranquility and Hope/Familias Unidas En Respeto, Tranquilidad y Esperanza)

FUERTE is a four to six month intensive program that aims to address the mental health needs of youth on probation (ages 14-20) and increase parental capacity and skills to care for and address the mental health needs of their children involved in the justice system. Additionally, FUERTE addresses the unmet needs of family members through linkages to community resources. Services include individual and family counseling in the home, and intensive case management in the home and community settings. Also included are linkages/referrals to mental health advocacy groups (NAMI-National Alliance on Mental Illness, MHCAN), medication management, therapeutic groups, parent education and support, peer support, pro-social connections and outpatient substance use treatment. The FUERTE Mental Health Clinician uses Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) as an evidence-based treatment when providing individual and family counseling.

BENEFITS

- Short term program
- High level of support and attention
- Potential to be removed from probation if program is successfully completed (to be determined by the Judge)
- Address youth mental health needs, issues with family dynamics & family needs
- Pro-social connections
- 24-hour Crisis Support
- Evening and weekend availability for appointments
- Linkages/referrals to community based programs and services

PARTICIPANT COMMITMENTS

- Meet with MH Clinician 1-2x/week
- Meet with Transitional Specialist 1x/week
- Youth and parent(s) will attend, and be actively involved in, weekly meetings with FUERTE team
- Attend NAMI groups/meetings and other community based programs based on needs identified by FUERTE team
- Access referrals made by Transitional Specialist

THE FUERTE TEAM & CONTACT INFORMATION

- Cesar Estrada—Probation Officer.....(831) 454-3893
- Lori Feldstein—Assistant Division Director-Juvenile Probation.....(831) 763-8163
- Liliana Gonzalez—Transitional Specialist.....(831) 688-6293 x3827
- Oscar Hernandez, ASW—Mental Health Clinician.....(831) 688-6293 x3826
- Bree Bode, LMFT—Encompass Program Manager.....(831) 688-8856 x3853

What Is Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)?

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is a components-based model of psychotherapy that addresses the unique needs of child with PTSD symptoms, depression, behavior problems, and other difficulties related to traumatic life experiences.

TF-CBT is a short-term treatment approach that can work in as few as 12 sessions. It also may be provided for longer periods of time depending on the child's and family's needs.

Individual sessions for the child and for the parents or caregivers, as well as joint parent-child sessions, are part of the treatment. As with any therapy, forming a therapeutic relationship with the child and parent is critical to TF-CBT. The specific components of TF-CBT are summarized by the acronym PRACTICE:

- Psychoeducation
- Parenting skills
- Relaxation skills
- Affective expression and modulation
- Cognitive coping and processing
- Trauma narration • In vivo mastery
- Conjoint child-parent sessions
- Enhancing future safety

What Symptoms Does TF-CBT Reduce?

TF-CBT primarily reduces symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD is characterized by problems with managing trauma-related negative emotions and physical reactions caused by memories or reminders of the trauma that may lead to maladaptive coping such as avoidance of reminders. These reactions often interfere with functioning at home, in school, and in interpersonal relationships. Typical PTSD symptoms are:

- Intrusive and upsetting memories, thoughts, or dreams about the trauma
- Avoidance of things, situations, or people which are trauma reminders
- Emotional numbing
- Physical reactions of hyperarousal, trouble concentrating, or irritability

In addition to improving PTSD symptoms, TF-CBT results in improvements in:

- Depression • Anxiety • Behavior problems • Sexualized behaviors • Trauma-related shame
- Interpersonal trust • Social competence

When children experience serious traumas, other family members are affected as well. This is why TF-CBT typically includes parents or caregivers in treatment. In the aftermath of trauma, TF-CBT is effective in helping parents to:

- Overcome general feelings of depression • Reduce PTSD symptoms
- Reduce emotional distress about the child's trauma • Improve parenting practices
- Enhance their ability to support their children