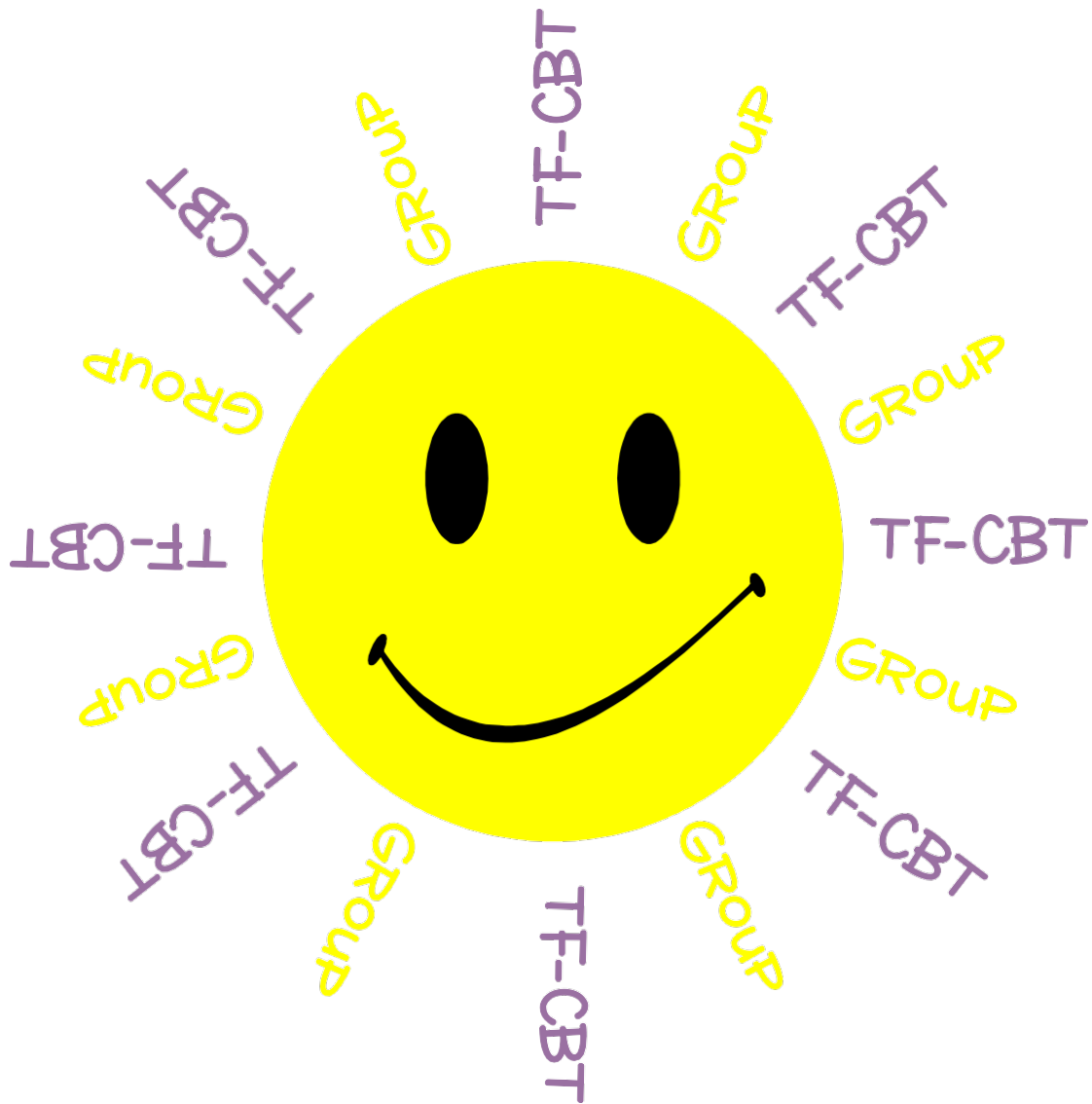


OUHSC Child Trauma Services Program



TF-CBT Group Curriculum



TF-CBT Group Session 3: *Cognitive Coping*

Rationale

This session will serve as an introduction to the cognitive triangle and cognitive coping skills development. Activities are designed to support youth development of healthy coping skills to manage daily stressors and trauma reminders. These skills will also be utilized after the trauma narrative to support children's cognitive processing of trauma-related beliefs.

Caregiver Objectives

1. Caregivers will learn methods for supporting children's development of cognitive coping skills.
2. Caregivers will consider the impact of their child's traumatic experiences on their own parenting styles.
3. Caregivers will learn trauma-informed parenting practices.

Child Objectives

1. Children will learn to identify thoughts and differentiate them from feelings.
2. Children will learn the connection between thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
3. Children will learn a method for stopping inaccurate or unhelpful thoughts.
4. Children will learn about the body's response to trauma reminders and practice skills for managing them.

Materials

Children's Group: Littles		
Children's folders		<i>Feelings Gauge</i> poster & <i>Feelings Faces</i> cutouts
<i>Group Rules</i> poster		Individual <i>Feelings Gauges</i> and <i>Faces</i> (one per child)
<i>Group Reward Chart</i> supplies		Head-Heart-Hand Signs
Tape/stick tack		Cognitive Triangle Traffic Cones (3)
Markers/Crayons/Pencils		Scenarios for Cognitive Triangle Handout
Book: Eggbert, the Slightly Cracked Egg		5 Senses Handout
Children's Group: Middles/Bigs		
Children's folders		<i>Feelings Gauge</i> poster & <i>Feelings Faces</i> cutouts
<i>Group Rules</i> poster		Individual <i>Feelings Gauges</i> and <i>Faces</i> (one per child)
<i>Group Reward Chart</i> supplies		Think-Feel handout
Tape/stick tack		Think-Feel-Do Walk-Through Signs
Markers/Crayons/Pencils		Cognitive Triangle Traffic Cones (3)
<i>Healing Days</i> book		Scenarios for Cognitive Triangle Handout
Children's Group: Bigs+		
Children's folders		<i>Feelings Gauge</i> poster & <i>Feelings Faces</i> cutouts
<i>Group Rules</i> poster		Individual <i>Feelings Gauges</i> and <i>Faces</i> (one per child)
<i>Group Reward Chart</i> supplies		Think-Feel-Do Walk-Through Signs
Tape/stick tack		ABCs of Behavior Worksheets
Markers/Crayons/Pencils		Cognitive Triangle Traffic Cones (3)
<i>My Trauma Brain Handout</i>		Scenarios for Cognitive Triangle Handout
Caregivers' Group		
Tape/sticky tack		<i>Think-Feel-Do Connection</i> Worksheet (caregiver)
Pens/Pencils		<i>Trauma and the Think-Feel-Do Connection</i> handout (one per caregiver)
Name tags		<i>Coaching on Coping Skills</i> handout
Homework 3 (one per child)		Coping Skills House Building Scenarios/Pieces for Combined Group

Session 3 Children's Group – Littles (5-7)				
1.	Group Check-In	Time	5 min	Lead Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind children of the group logistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is the third of 5 group sessions ○ The children's and caregivers' groups will come together at 6:30 for a combined activity. • Select the special helper of the day. • During check-in, have children share their feeling and rate it on the Feelings Gauge poster. 				
2.	Session Review	Time	5 min	Lead Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the concept of Muscle Relaxers and invite the special helper to assist in leading the group through rounds of Muscle Relaxers and Belly Breaths. • Review last session's focus on feelings. Concepts to review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Basic feelings words ○ Multiple feelings ○ Feelings scaling (Feelings Gauge) ○ Light and heavy feelings ○ Common feelings of children who have gone through upsetting or traumatic experiences. ○ Children can use relaxers to make heavy feelings lighter. • Homework Review: Ask children to share their successes in identifying light and heavy feelings. 				
3.	Introduction to Head – Heart-Hands	Time	5 min	Lead Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that today's session will be about thoughts, or what our brain says inside. • Have kids stand up and identify their head, heart, and hands. Explain that our head 'tells' us things, our heart 'feels' things and our hands 'Do' things. For example, Head says, "Tomorrow is my birthday!" Heart feels "excited" and Hands/Body – Jump up and down. (Use other examples to walk through). • Practice differentiating between thoughts, feelings, and actions by giving examples and having kids point to their head, heart, or hands. 				
4.	Triangle Practice	Time	10 min	Lead Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place head – heart - hands in a large triangle on the floor . Tell kids that our head is the 'boss' and so what our head says can make our heart feel and our hands do. Use example of spider being on shoulder & walk through triangle. Then change to head thinking it is a fake spider and walk through again. • Have kids take turns in groups of 3 drawing a thought – feeling- action set of slips of paper and reading aloud. Kids sort themselves to appropriate head-heart-hand and read aloud. Emphasize the point that children can lighten heavy feelings by changing or "lightening" their thoughts. Lighter thoughts and feelings lead to better choices and better outcomes. • Example scenarios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A child walks out to recess and two friends look at the child, whisper and start laughing. ○ A child is in a lunch line holding a tray of food and gets bumped from behind. ○ A child walks into class and says hi to a friend, but the friend doesn't say anything. 				
5.	Book on Changing Thoughts	Time	5 min	Lead Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce that you are going to read a book about an egg that learned to think new thoughts to feel better. • Read Eggbert the Slightly Cracked Egg • At the end ask kids what he thought about his cracks at the beginning and how he felt. Then ask how he thought and felt at the end of the book. 				

5.	Fight-Flight-Freeze	Time	10 min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that when people or animals feel scared, we do things to try to get safe. Kids are going to watch a puppet show and watch for how the animals act when they are scared. • Therapists act out 3 scenarios to demo fear responses. Pause after each to ask kids what happened. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lion hears other kids being loud and starts roaring to scare them away • Turtle sees new people and goes into his shell. • Bird hears mom (or teacher) voice and feels scare he will be in trouble and flies away • Now share that therapists will act out another play where and kids need to watch and see when the animal starts to feel scared and hold up their stop sign for when they should stop and relax. • Invite the special helper to assist in leading the group through a round of Belly Breaths and Muscle Relaxers. 					
6.	Check Out	Time	5 min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share that the group will learn a new skill in the combined group that can help when heavy feelings, thoughts or memories set off their alarms, called <i>Grounding (5 Senses)</i>. • Review behavior chart progress. • Prepare for the transition to the combined group. 					
Session 3 Children's Group – Middles (7-9)					
1.	Group Check-In	Time	5 min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind children of the group logistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is the third of 5 group sessions ○ The childrens' and caregivers' groups will come together at 6:30 for a combined activity. • Select the special helper of the day. • During check-in, have children share their feeling and rate it on the Feelings Gauge poster. 					
2.	Session Review	Time	10 min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the concept of Muscle Relaxers and invite the special helper to assist in leading the group through rounds of Muscle Relaxers and Belly Breaths. • Review last session's focus on feelings. Concepts to review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Basic feelings words ○ Multiple feelings ○ Feelings scaling (Feelings Gauge) ○ Light and heavy feelings ○ Common feelings of children who have gone through upsetting or traumatic experiences. ○ Children can use relaxers to make heavy feelings lighter. • Homework Review: Ask children to share their successes in identifying light and heavy feelings. 					
3.	Introduction to Thoughts	Time	10 min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that today's session will be about thoughts, or what our brain says inside. • Review the <i>Think-Feel</i> handout with children, including thought-feelings scenarios. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Therapists can act out the scenarios, if needed, to actively engage children. ○ Therapists can also place the think and feel traffic cones and graphics on the floor to assist in the scenario walk-throughs. ○ Use additional scenarios as needed that are relevant to group participants. 					

4.	Triangle Practice	Time	10 min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that our thoughts and feelings are also connected with our behavior, or what we do. • Place the <i>Do</i> cone and graphic in the triangle formation with the <i>Think</i> and <i>Feel</i> cones. • Return to the Spider example from the handout. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask the special helper to walk through the character's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, with support and ideas from the other group members. ○ Add to the story, stating that the character looks more closely and sees that it is a toy spider. Ask the special helper to walk back through the triangle, identifying (with group support) how the child's thoughts, feelings and behaviors change. • Use alternate or additional triangle scenarios (Scenarios for Cognitive Triangle Handout) as needed to illustrate the cognitive triangle concept. Emphasize the point that children can lighten heavy feelings by changing or "lightening" their thoughts. Lighter thoughts and feelings lead to better choices and better outcomes. • Example scenarios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A child walks out to recess and two friends look at the child, whisper and start laughing. ○ A child is in a lunch line holding a tray of food and gets bumped from behind. ○ A child walks into class and says hi to a friend, but the friend doesn't say anything. 					
5.	Fight-Flight-Freeze	Time	10 min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that everyone has an alarm system inside that helps us look out for danger. • Explain that some children who go through scary and upsetting experiences have an alarm system that is turned up on high to make extra sure that there is no danger. • Share that the group is going to read about how this alarm system works and what happens when it is turned up too high. • Read pages _____ in <i>Healing Days</i>. • Ask group to share examples of something that might set off their own alarm system. Therapists can share hypothetical examples also. • Invite the special helper to assist in leading the group through a round of Belly Breaths and Muscle Relaxers. 					
6.	Check Out	Time	5 min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share that the group will learn a new skill in the combined group that can help when heavy feelings, thoughts or memories set off their alarms, called <i>Grounding (5 Senses)</i>. • Review behavior chart progress. • Prepare for the transition to the combined group. 					

Session 3 Children's Group – Bigs (10-12)				
1.	Group Check-In	Time	5 min	Lead Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind children of the group logistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the third of 5 group sessions The children's and caregivers' groups will come together at 6:30 for a combined activity. Select the special helper of the day. During check-in, have children share their feeling and rate it on the Feelings Gauge poster. 				
2.	Session Review	Time	5 min	Lead Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the concept of Muscle Relaxers and invite the special helper to assist in leading the group through rounds of Muscle Relaxers and Belly Breaths. Review last session's focus on feelings. Concepts to review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic feelings words Multiple feelings Feelings scaling (Feelings Gauge) Light and heavy feelings Common feelings of children who have gone through upsetting or traumatic experiences. Children can use relaxers to make heavy feelings lighter. Homework Review: Ask children to share their successes in identifying light and heavy feelings. 				
3.	Introduction to Thoughts	Time	10 min	Lead Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that today's session will be about thoughts, or what our brain says inside. Review the <i>Think-Feel</i> handout with children, including thought-feelings scenarios. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Therapists can act out the scenarios, if needed, to actively engage children. Therapists can also place the think and feel traffic cones and graphics on the floor to assist in the scenario walk-throughs. Use additional scenarios as needed that are relevant to group participants. Utilize ABCs of Behavior worksheets to illustrate antecedents and consequences of behaviors. This should be done after Think-Feel handout is explained. 				
4.	Triangle Practice	Time	10 min	Lead Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that our thoughts and feelings are also connected with our behavior, or what we do. Place the <i>Do</i> cone and graphic in the triangle formation with the <i>Think</i> and <i>Feel</i> cones. Return to the Spider example from the handout. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the special helper to walk through the character's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, with support and ideas from the other group members. Add to the story, stating that the character looks more closely and sees that it is a toy spider. Ask the special helper to walk back through the triangle, identifying (with group support) how the child's thoughts, feelings and behaviors change. Use alternate or additional triangle scenarios (Scenarios for Cognitive Triangle Handout) as needed to illustrate the cognitive triangle concept. Emphasize the point that children can lighten heavy feelings by changing or "lightening" their thoughts. Lighter thoughts and feelings lead to better choices and better outcomes. Example scenarios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A child walks out to recess and two friends look at the child, whisper and start laughing. A child is in a lunch line holding a tray of food and gets bumped from behind. A child walks into class and says hi to a friend, but the friend doesn't say anything. Move from generic examples to include personal examples based on information you have about clients. 				

5.	Fight-Flight-Freeze	Time	10 min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach youth that trauma impacts our bodies, as well as our minds. Fight – Flight – Freeze is a universal (meaning everyone has it) response system in our bodies to threat. Give example of bear walking into the room right now. • (optional) May read pages 13-20 in Healing Days. • Teach that reminders of a past unsafe time, triggers, can put our bodies into fight-flight-freeze. • Ask the youth to share examples of things that may accidentally trigger the alarms of youth who have been through different types of traumas, like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car accident (riding in a car, being on a highway/busy street, car horns, sirens) • Tornado (rain, darkening sky, thunder, lightning, wind, tornado siren) • Witnessing adult fighting (arguing, loud voices; can be in different situations like a show on TV, in a store, at home, etc.) • Ask members if anyone would be willing to share something that has accidentally set off their alarm systems and how it felt. • Use “My Trauma Brain” handout to identify feelings, thoughts, and body triggers related to trauma. • Review the coping skills that have been taught in group to help children reset their alarm system: deep breaths, muscle relaxers, and activities from their Feel Better Plan. • Invite a group member to assist in leading the group through a round of Relaxers. 					
6.	Check Out	Time	5 min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share that the group will learn a new skill in the combined group that can help when heavy feelings, thoughts or memories set off their alarms, called <i>Grounding (5 Senses)</i>. • Review behavior chart progress. • Prepare for the transition to the combined group. 					

Session 3		Caregivers' Group			
1.	Group Check-In	Time	5min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome the caregivers to session 3. • Pass out name tags, folders, and ink pens/markers as needed. • Remind caregivers of the group logistics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The children's and caregivers' groups will come together at 6:30 for a combined activity. • Facilitate relaxation activity with the group. 					
2.	Homework Review	Time	5min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Homework 2: Feelings identification and scaling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask about and praise any successes. ○ Ask about challenges in completing the homework and problem-solve with caregivers to support successful mastery of feelings identification and relaxation skills in their children. 					
3.	Teach Think-Feel-Do Triangle	Time	5min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind caregivers that last week's session was on feelings identification and management. This week's session builds on that by teaching children about the connection between our thoughts, feelings and behavior. • Teach the <i>Think-Feel-Do Connection</i> by using any easily relatable experience (e.g., getting cut off in traffic). Draw triangle on white board and have caregivers identify thoughts, feelings, and actions. Try to generate from group both angry and anxious thoughts/feelings/actions. May also use the <i>Think-Feel-Do</i> handout. • Explain that understanding the think-feel-do connection is an important tool in understanding children's reactions. • Teach that caregiver can help children at each point of the triangle. Share the <i>Coaching on Coping Skills</i> handout. Discuss these ideas to aid when child is triggered and in fight/flight/freeze reaction mode. 					
4.	Cognitive Coping for Caregivers	Time	20min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform that applying the think-feel-do connection is just as important for caregivers as for kids. Our thoughts shape how we feel, and can impact our parenting. • Give example of parent thinking negative/hopeless/ ineffective parenting versus positive thinking/hopeful/effective parenting. • This session should allow caregivers the space to talk about their own thoughts related to their child's trauma history. • Utilize the group structure to facilitate a discussion in which caregiver's feel supported and validated. Ideally, the culture of the group allows for normalization of these thoughts for caregivers. • Listen for thoughts that negatively impact caregiver (support for child, distress level, general parenting) and guide group in generated alternate, balanced thoughts. (For example, "I should have known my daughter was being sexually abused, it's my fault." → "I wish I would have known earlier. I am doing everything now to help her heal.") 					

5.	Combined Group Preparation	Time	5min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined time will focus on learning a new coping skill, Grounding (5 Senses). Briefly orient caregivers to this skill and when it is helpful to use. • Caregivers will then help their children complete the <i>Coping Skills House Building</i> activity, during which the family will be expected to complete a series of activities. Some focus on coping skills while others address the difference between thoughts and feelings. • To be supportive, caregivers might: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice reflective listening to validate their child’s thoughts and feelings ○ Ask if their child would lead them in the coping skills they select. ○ Praise their child’s answers and knowledge of different skills. ○ Reinforce the idea that these are skills that their family can use during stressful times. ○ Encourage their child to come to them if they are having heavy thoughts or feelings so that the caregiver can work together to make them lighter. 					
6.	Homework Preparation	Time	5min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show caregivers a copy of Home Activity C and share that this homework will combine feelings and thought identification with scaling and coping skills practice. • Provide brief instructions on how caregivers can support their children in completing this session’s homework assignment. • Considerations for caregivers in supporting skill development in the coming week: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Caregivers may model use of the skills at times when their stress is increased. ○ Caregivers can practice the skills with their child when they start to see their child’s stress level increasing. ○ These skills will be less effective when a child is already highly upset. Intervening early is key to successful coping skills use. 					

Session 3		Combined Group			
1.	Session Review	Time	5min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are asked to share with their caregivers what they did in today's session. Children are encouraged to share their completed workbook page with their caregivers. 					
2.	Grounding	Time	5min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group leaders explain that families are going to learn a new skill for helping when heavy memories or thoughts get stuck in their brains. Group leaders teach Grounding (5 Senses) activity. Kids share with their grown-up a time their alarm goes off (for littles when they feel scared) and plan to use grounding. 					
3.	Coping Skills House Building	Time	10min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that group members have learned different ways to cope with heavy thoughts and feelings – belly breaths, muscle relaxers, grounding, and other activities they put on their Feel Better Plans. In this activity, each family gets to build a house room by room. Each room has a different story on the back. The character in each story needs the family's help to find a safe and healthy way of coping. The family is asked to come up with an answer and practice the coping skill together. Then their therapist will give them a new room with a new story to solve. Each time the family earns a new room, it can be added to their house until the house is complete. 					
4.	Home Activity Introduction	Time	2min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand out Home Activity C to families and briefly explain the assignment. Ask caregivers to make a strong effort to complete the homework with their child and return it next week so that the children can share their answers with other group members. 					
5.	Check Out	Time	2min	Lead Therapist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the homework prize drawing and award the prize to the winning child. Review behavior chart progress and praise children who earned today's reward. Hand out the prize as families leave the session. Therapists will follow up with caregivers, as needed. 					