

A new treatment for trauma is effective in children and adolescents

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A new study published in the current issue of *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* indicates the long-term positive effects of cognitive-behavioral therapy for trauma in children and adolescents. Trauma-focused cognitive-behavioral therapy is an evidence-based treatment for pediatric posttraumatic stress disorder. Trauma-focused-CBT is not only associated with a significant reduction of posttraumatic stress symptoms, depressive and anxiety symptoms, behavioral problems, and dysfunctional trauma-related cognitions, but also with improvement of psychosocial functioning. So far, only one study has demonstrated the long-term effectiveness of Trauma-focused -CBT in real-world clinical settings, with youth who had been exposed to different traumatic events.

Results showed significant continuous improvements after the treatment across a broad range of relevant clinical outcomes. This finding is consistent with previous studies reporting a reduction of both posttraumatic stress symptoms and anxiety, as well as an additional improvement in psychological adjustment, up to 1 year after completion of Trauma-focused -CBT. The ongoing trend towards improvement may be due to the strategy of Trauma-focused -CBT to furnish patients with skills to further reduce the impact of their traumatic memories. These skills might result in greater self-confidence and thus further recovery. Moreover, the reduction of trauma-related cognitions may contribute to the maintenance of treatment gains.

Future studies should consider longer observational periods, even up to adulthood, and investigate potential long-term treatment effects, such as

resilience towards new [traumatic events](#) and further achievements in life.

More information: Dunja Tutus et al. Sustainability of Treatment Effects of Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Children and Adolescents: Findings from 6- and 12-Month Follow-Ups, *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* (2017). [DOI: 10.1159/000481198](https://doi.org/10.1159/000481198)

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