

# The National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative:

Helping Kids Recover and Thrive



The mission of NCTSI is to transform mental health care for children, adolescents, and families affected by trauma throughout the country by improving the quality of community-based trauma treatment and services and increasing access to effective trauma-focused interventions.





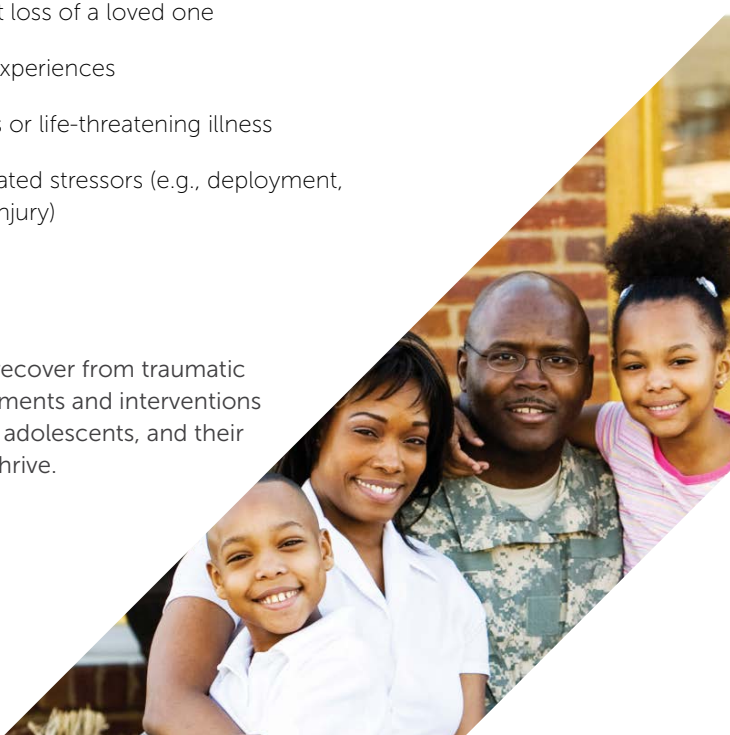
## **ABOUT** CHILD TRAUMATIC STRESS

Many children and adolescents experience traumatic events. These events may include:

- ▶ Neglect
- ▶ Psychological, physical, or sexual abuse
- ▶ Natural disasters or terrorism
- ▶ Witnessing or experiencing domestic violence
- ▶ Community or school violence
- ▶ Physical or sexual assault
- ▶ Commercial sexual exploitation
- ▶ Sudden or violent loss of a loved one
- ▶ Refugee or war experiences
- ▶ Serious accidents or life-threatening illness
- ▶ Military family-related stressors (e.g., deployment, parental loss, or injury)

### **THERE IS HOPE**

Children can and do recover from traumatic events. Effective treatments and interventions exist to help children, adolescents, and their families recover and thrive.



## IMPACT OF TRAUMA

In many cases, children may have experienced complex trauma or exposure to multiple or repeated traumatic events. This exposure may have wide-ranging, long-term impacts.

The impact of unrecognized child traumatic stress can last well beyond childhood. In fact, research has shown that child trauma survivors may experience:

- ▶ Learning problems, including lower grades and more suspensions and expulsions
  - ▶ Increased use of health and mental health services
  - ▶ Increased involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems
  - ▶ Long-term health problems (e.g., diabetes and heart disease)
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## ABOUT THE NATIONAL CHILD TRAUMATIC STRESS INITIATIVE (NCTSI)

Recognizing the serious mental health impact that traumatic events can have on children, adolescents, and families, Congress authorized the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to develop a national program to focus on child and adolescent trauma. A national program named the National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative (NCTSI) was created under the Children's Health Act of 2000.

SAMHSA's NCTSI accomplishes its goals by funding grantees that make up a national network of intervention developers, implementers, and service providers who work collaboratively to promote effective community practices for children, adolescents, and families affected by trauma. This is known as the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN).

The NCTSN collaborates with key child-serving systems and their leaders at the federal, state, and local levels to address the impact of childhood traumatic stress nationwide.

NCTSI grantees work with established systems of care including the health, mental health, education, law enforcement, child welfare, juvenile justice, and military family service systems to ensure that there is a comprehensive, trauma-informed continuum of accessible care.

Network-supported, evidence-based interventions, products, and tools are used in each of these settings and systems to better assist children and families.



## A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

To further the development and dissemination of evidence-based clinical intervention systems, NCTSI, through the work of the NCTSN, leads a collaborative structure of experts comprised of SAMHSA representatives and four distinct groups of grantees and stakeholders:

- ▶ **The National Center for Child Traumatic Stress** works to promote leadership and collaboration across the NCTSN and disseminates NCTSN program and intervention products.
- ▶ **Treatment and Service Adaptation** centers identify, develop, support, and improve treatment approaches for different types of childhood trauma.
- ▶ **Community Treatment and Services** centers provide and evaluate the effectiveness of trauma treatment and services in community and service system settings.
- ▶ **Affiliate members**, made up of 120 formerly-funded NCTSN members that continue to contribute to the national mission and ongoing work in their states and local communities.

**The NCTSN** also includes family and youth representatives on national workgroups, grantee advisory boards, and the Network's youth task force.

SAMHSA's NCTSN has trained more than **one million health professionals**.

Funded grant sites have provided evidence-based treatment to **hundreds of thousands of children**, adolescents, and families nationwide.



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## FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT:

**THE NATIONAL CHILD TRAUMATIC STRESS INITIATIVE,**  
visit <http://www.samhsa.gov/child-trauma>  
or call (240) 276-1880

**THE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH  
SERVICES ADMINISTRATION,**  
visit <http://www.samhsa.gov>  
or call (877) SAMHSA-7

**THE NATIONAL CHILD TRAUMATIC STRESS NETWORK,**  
visit <http://www.nctsn.org>

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