

Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools : Racial Trauma Module (CBITS-RTM)

TREATMENT AND SERVICES ADAPTATION CENTER FOR
RESILIENCY, HOPE, & WELLNESS IN SCHOOLS
NATIONAL CHILD TRAUMATIC STRESS NETWORK

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www.cbitsprogram.org

www.traumawareschools.org

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Overview



- Background
 - Development of Racial Trauma Module
 - Racism and Trauma
 - Cultural Humility and Self-Awareness
- CBITS-RTM Step by Step
- Other treatment issues
- Implementation planning



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History of Development: CBITS-RTM in Juvenile Justice



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Brief History of CBITS at Echo Glen Children's Center



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Why a Trauma Program in Juvenile Justice?

(Video Credit to Tatoosh Media: www.tatooshmedia.com)



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Can we talk about race?



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CBITS-RTM Research Study (2019)

Focus was creation of racial trauma module to be integrated into CBITS.

Modifying or adding components to a pre-existing evidence-based program can present a serious threat to program fidelity (Petrosino, Turpin-Petrosino, & Finckenauer, 2000).

However, it could also enhance effectiveness (Huey et al., 2000).

Strong literature base around racism contributing to racial trauma (Kirkiris et al, 2018) and need to address concern.

Modifications to programs more likely successful if primary components are retained (Durlak and DuPre, 2008).

CBITS group sessions 6&7 and 8&9 were condensed into one session for study.



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CBITS-RTM Research Findings (2019)

Staff $N = 8$; Treatment Youth $N = 30$; Control Youth $N = 24$

CBITS Feasibility

Overall fidelity averaged 80% or higher across 20 randomly selected audio recordings across two CBITS trainers.

CBITS-RTM

Overall fidelity of 72% or higher.

General Multilevel Modeling Results (Quantitative)

Positive trend ($p < .10$) for a treatment effect on BDI (depression).

Trend for treatment effect on increased expression of feeling powerlessness for identified scenarios due to racism for all CBITS-RTM treatment youth, and youth of color more than the control youth of color.

Anxiety scores indicated tx was beneficial with greater pretest-posttest decreases for youth of color compared to those in control.

Acceptability

96% of treatment youth recommended CBITS-RTM.

96% of youth provided positive, qualitative statements about the racial trauma module.

Staff rated their training experience of 98% or higher.

All participating staff stated they would recommend CBITS-RTM at completion of study.



Report published on the

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What does racism have to do with trauma?



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Trauma and Racism: How do these go together?

- ⚡ Negative effects of racism and racial discrimination on mental *and* physical health has been widely documented.
- ⚡ Findings have supported the notion that racism is not only a type of life stressor but can contribute to traumatic stress.
- ⚡ Furthermore, we have found that an adverse experience can not only lead to an individual experiencing common traumatic reactions, but it profoundly negatively impacts their overall mental health and quality of life.
- ⚡ Black, indigenous, and other People of Color have been found to experience PTSD at much higher rates compared to Whites.
- ⚡ Search for reasons to this disproportionality has led scholars to examine whether persistent exposure to, or experiences of racism can cause PTSD.



(Bryan-Davis & Ocampo, 2005; Carter & Muchow, 2017; Sledobnik, Sands & Rollock, 2016)

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Racial and Ethnic Disparities

Racial disparities among adjudicated youth have increased in the last decade although youth incarceration has declined (Sentencing Project Report, April 2016)

Emerging literature on “racial trauma,” arguing that experience of racism could lead to PTSD symptoms (Carter, 2007; Chae, Lincoln, & Jackson, 2011)

Vital to increase cultural awareness and understanding among staff who work directly with adjudicated youth

Also important to engage in meaningful conversations with youth around these challenging topics with regards to the impact on their lives



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Your Cultural Upbringing

Take a moment to reflect on your own cultural upbringing and background

Identify the following:

- How you define culture
- Values and expectations
- Discipline practices
- Reward system at home
- Role of family members
- Who did you cry to? Talk to? Play with? Seek comfort with?
- How was conflict handled?
- How was love expressed?



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Cultural Humility

Process-oriented approach, instead of striving for a level of "competence"

Three main factors of Cultural Humility:

1. Lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and self-critique
2. Desire to fix power imbalances, where none ought to exist
3. Develop partnerships with people and groups who advocate for others



(Hook, Davis, Owen, Worthington, and Utsey, 2013; Tervalon and Murray-Garcia, 1998)

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Step 1: Commitment to Lifelong Learning

Self-Reflection and Evaluation as *Critical*

"To refuse to listen to someone's cries for justice and equality until the request comes in a language you feel comfortable with is a way of asserting your dominance over them. ... By tone policing, you are increasing [their] disadvantage by insisting that you get to determine if their grievances are valid and will only decide they are so if they make the effort to prioritize your comfort." - Ijeoma Oluo



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Step 2: Mitigate Power Imbalances and Challenge Them

What are power imbalances?

Do you hold power?

How do you "mitigate" the power imbalance?

What are situations in therapy that are power imbalances?



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Talking about Race Makes it Worse and Other Thoughts

"What if some of the youth in the group is white? Would this session apply to them?"

"I'm worried if I encourage the teen to talk about race, or even discuss the possibility that he is a victim of racism, that he will not take any responsibility for his crime and play the 'race card'."

"I really just think we need to treat everyone like a human being and just treat the behavior. The behavior is the problem, so let's just focus on that."

"Just because I'm White, does not mean that I cannot relate to them."

"Race has nothing to do with it, if only he would focus on school and get an education."

"Bringing up race will only encourage the victim mentality."



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Healing the Hidden Wounds of Racial Trauma (Hardy, 2013)

Hardy (2013) "Healing the Hidden Wounds of Racial Trauma"

1. Affirmation and Acknowledgement
2. Create Space for Race
3. Racial Storytelling
4. Validation
5. The Process of Naming
6. Externalize Devaluation
7. Counteract Devaluation
8. Rechanneling Rage



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Affirmation and Acknowledgment

"It is important for the helping professional to convey a general understanding and acceptance of the premise that race is a critical organizing principle in society. Through affirmation and acknowledgement, we allow conversations about race to emerge."



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Create Space for Race

“Conveying a sense of openness and curiosity, we take a very proactive role in encouraging conversations about race. An effort is made to identify race as a significant variable, and we encourage youth to talk openly and candidly about race and their respective experiences with it.”



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Racial Storytelling*

“Young people are invited to share personal stories of racial experiences. This enables them to develop their voices and begin thinking critically about their experiences growing up as a youth of color. Examples of specific questions to encourage storytelling are:

- 1) Can you tell me a story about the first time you realized you were treated differently because of your race?
- 2) Can you tell me about a time when someone attempted to dis’ you based on your race?
- 3) Can you tell me a time when you felt proud to be (Asian, Latino, African American, Native American, etc.)?



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Validation

“Tool for counteracting devaluation and an assaulted sense of self. Validation is much more specific and personalized than the affirmation and acknowledgement process. Rather than conveying a verbal knowledge about race, validation provides confirmation of a youth’s worldview and worth. We also discover strengths and redeemable qualities of the young person, and the youth’s small acts of heroism is pointed out.”



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Process of Naming

“One of the most debilitating aspects of racial oppression is that this is a *nameless condition*, difficult to describe, quantify, or codify. Lacking a common language to convey what is happening deepens the self-doubt/self-denigration cycle. The major objective of this step is to affix words to racially based experiences. As we “name” the hidden wounds of racial oppression, we help youth understand how their lives are significantly impacted by them.”



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Externalize Devaluation

“We help youth understand why respect and the absence of respect are so important. They learn to recognize that devaluation and disrespect are directly connected to race and oppression. Further, some of their problem behavior may have been counterproductive ways to try and gain respect. The goal is to increase their thirst for respect and to recognize that assaults on their dignity do not lessen their self-worth.”



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Counteract Devaluation

“Provide an array of resources (emotional, psychological, and behavioral) that help build their strengths and provide a buffer against future assaults to their dignity and sense of self. This is vital if they are to successfully cope in the face of unrelenting messages from the broader society that can have a debilitating effect on their sense of self.”



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Rechanneling Rage

"Pain of rage is a normal and predictable response to perpetual experiences with degradation, devaluation, and domination. It is the build-up and culmination of emotions that have been blocked expression. There is a strong relationship between voicelessness and rage. Unless rage is properly channeled, it can be all-consuming, displaced, and destructive to the self and others. The goal of treatment is not to rid them of their rage but instead help them be aware of it, gain control of it, and ultimately redirect it. Rechanneled rage can be a powerful energy source helping youth of color to discover and cultivate what is great in and about them."



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Angel, 17-year-old Latino (from Hardy article)

"Dog, it's crazy out there as a Latino...; everybody looks at you all the time like something is getting ready to go down. I mean, I get on the E Train (subway) and suddenly all eyes are on you like you are a thief, rapist, or burglar. I see the looks...I know the looks cuz they happen all the time. At times, I want to go over to them, you know, mostly white people, and say 'hey, I know what you're thinking and I ain't no robber'. But I ain't stupid. I know I can't say s--- cuz the minute I try to say something like that, the next thing you know, the person start screaming and yelling, I am dead! You and I know what happens next...here comes the Po-Po and the next thing you kno I'm on lock down for just trying to tell some racist M---F---, I ain't trying to rob them. Man, it's messed up out there!"



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CBITS-RTM: Introduction to Race and Links to Traumatic Stress

AGENDA

1. Activity Review
2. Introduction to Racial Trauma & Related Terms
3. Terms and Definitions
4. Video Review
5. Video Discussion
6. Racial Trauma
7. Applying CBITS Skills to Cope and Combat Racism



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CBITS-RTM Placement Reminder

- If you do this module in two parts, which is recommended, the format is as follows:

Part One

- I. Activity Review
- II. Introduction to Racial Trauma & Related Terms
- III. Terms and Definitions
- IV. Video Review
- V. Video Discussion

Part Two

- I. Activity Review
- II. Racial Trauma
- III. Applying CBITS Skills to Cope and Combat Racism (10 minutes)



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Activity Review

Dependent upon if you do this module in two parts, with the first one being after Session 4 and the second after Session 8, your activity review would follow those respective sessions. Scripts are provided in the workbook.

If you do this in one group session, following Session 8, then your activity review would be for Session 8.



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Introduction to Racial Trauma and Related Terms

Important for facilitators to assume a culturally humble stance.
Emphasize this is brief introduction and focuses only on racism and its' impact on trauma.
Intersectionality and other parts of our identity and its impact is not discussed as in-depth, but that does not mean it is not important.
Review script from manual.



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Terms and Definition

Review of 6 primary terms:

1. Racism
2. Structural Racism
3. Microaggression
4. Unconscious Bias
5. Discrimination
6. Prejudice



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Racism

First ask if group members know how racism is defined, then provide definition (included in handbook)

"Any prejudice against someone because of their race, when those views are reinforced by systems of power. This is often thought of individual, face-to-face or covert actions towards another person that intentionally express prejudice, hate or bias based on race."

After reading definition, ask group members if they agree with the definition

Take a listening stance, less teaching

Emphasize it is a discussion



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Structural Racism

"A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate (foster) racial group inequity. A system of hierarchy and inequity, primarily characterized by white supremacy- the preferential treatment, privilege and power for white people at the expense of Black, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, Arab, and other racially oppressed individuals."

Some of these concepts can feel a bit abstract so here are a couple of examples: One example is, a Black man in Kansas City, 25 or younger, has a 28 percent chance of being stopped by the police. While a similar white male has only a 12 percent chance.

Another example is, over 65% of prisoners serving life without parole for nonviolent offenses are Black."



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“Adam Ruins Everything- The Disturbing History of the Suburbs”



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Micro-aggressions

“Everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or not, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.”



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“Teenagers Discuss Microaggressions and Racism”



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Unconscious Bias

"Judgements that occur automatically in favor of or against one thing, person, or group as compared to another, in a way that is usually considered unfair."

An example is a store worker following a Latino male in the store, thinking he might steal something. Assuming someone is a criminal based on their appearance is harmful and can lead to real consequences such as false criminal charges being placed on an individual.

An example is a woman clutching her purse in an elevator when a Black male walks in. Assuming someone is dangerous or about to steal your purse is harmful as it can lead to them calling the police, which have statistically resulted in negative outcomes. In some situations, Black males have died as a result of being falsely accused at the hands of police officers."



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Children/Adolescents, Race, and Implicit Bias



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DISCRIMINATION



"Treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing belongs rather than on individual merit."

An example is a hiring manager may look through job applicants and decide not to interview those with certain last names.

An example is paying a woman who does similar work as a man lower wages, or offering lower wage to a new immigrant having similar experiences/skills as a non-immigrant."



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PREJUDICE

"An unjustified or incorrect attitude (usually negative) towards an individual based solely on the individual's membership of a social group.

An example is having the attitude that all Black men are dangerous.

Another example is having the attitude that all Latinos are undocumented and stealing everyone's jobs.



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Clarification

"To clarify, anyone can be prejudiced toward anyone else, regardless of their race. People of color can be prejudiced towards white people, for example. However, it is not racism because there is no larger system in place, which oppresses white people."



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Video and Discussion

The Race Project (8 minutes) (<https://vimeo.com/160146948>)

As you play the video, the (below) questions are posed in this video with participants in the video providing their response. Before the next question plays, stop the video and engage the youth in discussion by having them answer the questions from the video. The questions are outlined below:

- Do you think racism still exists?
- What are some ways you see it in today's society?
- In what ways do you see it in your community?
- Have you ever experienced racial discrimination before?
- What do you think can be done to help resolve or stop racism?



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The Race Project Video



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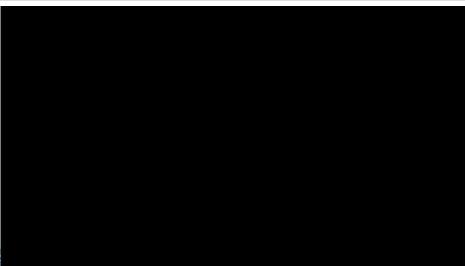
Racial Trauma

"After reviewing the terms and definition, and the videos, I want to highlight that experiences with any of these can contribute to stress. When one experiences repeated acts of racism, in any form, whether it is a microaggression, discrimination, or an unconscious bias, over time when one experiences many of these it can make one experience traumatic stress related to racially charged experiences."



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Understanding Racial Trauma



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Applying CBITS Skills to Cope and Combat Racism

Primary focus is to be aware that racism can contribute to traumatic stress, especially experiencing repeated acts of racism.

The first step is acknowledging that these events exist and occur.

The second step is figuring out how to cope.

We can cope either by managing our emotions or taking action, whichever is appropriate considering the situation.

A case scenario is provided in the manual, it is recommended to devise other case scenarios either on your own or elicit ideas from the group.



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Case Scenario (in handbook)

"Trey is an African-American, 15-year old male who struggles with math. In his math class, the teacher, Mr. Davis, gives the lesson to the class and tells the class to start their in-class work. Trey turns to his friend, Adam, who is a 15-year old Chinese-American male for help. Mr. Anderson walks over to Trey and says, "Trey, you can't just copy Adam's work. He is probably good at math but you need to do your own work." Mr. Davis then walks away and helps another student. Trey and Adam look at each other in confusion. Trey is unsure whether he can still work with Adam and Adam is scared to help Trey because he doesn't want either of them to get in trouble by Mr. Davis again."



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After reading the case scenario, ask the following questions and encourage them to apply skills learned from CBITS thus far.

- *What do you think is happening here?*
- *What advice would you give Trey? Adam?*
- *What CBITS' skills would you recommend Trey to use? Adam?*



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Next, engage youth in identifying thoughts and actions for both Trey and Adam. Then, have youth identify pros and cons to each action. Example tables have been provided for you here.



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What are possible thoughts and actions Trey might have?

Thought	Action
"I'm going to try to figure this out by myself"	Sits there, still confused with math work.
"I feel picked on"	Talks aloud, tries to get teacher's attention.
"That felt somewhat racist."	Talks to teacher afterwards, tells him how the comments made him feel.



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What are possible thoughts and actions Adam might have?

Thought	Action
"I'm going to get in trouble if I help Trey."	Avoids Trey, sits in seat and does work by himself.
"That felt somewhat racist."	Talks to teacher afterwards, tells him how the comments made him feel.
"Mr. Davis is a jerk but I need a good grade in this class."	Do nothing.



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What are some pros and cons to the actions that we came up for both Trey and Adam?

Trey

Adam

Action	Pro	Con	Action	Pro	Con
Sits there, still confused with math work.	Stays quiet, does not bring attention to self. Mr. Davis will leave him alone.	Feelings of anger and hurt will grow.	Avoids Trey, sits in seat and does work by himself.	Won't get in trouble anymore, teacher will leave me alone.	Trey might get upset and it might negatively impact their friendship.
Talks aloud, tries to get teacher's attention.	Feels immediate gratification.	Become a "problem" student.	Talks to teacher afterwards, tells him how the comments made him feel.	Use of effective communication, teacher might learn the impact of his statements.	Teacher might get upset.
Talks to teacher afterwards, tells him how the comments made him feel.	Use effective communication skills, lets teacher know impact of comments.	Teacher might get upset.	Do nothing.	Teacher might leave us alone.	Nothing changes.

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What action should Trey pick? Adam? Why?

Ideally, youth would choose a prosocial choice that might involve a discussion with teacher and the impact of the teachers' statements. However, discussing risk is important. For example, there might be more risk involved for Trey as Black males are often looked at as criminals compared to Adam, as Asian-American males are often assumed to be compliant and more gentle. Assuming Adam is good at math because he's Asian, for example, is a microaggression. Assuming Trey was copying Adam is also a microaggression and unconscious bias at play here. These are important to point out.



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Review of Key Concepts and Planning for Future Sessions

Questions provided in manual
Plan for celebration



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