



Treatment Selection for Traumatized Children: PCIT or TF-CBT?

Georganna Sedlar, PhD
UC Davis Children's Hospital CAARE Center
Jennifer Thomas, PsyD
UC Davis MIND Institute
Dawn Blacker, PhD
UC Davis Children's Hospital CAARE Center
October 14, 2010



Best Practices for Maltreated Children

- Strong empirical support for both PCIT and TF-CBT
- PCIT, TF-CBT and Abuse-Focused CBT (Kauffman Best Practices Task Force of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2004)

TF-CBT Overview

- Children ages 3-18 years
- Nonoffending Parent/caregiver
- Children from various environments
- Families of various races and cultures (e.g., Hispanic, African American)
- History of:
 - Sexual abuse
 - Exposure to domestic violence
 - Physical abuse
 - Car accidents
 - Natural disasters (flooding, fires, earthquakes)
 - Physical trauma (dog bites, surgeries, etc.)
 - Witnessing a violent crime
 - Traumatic grief



TF-CBT Components

- **P**sychoeducation/Parenting Skills
- **R**elaxation Training
- **A**ffective Regulation and Expression
- **C**ognitive Coping
- **T**rauma Narrative development & processing
- **I**n vivo gradual exposure
- **C**onjoint parent child sessions
- **E**nhancing safety and future development/growth



Common Clinical Presentation of Maltreated Children

- Poor Affect Regulation
- Externalizing Behaviors (e.g., temper tantrums, noncompliance, physical aggression)
- Internalizing Behaviors (e.g., withdrawal, sadness, anxiety)
- Trauma Symptoms (e.g., hyperarousal, reexperiencing, avoidance)



Clinical Symptoms Guide Treatment

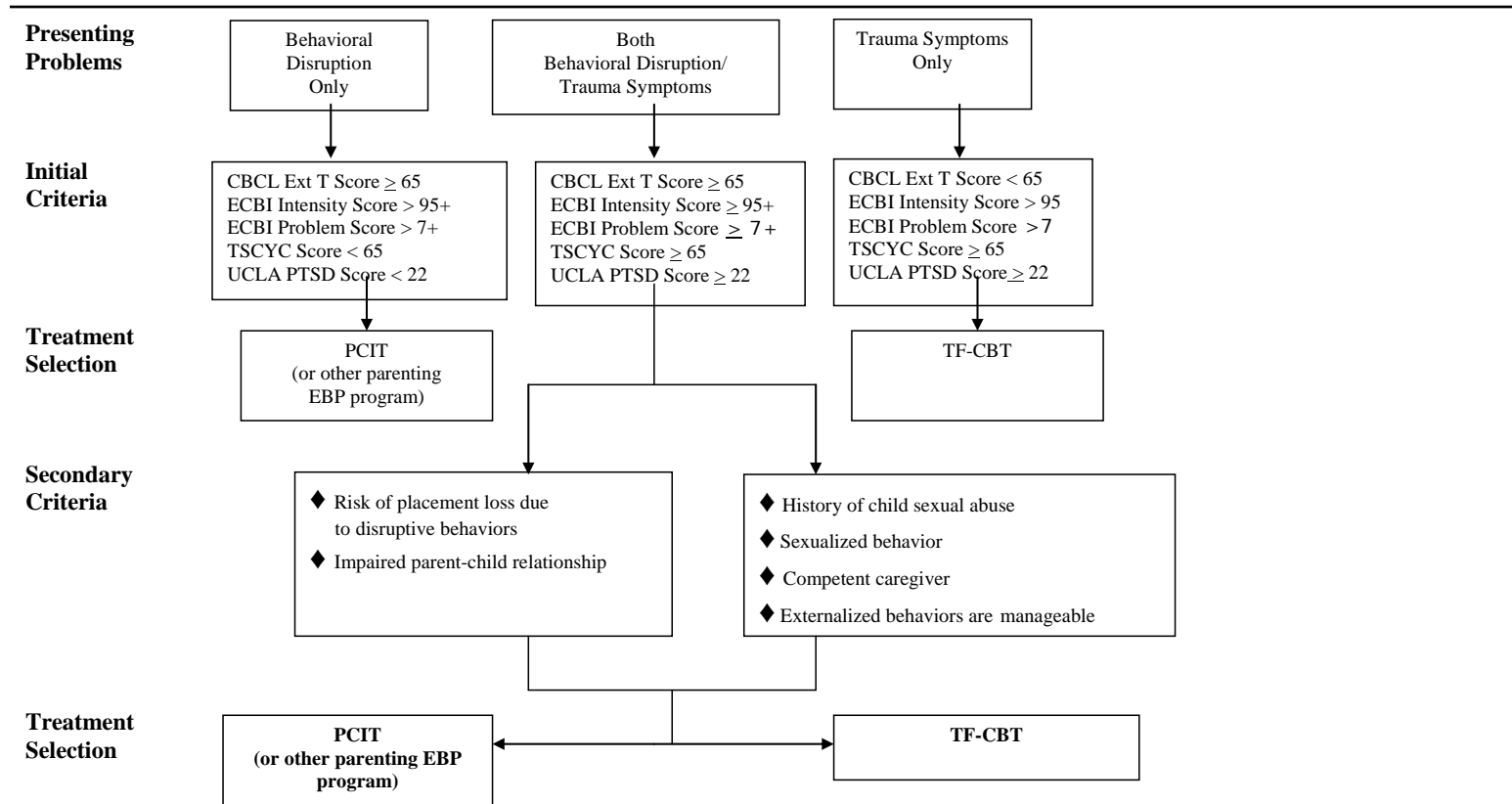
- Predominant Externalizing Behaviors=PCIT or other parenting EBT program
- Predominant Internalizing and Trauma Symptoms=TF-CBT
- Externalizing, Internalizing + trauma symptoms=?



Use of Assessment in Decision Making

- Child Behavior Checklist
- Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory
- Trauma Symptom Checklist for Young Children
- UCLA PTSD Index

**Decision Tree – PCIT or TF-CBT
(Child Age: 2.5 years to 8 years)**



Decision Tree - PCIT or TF-CBT. Sedlar, G., Blacker, D., Urquiza, A., & Ornelas-Knight, M. (2010). Copyright 2010 University of California Davis CAARE Center. Do not distribute or reproduce without permission from the authors.



Case Example: S.

- 6 year old Latina girl
- Exposure to maternal neglect, domestic violence, and sexual abuse
- Placed with an experienced foster parent
- Sexually Inappropriate Behavior

Case Example: S.

- CBCL: Internalizing=72;
Externalizing=69
- ECBI Intensity=132
- ECBI Problem=14
- TSCYC=107; Sexual Concerns=110
- UCLA PTSD=24



Use of Decision Tree

- **Competent Caregiver**
- **Sexualized Behaviors**
- **History of Sexual Abuse**
- **Externalized Behaviors Manageable**
- **Recommended Treatment: TF-CBT**



Case Example: A.

- 6 year old Latina girl
- Born Failure to Thrive
- History of severe physical, emotional, and sexual abuse
- Physically Aggressive behavior including animal cruelty
- Reported auditory hallucinations
- Placed with maternal aunt and other siblings

Case Example: A.

- CBCL: Internalizing=74;
Externalizing=64
- ECBI Intensity=147
- ECBI Problem=13
- NO TSCYC or UCLA but Sleep Problems on CBCL=82 and Anxiety Problems=70

Use of Decision Tree

- **Risk for disrupted placement**
- **Competent caregiver but client's behaviors were overwhelming to her (e.g., PSI Parent-Child Dysfunction=99th percentile)**
- **PCIT first then referred for Trauma Focused therapy**