

The Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention (CFTSI) is offered at CASGSL's three locations:



On the UMSL campus



In the Central West End



In Kirkwood

## Children's Advocacy Services of Greater St. Louis Locations

### University of Missouri–St. Louis Kathy J. Weinman Child Advocacy Center

7800 Weinman Way  
St. Louis, MO 63121  
314-516-6798

#### Kirkwood

121 W Monroe Ave  
Kirkwood, MO 63122  
314-516-8300

#### Central West End

4443 W Pine Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
314-516-4088



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# CONTACT

Community Operations Network  
For Treatment After Childhood Trauma

## Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention

Frequently Asked Questions

Children's Advocacy Services of Greater St. Louis

### Q: What is a traumatic event?

- A:**
- An overwhelming or upsetting experience
  - Examples include:
    - Sexual or physical abuse
    - Witnessing domestic or community violence
    - Exposure to a natural disaster, war, or terrorism

### Q: What are traumatic stress reactions?

- A:**
- Experiencing a traumatic event can overwhelm a child's ability to cope
  - May result in difficulties with thoughts, emotions, or behaviors including:
    - Feeling sad, nervous, jumpy, worried or frightened
    - Being preoccupied with memories of the trauma
    - Sleep and/or eating problems
    - Tantrums or anger problems
    - Difficulty concentrating

### Q: What is CFTSI?

- A:**
- Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention
  - A brief therapy model (between five to eight sessions)
  - For children and their caregivers
  - Developed by the Yale Child Study Center
  - Reduces the effects of children's exposure to trauma
  - Helps support children when they are struggling to cope
  - Provides education about trauma and trauma symptoms
  - Increases communication between children and their caregivers

### Q: Why is CFTSI helpful?

Research shows that CFTSI is an effective therapy. It:

- Can decrease traumatic stress reactions
- May prevent Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Reduces children's distress
- Teaches coping skills
- Improves communication between children and their caregivers

### Q: Who can participate in CFTSI?

- A:**
- Children 7-18 years old who:
    - Have recently experienced or disclosed a traumatic event
    - Live in St. Louis City or County
  - Their non-offending caregivers (including biological or foster parents)

### Q: Do you provide transportation?

- A:**
- We can help with transportation costs in some circumstances
  - Our locations are easily accessible by St. Louis public transportation
  - We have free parking

### Q: What is a Family Engagement Specialist (FES)?

- A:**
- CASGSL staff trained in helping families referred to CFTSI
  - They offer assistance to help families engage in services. This may include:
    - Making transportation arrangements
    - Finding childcare
    - Identifying community resources to address other family needs
  - They help families get into therapy
    - Completing necessary paperwork
    - Finding convenient times/dates

### Q: How long will it take?

- A:** This is a **short-term** intervention. Most families finish in **five sessions** though we may add an additional one to three sessions if needed.

### Q: When do sessions take place?

- A:** During normal business hours. We are happy to provide notes to families to explain absences to school or work.

### Q: What if my child does not want to talk about the trauma?

- A:**
- CFTSI does not require children to discuss the trauma.
  - CFTSI is focused on identifying trauma reactions and feelings and then learning new coping skills.

### Q: My child is the one who experienced the trauma, why am I being asked to participate?

- A:**
- A child's traumatic experience impacts the entire family
  - The first session is with the caregiver only
  - Later sessions include time where the child and caregivers meet together
  - CFTSI teaches caregivers ways to help their children
  - It also helps improve communication between children and caregivers
  - The best predictor of a child's recovery after a trauma is the presence of a supportive caregiver

### Q: What if I have not noticed any changes in my child's mood or behavior?

- A:**
- All children react differently to traumatic events
  - Some reactions are visible, and others are not
  - Some children are vocal in communicating their symptoms or distress, but many are less comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings
  - CFTSI helps increase children's coping skills and comfort in discussing their feelings

### Q: What if my child needs more than five to eight sessions?

- A:** At the end of treatment, your therapist will discuss next steps. If needed, we will provide referrals for services that may benefit you and your child.

### Q: How much do the sessions cost?

- A:** CFTSI is **FREE** for families living in St. Louis or St. Louis County.

### Q: How soon can I start?

- A:** Within one or two weeks.

### Q: Where are the sessions located?

- A:**
- Any of our three locations (see back panel)
  - Remotely via telehealth

**For answers to additional questions, call 314-516-7330.**