# Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools for American Indian Youth (CBITS-AI)

Pilot Site Information Sheet

What is CBITS-AI?

Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS; Jaycox, Langley, & Hoover, 2018) is a clinical group intervention based on components of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and intended for middle and high school students exposed to trauma. CBITS-AI is the NNCTC's cultural adaptation of CBITS, approved by the developers and written by a committee of cultural experts. CBITS-AI offers revisions responsive to American Indian students. Both CBITS and CBITS-AI can be further adapted to be locally responsive. There are 10 group sessions and 1 to 3 individual session. Group facilitators need to be school counselors or other mental health professionals.
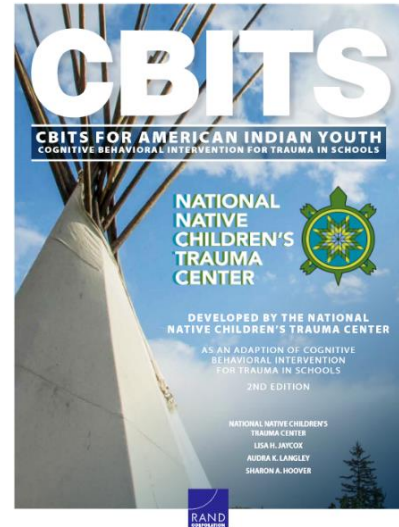
How was CBITS-AI Adapted?

The National Native Children's Trauma Center organized a workgroup consisting of NNCTC staff and professionals (including professionals with tribal affiliations) with prior experience implementing or researching the implementation of CBITS with AI/AN students. The workgroup used the CBITS manual as a guide to discuss modifications. The workgroup altered some group activities and added other group activities determined to be a better cultural fit for America Indian youth, while retaining fidelity to the original therapeutic components of CBT and CBITS.

Topic areas include psychoeducation about trauma utilizing the holistic wheel; relaxation training and the development of coping skills; utilization of the Bison Story to address anxiety; utilization of a Resiliency Walk to increase helpful thoughts and combat negative thinking; and the building of resources and connection.

What are the recommended criteria for implementing CBITS-AI?

CBITS-AI aligns well with established Multi-Tiered System of Support frameworks in schools. Because the intervention is trauma-focused, it fits best within a trauma-informed system. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a trauma-informed system is one that realizes the widespread impact of trauma, recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma, responds by integrating trauma knowledge into practices,

procedures, and policies, and works to resist re-traumatization among students, staff, and families. Schools that are ready to implement *CBITS-AI* typically have the following characteristics, or are working toward them:

- Administration support for trauma-informed practices and a school climate characterized by trauma-informed understanding
- General knowledge among staff members about the impacts of trauma on learning and behavior
- General knowledge of best practice strategies staff can use to support all students, particularly those students exposed to trauma
- Use of trauma-informed principles, such as positive behavioral supports and positive discipline
- A general agreement and understanding among staff to utilize the adult/student relationships to build trust, understanding, and safety

What should we expect as a pilot site?

- Participate in a day-long CBITS-AI training
- Complete a short feedback form per each session (a 5- to 10-minute time commitment per form)
- Participate in two calls with the developers regarding technical assistance in implementation (a 45-60-minute call)
- Conduct two trauma-informed assessments to be given pre/post
- Enter into a data usage agreement to share de-identified data with the NNCTC to help measure efficacy
- Participate in technical assistance calls with the NNCTC developers as needed

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