

## Overview

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Bronx Child Trauma Support provides trauma-informed psychotherapy, crisis intervention, and court support to children and teens who have been victims of or witnesses to sexual assault, intimate partner violence, community violence, child abuse, and homicide. In the wake of violence, young people frequently experience debilitating fear and anxiety, difficulty sleeping and concentrating in school, depression, and increased risk of further victimization. Our free services, offered in English and Spanish, are designed to reduce post-traumatic stress reactions and minimize the potential for youth to become retraumatized by involvement in Family and Criminal Court proceedings. Participants learn skills to help manage their emotions and reactions to trauma, and enhance family communication.

### Responding to Trauma

Each year, more than 100 young people and their families are referred to Bronx Child Trauma Support for therapeutic and court support services following exposure to violent crime. The program is one of only a few in the borough dedicated to providing two of the most effective evidence-based interventions for traumatized children, teens, and their caregivers:

- **Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy:** A caregiver-child treatment that aims to decrease post-traumatic stress symptoms by helping participants develop coping tools, build sources of support, and better understand their traumatic experiences.
- **Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy:** A treatment for children, teens, and adults that quickly alleviates distress and symptoms (like depression and anxiety) resulting from traumatic or disturbing life events.

### ■ Child and Family Traumatic Stress

**Intervention:** A brief caregiver-child intervention that addresses the needs of youth immediately following a traumatic event and helps prevent enduring post-traumatic stress reactions by strengthening family communication and support, teaching coping skills, helping families address practical needs, and assessing whether a child needs longer-term treatment

### Assisting with the Court Process

Testifying in criminal and family court can be a scary, overwhelming, and confusing experience for children and adults alike. For many, the experience of testifying about a crime is retraumatizing and intrusive. Bronx Child Trauma Support offers young victims and witnesses who have to appear in Criminal or Family Court support from therapists, which includes advocacy with prosecutors and family court attorneys, emotional preparation for testimony, court accompaniment, assistance with creating victim impact statements, and help with processing court outcomes.

**Crisis Intervention**

The Bronx Child Trauma Support Program offers on-site crisis intervention, risk assessment, and safety planning for youth who disclose a risk of suicide, selfharm, or other imminent danger at any point during their participation in the criminal justice process. Young people seen for crisis intervention receive follow-up services from the program or referrals to appropriate agencies.

**Impact**

Children and teens that complete treatment with the program experience statistically significant decreases in symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and comorbidities. Bronx Child Trauma Support uses pre- and post-treatment standardized assessment and self-report instruments to track reductions in post-traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, and dissociation. Families continue to receive services until their symptoms are effectively managed or resolved, or a referral for additional care is indicated. Following participation in the program, young people and their caregivers frequently report improvement in their academic performance and behavior at home, as well as increased feelings of safety, positive coping strategies, healthy self-esteem, and improved relationships with family members and peers. Families learn that the trauma they experienced does not define or control them.

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**For More Information**

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