

Interventions for Abusive Behavior

The CEBC defines Interventions for Abusive Behavior as programs that address a parent's or caregiver's abusive treatment of a child or adolescent. The abusive behavior may be one or more of the following types as defined by the CEBC for this topic area:

- **Physical abuse:** Nonaccidental physical injury (ranging from minor bruises to severe fractures or death) as a result of punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, hitting (with a hand, stick, strap, or other object), burning, or otherwise harming a child or adolescent
- **Sexual abuse:** Activities perpetrated on a child or adolescent such as fondling their genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials
- **Emotional/Psychological abuse:** A pattern of behavior that impairs a child's or adolescent's emotional development or sense of self-worth, such as constant criticism, threats, or rejection, as well as withholding love, support, or guidance

This topic area is focused on interventions to stop the abusive behavior and prevent re-abuse. Several related topic areas have been reviewed by the CEBC, such as [Anger Management Treatment \(Adult\)](#), and [Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence: Batterer Intervention Programs](#). Programs reviewed in these areas will not be listed in this topic area unless they meet the criteria below.

Interventions designed solely to address the needs of abused children and adolescents are not covered in this topic area; these interventions may be found in the [Trauma Treatment \(Child & Adolescent\)](#) topic area.

The following link gives more information on this topic area as it is defined by the U.S. government: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/resources/definitions-child-abuse-and-neglect/>

Interventions for Abusive Behavior topic area criteria:

- **Target population:** Abusive parents or caregivers
- **Services/types that fit:** Typically outpatient services with individual, group, or family formats; services may be delivered in the home and may include assessment, case planning, mental health services, case management, education, and/or skill building
- **Delivered by:** Child welfare staff, mental health professionals, or trained paraprofessionals
- **In order to be included in this topic area on the CEBC:** Program must specifically target stopping child or adolescent abuse and preventing recurrence as a measurable goal
- **In order to be rated in this topic area by the CEBC:** There must be research evidence (as specified by the CEBC [Scientific Rating Scale](#)) that examines abuse-related outcomes such as reductions of recurrence of maltreatment or outcomes for parents or caregivers such as changes in abusive behavior and related parenting practices (e.g., harsh parenting)



The table below provides a summary of the rated programs currently listed in the [Interventions for Abusive Behavior](#) topic area. More detailed information can be found on the CEBC website.

Program	Target Population	CEBC Scientific Rating	CEBC CWS Relevance Level
Multisystemic Therapy for Youth with Problem Sexual Behaviors (MST-PSB)	Youth between 10 and 17.5 years of age (and their families) who have engaged in sexually abusive behavior toward others	1	Medium
Alternatives for Families: A Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT)	Caregiver and their child between the ages 5 and 17 years whose family struggles with conflict and/or coercion due to parent, child, and/or overall family behavior	2	High
Multisystemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect (MST-CAN)	Families who have come to the attention of Child Protective Services within the past 180 days due to the physical abuse and/or neglect of a child in the family between the ages of 6–17	2	High
SafeCare®	Parents at-risk for child neglect or abuse and a history of child neglect or abuse	2	High
Combined Parent-Child Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CPC-CBT)	Children ages 3–17 and their parents (or caregivers) in families where parents engage in a continuum of coercive parenting strategies	3	High
Functional Family Therapy Child Welfare® (FFT - CW®)	Children and adolescents up to 17 years of age and their parent/caregivers and other family members who were referred to child welfare services for indicated or suspected child abuse or neglect.	3	High
Nurturing Parenting Program for Parents and their School-age Children 5 to 11 Years	Parents of families who have been reported to the child welfare system for child maltreatment including physical and emotional maltreatment in addition to child neglect; may be used as a court-ordered parenting program	3	High
Nurturing Skills™ for Families (NSF)	Families with children prenatal to age 19 who have experienced or are at higher risk for child maltreatment and other families with children prenatal to age 19	3	High
Parents Anonymous®	Parents, grandparents, relative and kin providers, foster parents, or anyone serving in a parenting or caregiver role and children and youth of all ages with behavioral health, substance use disorders, and wellness concerns	3	High