



# Game-Based Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Child Sexual Abuse: An Innovative Treatment Approach

*Craig I. Springer PhD, Justin Misurell PhD*

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## **DELIVERS AN EFFECTIVE, ENGAGING NEW TECHNIQUE FOR TREATING CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE**

Treating a confirmed or suspected case of childhood sexual abuse is undoubtedly one of the most challenging situations a clinician can face. This unique book, written by recognized experts on the evaluation and treatment of childhood sexual abuse, is the first to disseminate a comprehensive and integrative approach to treating child sexual abuse that combines the power of structured play therapy with cognitive-behavioral treatment. Created by the authors, game-based cognitive-behavioral therapy (GB-CBT) is a complete therapeutic package containing engaging techniques and effective strategies to treat the problems experienced by children and families impacted by sexual abuse.

The book provides the rationale, underlying theory, and step-by-step instructions for providing GB-CBT to families affected by child sexual abuse. Detailed descriptions of evidence-based techniques and required materials are included, along with reproducible game boards and other items needed to implement activities. These structured therapeutic games and role-plays are enjoyable and provide multiple opportunities for children to learn and rehearse such skills as emotional expression, anger management, relaxation strategies, social skills, social problem solving, and cognitive coping. A detailed session framework complete with behavioral expectations and reward systems, along with illustrative case examples, further demonstrates how to implement GB-CBT. Also included are recommendations for effective and comprehensive assessment procedures. The book describes activities for individual, conjoint child-caregiver, and group therapy that can be used in a multitude of therapeutic environments and can be incorporated into clinical practice across a variety of orientations. Additionally, it includes information about cultural considerations critical for effective delivery with diverse populations. The book also contains strategies for training and educating students and clinicians about GB-CBT.

## **KEY FEATURES**

- Delivers an effective new method for treating child sexual abuse that combines structured play therapy with cognitive-behavioral therapy
- Written by the originators of GB-CBT, recognized experts in this field
- Designed for use in a variety of settings and with different therapeutic modalities
- Presents concrete strategies, step-by-step instruction, and required materials for treating problems related to child sexual abuse
- Includes illustrative case examples and a complete description of structured sessions with behavioral expectations and reward systems

**Craig I. Springer, PhD**, is a recognized expert in the field of evidence-based practices for childhood behavioral disorders and trauma. He currently holds the position of Director of the Psychological Services Clinic at the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology at Rutgers University. Prior to his appointment at Rutgers, Dr. Springer was a supervising psychologist at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center

Metropolitan Regional Child Abuse Diagnostic and Treatment Center, where he codeveloped and researched game-based cognitive-behavioral therapy (GB-CBT), and supervised programming for children and families impacted by child abuse and neglect. In collaboration with Dr. Misurell, he cofounded Psychology Innovations, LLC, which was formed to develop, disseminate, and promote the use of creative and effective therapeutic interventions. Dr. Springer received his PhD in clinical psychology from Fairleigh Dickinson University. He is a licensed psychologist in New York and New Jersey and is credentialed by the National Register of Health Service Psychologists. Dr. Springer serves on the Practice Guidelines Committee of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children and is a reviewer for the *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* and *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice and Policy*. He has given numerous presentations and workshops at regional and national conferences and is the author of several peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters.

**Justin R. Misurell, PhD**, is a clinical assistant professor of child and adolescent psychiatry at New York University's (NYU) School of Medicine and clinical director at the NYU-Child Study Center New Jersey office. He is a recognized expert in the treatment and evaluation of child abuse and trauma, and provides assessments and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) for a variety of childhood difficulties, including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), behavior disorders, anxiety and mood disorders, oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), and trauma- and stress-related concerns. Prior to joining the NYU Child Study Center, Dr. Misurell was a staff psychologist at Metropolitan Regional Child Abuse Diagnostic and Treatment Center, Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, where he conducted evaluations and therapy for child survivors of abuse and neglect. Additionally, he cofounded and studied an integrative and evidence-based treatment model, game-based cognitive-behavioral therapy (GB-CBT). Dr. Misurell has presented numerous times on the topics of child abuse, trauma, and the game-based approach and has published multiple articles in peer-reviewed journals. He earned his doctorate in clinical psychology from Fordham University and received an Early Career Scholarship from the National Register of Health Service Psychologists in 2013. Dr. Misurell is a licensed psychologist in New York and New Jersey, and is credentialed by the Council for the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology.

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