

**Trauma and Grief Component Therapy for Adolescents (TGCTA) Overview**

Marisa Nowitz, MSW, LCSW-S

Vice President of Education and Training at the Trauma and Grief (TAG) Center,  
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Clinical and Training Consultant, Lucine Center for Trauma and Grief

© 2008 TAG Center TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Overview**

- TGCTA
- Training Information
- Questions & Discussion

© 2008 TAG Center TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Lucine Center for Trauma and Grief**

Lucine Center  
*for trauma and grief*

About Our Team Resources Professional Workshops Appointments Contact

**You are not alone.**

-----  
A traumatic event or loss can make a child, teen, or young adult feel like they're surrounded by darkness. Let us help light the way toward hope and healing.

Begin your journey →

<http://lucinecenter.com>

© 2008 TAG Center TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

---

---

---

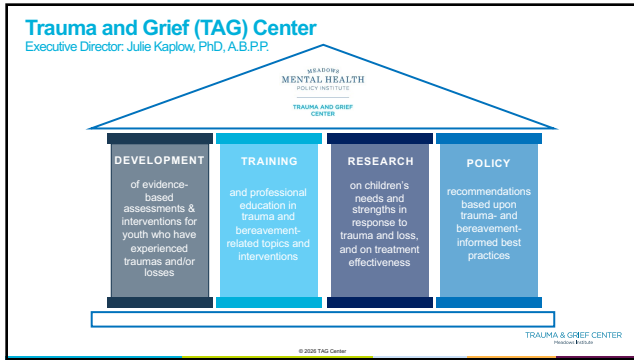
---

---

---

---

---




---

---

---

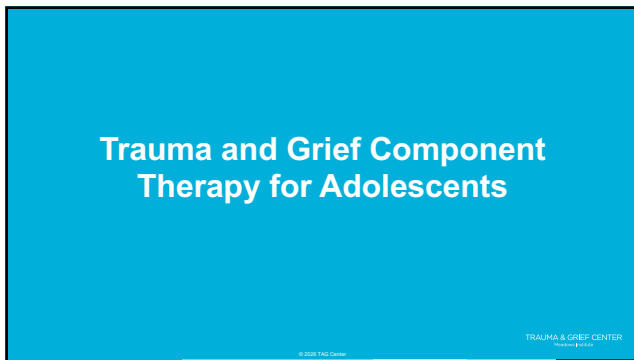
---

---

---

---

---




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- History of TGCTA**
- War exposure
  - School shootings
  - Terrorism
  - Juvenile Justice (JJ) settings
- TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Pittsburgh, PA
- © 2026 TAG Center

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### What Makes TGCTA Unique?

- Specialized focus on adolescence
- Interplay between trauma and bereavement
- Modularized, assessment-driven format
- Multi-tiered intervention framework
- Flexibly tailored
- Group- and individual-based
- Grounded in state-of-art clinical advances

© 2008 TAG Center

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Proctor & Keenan

---

---

---

---

---

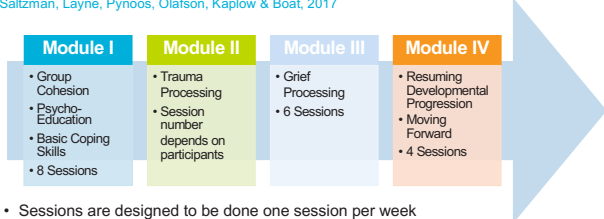
---

---

---

### Trauma and Grief Component Therapy for Adolescents

Saltzman, Layne, Pynoos, Olafson, Kaplow & Boat, 2017



- Sessions are designed to be done one session per week
- 45-60-minute sessions
- Can be flexibly tailored to fit the needs of your setting ("flexibility within fidelity")

© 2008 TAG Center

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Proctor & Keenan

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Additional Information and Time Commitments

- TGCTA is a longer-term intervention. At minimum, 8 weeks is needed to complete Module I. Length of treatment depends on how many modules need to be completed.
- A full course of TGCTA can take 5 months or longer, depending on how many sessions the trauma narrative takes to complete.
- TGCTA is not a crisis intervention.
- Assessments/screenings should be completed no sooner than 8 weeks following a traumatic event and/or loss.
- Clinicians should be given the opportunity to participate on monthly consultation calls which will take place at a set time each month.

© 2008 TAG Center

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Proctor & Keenan

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Evidence of TGCT's Effectiveness**

Grassetti et al., 2015; Layne et al., 2001; 2008; Saltzman et al., 2006

**Results of effectiveness studies showed:**

Reductions in PTSD, depression, and unhelpful grief reactions

Improved school behavior including...

- enhanced classroom rule compliance
- enhanced positive peer relationships
- enhanced school performance
- increased school interest
- decreased school anxiety/withdrawal
- decreased violence

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Pittsburgh, PA

© 2008 TAG Center

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Who is a Good Candidate?**

- 12 or older (mental age 11 or higher)
- History of severe stress, trauma, or loss
- Impaired functioning in life domains (e.g. school, family, and friends)
- No evidence of psychosis, not extremely labile or disruptive
- Clinical judgment

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Pittsburgh, PA

© 2008 TAG Center

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Assessment Measures**

**1. Prolonged Grief Disorder (PGD) Checklist (8 minutes)**

Kaplow, J. B., Layne, C., Oosterhoff, B., Goldenthal, H., Howell, K., Wamser-Nanney, R., Pynoos, R. (2018)

Can be used for risk screening, treatment monitoring, and treatment outcome

Can be scored according to DSM-5 criteria or the three dimensions of grief as described in multidimensional grief theory

**2. UCLA PTSD Reaction Index (Brief Version) (8 to 10 minutes)**

Rolon-Arroyo, B., Kaplow, J.B., Oosterhoff, B., Layne, C.M., Steinberg, A., & Pynoos, R. (2020)

Includes a range of potentially traumatic events

COVID-19 questions added to assess distress related to COVID-19 pandemic

**3. Short Mood and Feelings (SMFQ) Questionnaire (2 to 3 minutes)**

Angold and Costello (1987)

Measures depressive symptoms and provides clinical cut-off

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Pittsburgh, PA

© 2008 TAG Center

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**TGCTA Module I, Sessions 1-8**  
**Session Logistics**

- Sessions are structured with ritualized greeting and scripts that provide a predictable frame within which the hard work of recalling, sharing, and learning new coping can safely unfold.
- At the end of sessions after the calming activity, youth members can give leaders written feedback about the session, using the Checkout Feedback form.
- Sessions are designed to be completed once per week but can be adapted as needed.

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
© 2026 TAG Center

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Overview of Module I**

- Session 1:** Goal setting, current coping strategies
- Session 2:** Psychoeducation about trauma/grief reactions, deep breathing
- Session 3:** Emotion identification, emotional awareness
- Session 4:** Trauma and loss reminders
- Session 5:** Pros and cons of coping strategies, utilizing helpful coping strategies
- Session 6:** Distinguishing and understanding links between thoughts, feelings, behaviors
- Session 7:** Hurtful/helpful thoughts
- Session 8:** Five-step model for getting support

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
© 2026 TAG Center

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Overview of Module II**

- Beginning Session :** Preparing to Tell Our Stories
- Middle Sessions:** Telling Our Stories
- Final Session:** Summary of Narrative Experience and Group Themes

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
© 2026 TAG Center

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Overview of Module III**

- Session 1:** Learning About Grief
- Session 2:** Understanding Connections Between Loss Reminders, Grief Reactions & Consequences
- Session 3:** Dealing With Distress Over the Circumstances of Tragic Deaths
- Session 4:** Identifying Positive and Negative Traits
- Session 5:** Reminiscing Together
- Session 6:** Planning for Difficult Days (Relapse Prevention)

*Sessions 1-3 are designed to reduce maladaptive/unhelpful grief reactions. Sessions 4-6 are designed to enhance and promote adaptive/helpful grief reactions.*

© 2026 TAG Center

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Pittsburgh, PA

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Overview of Module IV**

- Session 1:** Promoting Developmental Progression
- Session 2:** Coping With Difficult Days
- Session 3:** What **IS** and What **IS NOT** Your Job to Fix
- Session 4:** Graduation & Launching Into the Future

© 2026 TAG Center

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Pittsburgh, PA

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**TGCTA Learning Collaborative**

- Training Dates: Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>
- Time: 9:00am-4:30pm CT both days
- Training will be followed by 6 months of monthly consultation calls (one hour per month)
- In order to become "rostered" as a TGCTA-trained clinician, participation in the two-day training, as well as 75% of consultation calls is required. Additional requirements include completion of an individual case or group with TGCTA, as well as completing fidelity metrics.

© 2026 TAG Center

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
Pittsburgh, PA

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


**Contact the Lucine Center**

**Marisa Nowitz, MSW, LCSW-S**  
Clinical and Training Consultant  
marisa@lucinecenter.com

**Julie Kaplow, PhD, ABPP**  
CEO  
kaplowjb@gmail.com

**Lucine Center for Trauma and Grief**  
lucinecenter.com  
Daniel Martinez, Intake Coordinator  
(832) 244-9502

To learn more about TAG Center trainings:



© 2026 TAG Center

TRAUMA & GRIEF CENTER  
PROVIDER EDUCATION

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---