

THINKING FOR A CHANGE (T4C)



OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

The Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant (JJIG) program is a statewide competitive grant administered by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). The program offers funding and technical support for juvenile courts to implement nationally recognized community-based treatment programs appropriate for youth scoring moderate- to high-risk on the Pre-Disposition Risk Assessment (PDRA).

Evidence-based programs (EBPs) provide support and supervision to address youth needs; promote a positive relationship among the youth, their families, and their communities; and ultimately reduce out-of-home placements, associated higher costs, and recidivism while maintaining public safety.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

EBPs target specific risk and protective factors that influence the problem for their target population. **Risk factors** are aspects of a person or their environment that increases the likelihood they will experience a negative outcome. **Protective factors** are aspects of a person or their environment that have a positive influence and serve as a buffer against negative outcomes. The main goal for EBPs is to strengthen existing protective factors or build new ones and reverse risk factors in youth.



A youth with risk factors is more likely to experience more risk factors and less protective factors.

Each protective factor a youth has reduces the impact of one or more risk factors.

THINKING FOR A CHANGE (T4C) PROGRAM SUMMARY

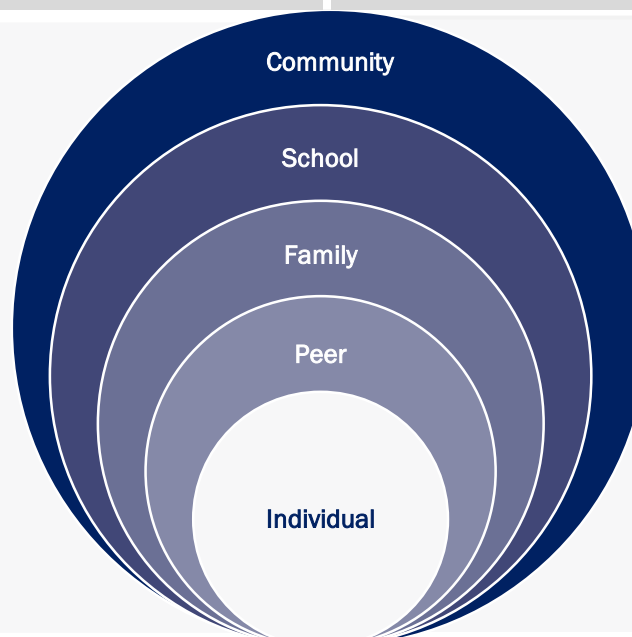
Thinking for a Change (T4C) is a group-based intervention that addresses the criminogenic thinking of offenders by developing problem-solving and social skills. Group-based interventions predominately focus on risk and protective factors that directly affect the individual.

RISK FACTORS

- Impulsive behavior
- Sensation seeking behavior
- Poor social skills
- Antisocial thought patterns
- Antisocial behavior patterns
- Antisocial attitudes and belief patterns
- Poor problem-solving skills
- Lack of individual accountability

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Improving social skills
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Prosocial thought patterns
- Prosocial behavior patterns
- Prosocial attitudes and belief patterns
- Interaction with prosocial peers
- Emotional awareness and understanding problem-solving skills



THINKING FOR A CHANGE (T4C)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

What is T4C?

- Thinking for a Change is a cognitive-behavioral curriculum that targets changing the criminogenic thinking of participants. The program consists of three components: Social Skills, Cognitive Self-Change, and Problem-Solving. **T4C** is a co-facilitated, group-based, skill-building program.

What is the main goal of T4C?

- T4C combines cognitive restructuring theory and cognitive skills theory to help individuals take control of their lives by taking control of their thinking¹. The main goal is to effect change in thinking so that behavior is positively impacted.

Is T4C evidence-based?

- There is an extensive body of **research** that shows cognitive-behavioral programming significantly reduces recidivism of offenders².

How long is the T4C program?

- 13 weeks; group meets 2 times per week lasting 1.5–2 hours each session
- 25 lessons, plus option of aftercare component (Note: It may take more than 1 session to complete all activities in a lesson. If this occurs, facilitators are to not start another lesson after completing the carryover lesson.)

What is the target population for T4C?

- Youth aged 11 to 17 exhibiting impulsive or sensation seeking behaviors and antisocial thought/behavior patterns.
- T4C is appropriate for both males and females and all race and ethnicities.

What is the suggested group size for T4C?

- It is recommended groups have between 8 and 12 youth in order to preserve program integrity. More than 12 youth would require more time than is allotted for each lesson, and fewer than 8

members would compromise the group process and diminish the effectiveness of youth learning.

How do I get trained in T4C?

- All facilitators must be trained by a National Institute of Corrections (NIC) certified Train the Trainer.
- This training is typically four days and is a total of 32 hours. Facilitators must attend all 32 hours to become a facilitator.
- T4C requires two facilitators.
- CJCC hosts at least one T4C Facilitator Training every year. Please note, T4C Facilitator Trainings are hosted year-round outside of CJCC as well.

How many counties are using T4C in Georgia?

- Through the Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant, six counties are currently providing T4C.

¹ Bush, Jack, Barry Glick, Juliana Taymans, and Michael Guevara. 2011. *Thinking for a Change: Integrated Cognitive Behavior Change Program Version 3.1*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections.

² Landenberger, Nana A., and Mark W. Lipsey. 2005. "The Positive Effects of Cognitive Behavioral Programs for Offenders: A Meta Analysis of Factors Associated with Effective Treatment." *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 1:451–76.

Thinking for a Change combines cognitive restructuring theory and cognitive skills theory to help individuals take control of their lives by taking control of their thinking.

