



Adapting CPT for Clients with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Course Information Document

Target Audience: Mental Health Care Providers with foundational CPT training

Instructional Level: Introductory

Course Description: Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) experience elevated rates of trauma exposure, yet standard evidence-based treatments for PTSD are not always implemented with appropriate modifications for this population. This workshop provides clinicians with an overview of ASD characteristics relevant to trauma treatment, common barriers encountered in therapy, and practical strategies for adapting Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) to better meet the needs of clients with autism.

Participants will review emerging research, analyze case examples, and engage in practice exercises focused on modifications to CPT to better align with the cognitive and communication needs of individuals with ASD. The session emphasizes maintaining fidelity to CPT while making clinically appropriate adjustments to improve accessibility, engagement, and outcomes for individuals on the autism spectrum.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. **Describe** core characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) that influence trauma presentation and engagement in psychotherapy.
2. **Identify** at least three common barriers and clinician “stuck points” when applying traditional Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) with individuals with ASD.
3. **Apply** at least three evidence-informed adaptations to CPT to improve treatment effectiveness for clients with ASD.

Date and Time: Thursday, September 3, 2026, from 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM **Central Time** / 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM **Eastern Time**

Duration: 2 hours

Where: Zoom

Training Cost: \$50

Meet the Presenter

Drew Wheat, M.S., LCMHC, CRC



Drew Wheat, M.S., LCMHC, CRC, is a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor at I.C.A.R.E. Counseling Services in Mebane, North Carolina. He earned both his B.A. in Psychology and M.S. in Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he specialized in psychiatric and developmental disabilities.

Drew's clinical background includes experience as an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapist, which informed his ongoing work with individuals on the autism spectrum. His practice focuses on adapting evidence-based interventions to meet the unique needs of individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities. He is also a Quality Rated Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) provider and specializes in the treatment of PTSD within community based settings.

Drew Wheat does not have conflicts of interest

Special Accommodations

If you require special accommodations due to a disability, please contact the STRONG STAR Training Initiative at admin@strongstartraining.org one week prior to the workshop so that we may provide you with appropriate service.

Continuing Education

The STRONG STAR Training Initiative offers attendees **2 Continuing Education (CE) Credits** for participating in the 2-hour training. Participants who attend are eligible to receive 2 CE Credits. Inquiries regarding CE may be directed via email to admin@strongstartraining.org.

Our continuing education credits have historically been recognized by most professional state licensing boards. However, this is not guaranteed. Please check with your licensing board for verification.

The University of Texas at San Antonio Health Science Center is approved by the American Psychological Association (APA) to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The University of Texas at San Antonio Health Science Center maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

Cancellation, Substitutions, and Refunds

Registration fees, minus a \$25 service charge, will be refunded to participants who send a written cancellation via email to admin@strongstartraining.org sent no less than 15 days before the training. No refunds will be made thereafter. A colleague may be substituted for no extra charge if STRONG STAR Training Initiative is notified at least two business days before the training. Alternative, you may choose to reschedule to a future Learning Community with no additional cost. For additional information, please contact the STRONG STAR Training Initiative at admin@strongstartraining.org.

AGENDA

Please note Agenda time is based on **Central Time Zone**

11:00 AM – 11:10 PM CT	Introduction and overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
11:10 AM - 11:30 PM CT	Clinical considerations for therapy and CPT with clients with ASD
11:30 PM - 11:50 PM CST	Case study and discussion
11:50 PM - 12:30 PM CT	Adaptations to CPT and Practice Exercise #1
12:30 PM – 12:50 PM CT	Practice Exercise #2
12:50 PM – 1:00 PM CT	Q&A, conclusion, and resources