THERAPEUTIC PLAY
Healing Through Connection

Presented by:
Tammy Schamuhn, M.Sc., R. Psychologist., R.Play Therapist Supervisor
Co-Founders of the Institute of Child Psychology
Our foundation is one of respect for all with a commitment to listen fully and learn from the diverse viewpoints of our team and those we service in our community.

At the heart of our work is the importance we place on insight, compassion, trust and warmth. We want to foster lasting change in the lives of families and transform our community. We believe that everyone should have access to affordable mental health resources.

We believe strongly in dismantling the stigma around mental health and in empowering caregivers and professionals to help children to reach their full potential. We continually identify important questions, seek out the answers, and evaluate and document what we learn.
LESSON 1
The Power of Play

Play in the animal kingdom:

Critical Factors in Healthy Development

1. Play
2. Movement and Touch
3. Human Connection
4. Time in Nature
5. Rest

The Importance of Play:

- Play allows children (and us) to use their creativity while developing their imagination; dexterity; and physical, cognitive, and emotional strength
- Play is important to healthy brain development
- Exploring the unexpected and developing a sense of mastery
- “Exploration of the possible” - Stuart Brown, M.D
- Undirected play allows children to learn how to work in groups, to share, to negotiate, to resolve conflicts, work through fears, build confidence, and to learn self-advocacy skills
- Play allows children to create and explore a world they can master while practicing adult roles
- Play has been shown to help children adjust to the school setting and even to enhance children’s learning readiness, learning behaviors, and problem-solving skills
WHAT ABOUT Play IN THE TEEN YEARS?

A WORLD WITHOUT Play

• Depression, Absence of Empathy, Rigidity, Interpersonal Conflict, Joylessness, Addiction, Diminished Curiosity, Workaholism

• We see children struggling with social and sensory issues at a young age

• We see children who get stuck in distressing emotions

• We see children who seem less attentive, restless and keyed up
LESSON 2

Attachment

ATTUNEMENT

Most basic state of play, critical component of healthy attachments and emotional regulation. Attunement buffers the growing child against excessive surges of emotion, orchestrates genetic unfolding and governs optimal brain functioning.

THE FOUR Attachment STYLES

• SECURE: I am loved, safe, and can face the world’s challenges.
• AMBIVALENT: I am unsure, insecure, and don’t know if I can cope.
• AVOIDANT: I am alone, lonely, and the world is a cold place.
• DISORGANIZED: I am scared, frightened, and the world is a cruel place.
In the absence of reflection, history often repeats itself. Research has clearly demonstrated that our children’s attachment to us will be influenced by what happened to us when we were young if we do not come to process and understand those experiences. - Dr. Daniel Siegel
THE 4C’s OF HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

• COURAGE: Face life’s tasks and take risks
• CONNECT: Socialization, playfulness, belonging
• CAPABLE: Feel competent and can do things for themselves
• COUNT: Feel they are significant, feel they can make a difference

PLAY STYLES AND Attachment

• SECURE: Open, warm, flexible, easy to engage > readily explores play room, inquisitive, rich narratives
• AMBIVALENT: Clingy with caregiver, reluctant to go into the room, anxious >constricted use of space, low play skills, themes of nurturance, barriers, fixing, constancy play
• AVOIDANT: Impulsive, avoidant, pushes caregiver > Quick to explore, bounces around from item to item, lacks warmth, reluctant to express or deny emotions.
• DISORGANIZED: Presentation varies > play will swing, can be erratic or very empty.

TOUCH:

• Clinical data suggests that early tactile experiences influence an infant’s immunological response, growth rate, weight gain, ability to withstand stress. Also shown to increase infant’s sensorimotor performance, learning, responsivity and visual recognition.
• Reuses monkeys – anxious, irritable monkeys: lower problem solving skills, bottom of social ladder
• Monkeys predisposition anxiety – cuddle and touch – adopted monkeys increase inquisitiveness.
**Polyvagal Theory:**

Social Engagement System as the circuitry which is responsible for regulating vocalizations, gestures and facial expressions that elicit trust. Think about your presence, voice, facial expressions and gestures, touch.

---

**Attunement Activities:**

---
LESSON 3
The Neurobiology of Play

- Empathy
- Body Control and Coordination
- Self Awareness
- Executive Functioning
- Play
- Fight, Flight, Freeze, Collapse
- Breathing and Bodily Functions
- Emotion
Play HELPS A CHILD’S BRAIN TO FIRE AND GROW:

- Strong connection between bigger brain size and species that play (Pellis & Iwaniuk)
- Play starts in the brainstem>>> to limbic>>> to cortex
- Increases functioning in pre-frontal cortex: regulates emotions, helps children plan ahead, problem solving
- Play activates the ENTIRE neocortex (logical/new brain).
- Improves memory
- Increases attention span and language development
- Inoculates them to stress
- Builds the brain socially: “The function of play is to build pro-social brains; social brains that know how to interact with others in positive ways” (Dr. Jaak Panksepp)
- Through play, the brain is making sense of itself through stimulation and testing. Play helps to sculpt the brain.
- Play creates and strengthens new neural connections
- Kids need 2-3 hours a day of gross motor movement, which includes play, for optimal development of brain and body.
HOW MUCH ACTIVE **Play** IS ENOUGH?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

OLDER BRAINS, NEW **Connections**

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brain Stem</th>
<th>Mid-brain</th>
<th>Limbic</th>
<th>Cortical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-1 yrs</td>
<td>1-2 yrs</td>
<td>1-4 yrs</td>
<td>2-6 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arousal / Sleep</td>
<td>Motor Regulation / Sensory</td>
<td>Emotions / Social Awareness</td>
<td>Building the Staircase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch / Massage</td>
<td>Massage / Movement / Music</td>
<td>Dance / Play / Art</td>
<td>Storytelling / Puzzles / Colouring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nurturing EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING:**

- Repetitive, patterned music and movement: brainstem dysregulation
- Pretend play: Working memory, inhibitory, flexibility
- Storytelling: Working memory, sustained attention
- Obstacle courses: Problem solving, quick thinking, multi-steps
- Simon Says: Impulse control
- Feely bag: Sensory information with a mental picture.
LESSON 4

Steps and Stages

PLAY HISTORY: Please see Appendix A

TRUE Play:
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

EBERLE’S SIX Play STAGES

Anticipation: _________________________________________________________________
Surprise: _________________________________________________________________
Pleasure: _________________________________________________________________
Understanding: ____________________________________________________________
Strength: _________________________________________________________________
Poise: _________________________________________________________________
**Types of Play**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Play:</th>
<th>Social Play:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rough and Tumble Play:</td>
<td>Ritual Play:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imaginative Play:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Pretend Play: Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 mth</td>
<td>Body based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-23 mth</td>
<td>Home activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-30 mth</td>
<td>Home and community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-35 mth</td>
<td>Doctor, flights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-42 mth</td>
<td>Beyond personal experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42-47 mth</td>
<td>More details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 yrs</td>
<td>Adds subplots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 yrs</td>
<td>More emotional depth and more subplots</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parten’s Social Stages of Play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unoccupied (0-2yrs)</td>
<td>Random movements is the unit of play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitary (2-3 yrs)</td>
<td>Playing by self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onlooker (2.5 yrs - 3.5 yrs)</td>
<td>Watching others play / no effort to join.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallel (2.5 yrs - 3.5 yrs)</td>
<td>Playing side by side / paying attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associative (4 yrs)</td>
<td>Asking questions of each other / similar goals / no rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social (6yrs)</td>
<td>Sharing ideas / toys / rules.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Piaget’s Stages of Play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensorimotor (0-2 yrs)</td>
<td>Direct sensory and motor contact. Object permanent and separation anxiety develop during this stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preoperational (2-6 yrs)</td>
<td>Uses symbols to represent objects, does not reason logically. Ability to pretend. Egocentric.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete Operational (7-12 yrs)</td>
<td>Can think logically. Can add and subtract. Child understands conservation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Operational (21 yrs plus)</td>
<td>Adolescent can reason abstractly and think in hypothetical terms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Take a minute to think about “how” you play. What would your child describe as your play personality?

Play Personality (Brown)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Joker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kinesthetic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Explorer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Competitor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Director</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Collector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Artist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Storyteller</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LESSON 5

ICP's Therapeutic Play Model

PLAY THERAPY IS BASED UPON THE FACT THAT PLAY IS THE CHILD’S NATURAL MEDIUM OF SELF EXPRESSION. IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE CHILD TO ‘PLAY OUT’ HIS/HER FEELINGS AND PROBLEMS JUST AS ADULTS TALK OUT THEIR DIFFICULTIES. -VIRGINIA AXALINE

PLAY THERAPY: USING Play TO HEAL

• Play is an emotionally engaging and creative experience that increases levels of oxytocin. This hormone enhances feelings of emotional wellbeing and trust, thus supporting the creation of a therapeutic relationship between the child and play therapist. Mirror neurons are also activated in play, helping the therapist accurately read and connect with the child’s emotional state.

• The empathic attunement of a therapeutic alliance provides the optimal chemical environment for creating new neural pathways.

• A certain level of emotional arousal is ideal for consolidation and integration of neural pathways.

• The integration of affect and cognition is the third therapeutic factor. In the playroom, the child and therapist collaboratively create conditions where the brain has an optimal amount of arousal, setting the stage for change and learning to take place.

• Finally, play therapy involves co-constructing wordless narratives of self-awareness and transformation. Play has the essential characteristic of honoring the child’s emotional world and private logic while simultaneously providing the conditions to author a healthier, more adaptive way of being.
Repetitive themes can be indicative of possible* unspoken needs or experiences they need mastery over; needs are context dependant. **Themes should not be used as a diagnostic tool.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good Guy vs. Bad Guy Play</strong></td>
<td>Child feels actions have been/perceived as “bad,” low self-esteem, or poor self-control; pre-occupied with questions of goodness (i.e., “am I a good or bad person”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nurturing Play</strong></td>
<td>Need for nurturance from others; parentification (i.e., feeding, nursing someone back to health, caring for a doll)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixing Play</strong></td>
<td>Desire to feel fixed or ok, mastery over the world (i.e., doctoring, repairing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sorting Play</strong></td>
<td>Something is feeling chaotic and trying to establish order; building on level of moral development (i.e. lining things up, categorizing things)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mastery Play</strong></td>
<td>Wants to be feeling in control of feelings and actions; may “fail” to show adult “bad parts” of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><em>Aggressor-Victim</em> Play</em>*</td>
<td>Feels like a victim; angry impulses/feels they can't control them; feelings of powerlessness; symbolic of conflictual close relationships (without good/bad theme; i.e., hitting, biting, killing, shooting, knifing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Death Play</strong> (natural or aggressive)</td>
<td>Their anger or someone else’s; separation between people in real life; feeling overwhelmed or harmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constancy Play</strong></td>
<td>Tenuous sense of trust/trying to build it; trying to keep mental image of someone; parts of the self hidden; trouble maintaining constant image of self (i.e., hide n’ seek, peekaboo, hiding things, catch me)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Store and Shopping</strong></td>
<td>Feeling needy. Have control of good things or how their needs are being met</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on the work of Helen Benedict
What you Find in a Play Therapy Room:
You can choose similar themed items at home or work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pillows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurines Within A Sand Tray</td>
<td>Animals, fantasy figurines, people, natural items, spiritual, death/ scary, abstract, breakable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys For Battling</td>
<td>Foam swords, shields, armour, nerf guns, handcuffs, caution tape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys For Nurturing</td>
<td>Dolls, blankets, feeding toys, doctor kits, vet kits, kitchen with food, first aid kits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress Up Clothes</td>
<td>Masks, superheros, mom, dad, feathers, head pieces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive Items</td>
<td>Musical instruments, art supplies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys For Mastery</td>
<td>Lego, wooden blocks, king, tool workshop.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RULES OF THUMB:

- You can't give away that which you don't have yourself.
- I see you. I hear you. I understand you.
- The child is the leader.
- 100% in–mind, body, and heart.
- Be on their level, close enough to show interest, but enough space to move and engage in play.
- Listen with your eyes and your ears.
- Follow their gaze.
- Your voice should mostly be gentle and caring, but vary with the intensity and emotion of child’s play.
- Talk to the right brain.
- No evaluation; only reflecting their world.
- Let them figure things out.
P.A.C.E. - A WAY OF “THINKING, FEELING, COMMUNICATING, AND BEHAVING IN A WAY THAT MAKES CHILDREN FEEL SAFE.” - DANIEL HUGHES

Playfulness – delighting in interactions
Acceptance – genuine acceptance of who the child is
Curiosity – Being curious about how behaviours came to be. “I wonder…”
Empathy – The adult is feeling the feelings of the child and communicating strength and love, that the child's distress is not too much

4 Essential Skills

1. Entry:
“[…..] this is a very special playtime for you and I. You can do almost anything you want in here. If there’s something you may not do, I’ll let you know”.

Shorten Rules listed only if child has been struggling with limit setting for many sessions, and even then 1-3 rules (= indicating lack of trust). After several session shorten to “…we’re going to the special playroom now”

2. Bathroom:
Suggest child goes before: “you're back in the special play space now”
Second time, ok, but third time remind them that if they leave their time playing is over (firm, calm, pleasant)

3. Leaving:
5 min, 1 min
Resistance = reflection:
“You’re having such a good time, but it is time to leave the room”

Departure signalled by standing up

4. Clean-up:
Not expected to put away toys:
“Special nature of the session,” may not play the way they need to if they have to clean up, final appearance is a reflection of the client’s emotional work

Power struggle could undermine the relationship
QUADRANT 1

Language

• Track Language
• Track Physical Play

QUADRANT 2

Relate

• Reflect Feelings
• Empathy

QUADRANT 3

Limits

• Set limits on behaviour when needed

QUADRANT 4

Regulate

• Attunement
• Proximity
• Warmth
• Eye Contact
QUADRANT 1

LANGUAGE

RESPONDING TO A CHILD’S **Questions**: 

**Child:** “What should I play with?”
**Response to child:** ‘During our play time, you get to decide’.

**Child:** “Why do you keep doing that (tracking)?”
**Response to child:** ‘You notice that I keep doing that..it sounds really weird to you, but this is how I pay attention to your play.’

**Child:** “What is this?” or “How does this work?”
**Response to child:** ‘You’re trying to figure out what this is...in this room, it can be whatever you want it to be’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’t</th>
<th>Do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use evaluative language, give advice or suggestions</td>
<td>Allow them to figure it out by themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use labels (including gender) for imaginative play, unless the child does</td>
<td>Do use “this one...that one...red one...little one.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use questions</td>
<td>Use statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-narrate</td>
<td>Use labels for items like chair, lamp, desk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track Speech</th>
<th>Track Physical Play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIRROR:</strong> “Oh, the little one is going to school”</td>
<td>“Ahhh, the green one is next to the yellow one”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUMMARIZE:</strong> “They are all going to sleep now, everyone is very tired.”</td>
<td>“That one is going up, up, up”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLARIFY:</strong> “So...are you saying, it got stuck and can’t get out?”</td>
<td>“You are holding that”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“You’ve decided”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“It’s moving!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUADRANT 2

RELATE (Reflecting Feelings)

How are the characters feeling? (dramatic/imaginative play)

How is your child feeling? (building, creating, interacting with you)

EXAMPLES:

• “You’re so excited we’re playing together!”
• “OH! That one is so angry at the big one!”
• “You’re frustrated you can’t figure that out!”
• “You’re so proud of yourself because you figured out how to do that”
• “You are sad our play time is over.”
• “Awww . . . I can see the mommy really loves her baby”
• “That one looks really sick. She must feel scared”
• “She must feel lonely in that house all by herself”
QUADRANT 3

Limit Setting

**Limits ARE NOT NEEDED, UNTIL THEY ARE NEEDED**

A- Acknowledge the feeling
C- Communicate a limit
T- Target an alternative

“This is our very special time together. You can say or do almost anything you want. If there’s something you can’t do, I will tell you”

**EXAMPLES:**

A: “The gun is so much fun”
C: “But you may not shoot me in the head”
T: “You can shoot me anywhere from the neck down”

A: “Painting is so much fun”
C: “But you may not paint on the table”
T: “You can paint on this paper”

A: “It’s frustrating when you can’t figure out something”
C: “But you may not hit me”
T: “You can stomp your feet or use your words”
QUADRANT 4

Regulate

What is your voice doing?
• Warmth?
• Varied Inflection?
• Non-judgmental?

What is your body doing?
• On the floor?
• Eye contact?
• Mutual gaze?
• Open body position?

How attuned am I?
• Is what I’m saying increasing the intensity/duration of the play or is my child shutting down?
• Are they more affectionate with me after the session is done?

JOINING THE PLAY
• We STOP using quadrant 1 here
  • Tracking/reflecting not needed here

• Think of the child as the DIRECTOR

• Empathetic attunement (quadrant 4**)
  • Follow their verbal and non-verbal cues

• Is your role increasing the child’s involvement, enriching the narrative?
# Lesson 6

## Directive Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ritual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenga / Magnetic Fish / Popsicle Sticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create A World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get To Know Your Ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sticky Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anxiety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental Reflection And Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Shield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry Dolls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry Monster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear-O-Meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand Model Of The Brain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“What to do when you worry too much”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Anger

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volcano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dragon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mousetrap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacle Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Impulsivity

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esteem Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checkers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Directive Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rythmic Movement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Grief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Education</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story Books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Chains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Places</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory Boxes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scent Bracelets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healing Hearts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Separation / Divorce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Education</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My 2 Homes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storybook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Places</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliotherapy / Movies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings Heart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Emotional Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jenga</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which Emotion Am I?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimochi Dolls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books / Movies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Trauma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Refer</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly Hugs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Care Box</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounding Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connected Adult</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Teen Needing Help

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music And Art</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sandplay IDEAS

Use rice, kinetic sand, or regular sand. Container: Baking sheet, tupperware container, water tray.

Possible figurines: (categories)

- Scary / aggressive figurines
- Plants / vegetation
- Natural elements
- Buildings
- Barriers (fences or signs)
- People
- Animal
- Helpers

Questions to ask:

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

STORYTELLING

- Think of your goal.
- Decide where and when you want the story to take place
- Describe the scene
- Describe the characters clearly (need a protagonist, antagonist, a resource person, and an ally)
- Describe the problem
- Use sensory storytelling
- Hurdles, but forward motion
- Resolution needs to be concrete
- Celebration or affirmation

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
**ATTACHMENT Play**

- Secure, attuned, joyful relationship.
- Direct, here and now experience.
- Guided by an adult. Responsive, attuned, empathetic and reflective.
- These activities are all about creating a warm, comfortable experience where the caregiver is a secure base. Within the context of joyful interactions, the focus is on connection, exploration, and mastery.
CHILD PARENT RELATIONSHIP Training

10 session parent training with 30 minute play times once a week, toy list, same principles as play therapy.

“In this special play time, the parent creates an accepting relationship in which a child feels completely safe to express himself through play - fears, likes, dislikes, wishes, anger, loneliness, joy or feelings of failure. This is not a typical playtime. It is a special playtime in which the child leads and the parent follows. In this special play time, there are no reprimands, put-downs, evaluations, requirements or judgments.”

CPRT is typically administered in 10 weekly, 2 hour group sessions with 5-8 parents. CPRT includes three key components: a didactic component, a supervision component and a group process component. During sessions 1-3, parents learn child-centered play therapy skills, concepts, and attitudes. In weeks 4-10, parents practice their new play skills in play sessions with their child and the therapist reviews the videos of parents’ play sessions to provide focused supervision and feedback for parents in the small group format. The CPRT treatment manual (Bratton et al., 2006) contains all materials that the therapist needs to conduct the 10-session CPRT model, including parent handouts, homework, and worksheets, organized by training sessions. (Source: https://cpt.unt.edu/)
LESSON 7

Putting the Oxygen Mask on First

• Fear-based parenting: emotional issues passed on from our own experiences

• Children trigger our own issues: responding to something from our past vs. responding to the present moment (i.e., Shame triggers).

• Emotions make us uncomfortable !!!!

• Our history of how adults responded to our own emotions will affect how we respond to these same emotions in our children

• Recognition of this “shark music” is key: if you notice it, be careful about what you are doing or saying - give yourself time before responding

• Notice what it feels like in your body: increase in heartbeat, pressure in your head, or a sense of urgency. Learn your own warning signs.

• Recognize what it feels like mentally: thoughts are racing or going in circles, inability to think clearly.

• Take time away to calm down: in the current state, nothing will get accomplished.

• Focus on your breathing: simple slow breaths.

• Engage large muscle groups: helps to calm the nervous system and bring the prefrontal cortex back online.

• Lastly, notice why you are in this mode: usually something about the situation has made you feel vulnerable.
LESSON 8
Therapeutic Expectations

AVERAGE TRAJECTORY OF EMOTION FUNCTIONING

PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING

WK 1  WK 2  WK 3  WK 4  WK 5  WK 6  WK 7  WK 8  WK 9  WK 10  WK 11  WK 12  WK 13
APPENDIX A

Your Play History

Set a timer and write for 2 minutes on your own experiences of play. Do not think, just write!

What came up for you in this exercise?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Who played with you when you were younger?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What was your parents’ relationship to play like?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Were toys freely available to you? If so, what type of toys?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Can you recall a really positive play experience?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________


Can you recall a challenging play experience?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________


What would your child say about your relationship to play?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
# Therapeutic Play Session Journal

**Child:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Your Goal for Your Child This Week:**

**Changes in Child from Last Session:**

**Quadrants You Used or Focused On:**
- Q1: Language
- Q2: Relate
- Q3: Limits
- Q4: Regulate

**Toys Your Child Chose:**

**Observations:**

**Themes:**
- Nurturance
- Mastery
- Good Guy vs. Bad Guy
- Fixing Play
- Sorting Play
- Aggressor - Victim Play
- Death Play
- Constancy Play
- Store-Shopping Play
The **Institute of Child Psychology** was founded to educate parents and professionals on issues pertaining to children's mental health, and to promote the psychological and emotional well-being of children and adolescents.

Our mission is to empower parents, teachers, therapists, social workers and psychologists by giving them pertinent insights, skills, and tools necessary to help children thrive.