

After each session...

Do not ask your child questions about the play session. Just say, "Hi, we can go now." If your child tells you what happened during the session, listen carefully and allow your child to lead the conversation. If your child shows you a painting or drawing he completed in the playroom, do not praise your child's work. Instead, simply describe what you see in the art piece such as, "You used lots of different colours" or "You drew three people".



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play therapy

...what parents and children need to know



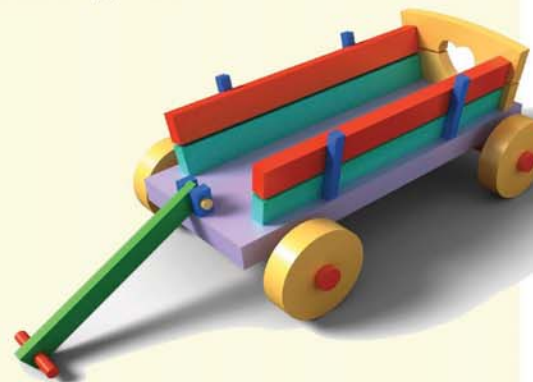
Play Therapy

Play Therapy is to children what counselling is to adults. In play therapy, children use toys as words and play as the language in which they communicate. Children use specially selected toys in the playroom (such as dolls, puppets, paint and sand) to communicate thoughts, needs and feelings that may be difficult to express in words. When children are able to communicate their thoughts, needs and feelings, they feel understood and often feel and behave better. A trained play therapist also aims to help children develop a more positive self-concept, build confidence and to become more self-directed.



Does my child need play therapy?

Most children can benefit from play therapy. Children who have significant difficulty coping in different areas of their lives or who are going through difficult times (such as change of school / home, divorce, loss of loved ones) or who exhibit problematic and disruptive behaviours can especially benefit from play therapy. The therapist seeing your child will assess if your child is suitable for such an intervention approach



Preparing your child for Play Therapy...

You may tell your child that he will be coming to be with the therapist in a special playroom every week where there are lots of toys. If your child wants to know why he is going to the playroom, you may say, "When things are hard for you at home (or at school), sometimes it helps to have a special place to play".

As playing with paint and sand in the playroom can be messy, we suggest you dress your child in casual and comfortable clothes as they prepare for paint splatters! Take your child to the bathroom before the session starts. Reassure your child that you will be waiting when he comes out of the playroom.

References:

Garry Landreth (2002)
Play Therapy: The Art of the
Relationship (2nd ed)

New York: Brunner-Routledge
Center for Play Therapy
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APAC Academy of
Play & Child Psychotherapy