

"Play therapy is defined as a dynamic interpersonal relationship between a child (or person of any age) and a therapist trained in play therapy procedures who provides selected play materials and facilitates the development of a safe relationship for the child (or person of any age) to fully express and explore self (feelings, thoughts, experiences, and behaviors) through play, the child's natural medium of communication, for optimal growth and development."

(Landreth, 2012, p. 11)

capa

Child Abuse Prevention Association

CAPA Clinical Program Partners:



LEARN MORE

www.a4pt.org

References

Landreth, G. (2012). *Play therapy: The art of the relationship*. Taylor & Francis Books, Inc.: New York.

Ray, D. (2015). *Play therapy: Counseling in the child's language*.
<https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.csi-net.org/resource/resmgr/webinars/w-ppt-2015-09-22-play.pdf>

PLAY THERAPY

**WHAT IT IS AND
WHY IT IS EFFECTIVE**



Toys are children's
words and *play*
is their language.

-Dr. Gary Landreth

BACKED BY *research*

Play therapy is supported by decades of research, dating back to the 1900s. Evidence shows play therapy application, across a variety of presenting problems, is effective among diverse and cross-cultural backgrounds.



THE VALUE OF *play*

Development

Children think differently than adults and develop through stages. For example, between the ages of three and ten developmental characteristics are emerging. Navigating early stages includes increasing attention, obtaining motor skills, using imagination, seeking to please adults, and more. An early middle stage is more rigid, competitive in nature, individualizing, and views things more realistically. Around the late early stage, moods are more evident like calm and energetic, children may be more critical, focusing on peers in play, seeking independence, patterns of thinking and reasoning are more logical or concrete. These developmental stage characteristics impact play.

Process

Play is natural medium of expression for children. It is a process that could attempt to organize experiences of the world around them and gain a sense of control- it is a safe, accepting, understanding, caring, and empowering place!

Function

Play is more than fun; it is a form of therapy and an interpersonal relationship between the child and therapist. Play therapy has different functions that may involve symbolic, catharsis, social skills, and mastery.