

TRANSFORMATIONS

THERAPEUTIC PLAY AT ACTION DEAF YOUTH

Why play?

Play comes very naturally to almost all children and is incredibly important for their development. It helps to shape key social, emotional, creative, language, cognitive and physical processes.

Since play and creativity operate on impulses outside the child's awareness (what we call 'the unconscious'), play therapy is proven to be an effective means of supporting children who may be experiencing emotional, behavioural and/or social difficulties. When children play, anti-anxiety or 'feel good' chemicals are released in the brain so play in itself is healing.

What is play therapy?

Play therapy is a type of counselling for children that does not involve talking. The child can use a variety of play and creative arts materials to express themselves, work through their thoughts and feelings, and make sense of their life experiences.

The child is offered a safe and supportive environment in which they feel comfortable and respected. The child is supported to work through their issues themselves at their own pace. The practitioner is trained to interact with the child in such a way that the therapeutic benefits of play are activated.

Through the metaphor of play, the child develops strategies to deal with their emotions and resolve inner conflicts. By helping to free the child from negative experiences or feelings that block their learning and development, therapeutic play can:

- 👉 Reduce anxiety
- 👉 Increase the child's confidence and self-esteem
- 👉 Foster resilience
- 👉 Enable the child to form healthy relationships
- 👉 Support the learning of new ways of behaving
- 👉 Enhance the child's creativity and playfulness



What happens during sessions?

The playroom, which we call KidZone, is equipped with a large selection of different play materials, all of which have a therapeutic purpose. These include:

- 👉 Art and craft materials
- 👉 Clay
- 👉 Creative visualisation tools
- 👉 Dance scarves, rings and pom poms
- 👉 Doll's house
- 👉 Dressing up / role play props
- 👉 Games
- 👉 Musical instruments
- 👉 Puppets
- 👉 Sand tray
- 👉 Small world figures
- 👉 Stories

The child is invited to play in an open-ended manner and in any way they wish as long as this does not hurt anything or anybody. Giving the child opportunities to play uninterrupted as they so wish helps them to process their feelings and achieve a more secure sense of emotional wellbeing which in turn enables them to function better.

The child may play out past experiences in order to make sense of these and become more resilient.

How often and how long are sessions?

Sessions take place once a week and usually last for around 40 to 45 minutes.

The number of sessions required will depend on the child and their individual needs but usually a minimum of 12 sessions is recommended.

Consistency on a regular day and at the same time and place is crucial for developing a trusting relationship. Unplanned missed sessions may disrupt the process.

Our practitioner



Julie is currently undergoing extensive postgraduate training through the Academy of Play and Child Psychotherapy and is registered with Play Therapy UK to support children with mild to moderate difficulties. Once she completes her training, she will be able to support children with more severe or complex difficulties. All her work is subject to clinical governance procedures, including regular supervision with an experienced play therapist.

Julie, who is Deaf herself, is also a fully qualified and experienced teacher of deaf children. As such, she brings with her a unique understanding of the needs and experiences of deaf children.

Referrals

A professional who knows the child well or the child's own parents are welcome to make referrals. Forms can be obtained by contacting us.

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