

WHY USE PLAY?

To some, using play as a therapeutic intervention may seem trivial to others maybe a little bizarre. As adults, when we encounter problems we tend to think about them, talk about them, assess them, view them from different angles and consider different options. Oftentimes, we will also talk them through with someone we trust or feel safe with.

Young children do this too, but with toys and play instead of words.

PLAY IS THE THERAPY, AS IT IS THE PRIMARY WAY THAT CHILDREN:

- Learn about their world and understand how things work
- Express themselves and develop new physical skills.
- Develop new mental skills, social skills and bonds.

Filial Therapy was developed in the early 1960's by Drs. Bernard and Louise Guerney, since that time extensive research has found it to be an extremely effective intervention to help children and strengthen families.

WHAT IS FILIAL THERAPY?

Filial Therapy engages parents as partners in the process of strengthening their own families to benefit the children, the parents and the family as a whole.

Parenting is one of the hardest 'jobs' out there, and there is no manual or formal training. Filial Therapy is designed to help you find and build on the strengths that you already have so that you can feel even more confident and connected as a parent.



Filial therapy is a unique approach to therapy that emphasizes the parent-child relationship as a means of alleviating child and/or family difficulties and is used to strengthen the parent-child relationships in order to prevent problems.

~ VanFleet, 2022



FILIAL therapy with SECURE FOUNDATIONS



HOW CAN FILIAL THERAPY HELP?

- Reduce or eliminate any existing problems
- Help the family prevent future problems
- Strengthen the parent-child attachment and relationships within the family
- Improve the family's communication abilities
- Improve the family's coping abilities
- Develop more flexibility within the family
- Increase the family's ability to have fun together
- Provide the family with tools and ideas to use in the future

(VanFleet, 2022)

STAY CONNECTED

Sarah Bolitho

Play Therapy by Secure Foundations

www.securefoundations.com.au/playtherapy

Email: sarah@securefoundations.com.au

WHAT DOES FILIAL THERAPY HELP WITH?

Benefits for the parents

- Develop an increased understanding of their child's development
- Develop an increased understanding of their child's feelings and motivations
- Learn about the importance of play and emotion in overall adjustment
- Learn additional childrearing skills and ideas to bring positive results
- Open up their communication with their children
- Develop their self confidence as parents
- Increase their feelings of warmth and trust toward their children

Benefits for the children

- Develop an understanding of their own and other's feelings
- Express their feelings in appropriate ways to meet their needs better
- Develop their problem solving skills
- Reduce their problematic behaviours
- Work through their conflicts and dilemmas to improve their adjustment
- Make better choices and take responsibility for them
- Increase their trust in their parents
- Increase their self confidence and self esteem

FILIAL THERAPY

WHAT TO EXPECT



Intake - the therapist will gather as much relevant information as possible to understand the family dynamics and ensure filial therapy will be a good fit



Assessment - the therapist will use this time to sit beside and get to know the family through play observations and discussion



Demonstration - the therapist will conduct a therapeutic play session with each child whilst the parents observe and jot down any observations for later discussion



Skills Training - the therapist will teach the parents four main therapeutic skills that will be learnt and practised in the next phase of therapy to use with their children



Supervised practice sessions - the parents will carry out therapeutic play sessions with their child(ren) which will be observed and supervised by the play therapist. The therapist will make some notes which will be provided to the family and there will then be a chance for a debrief



Planning to finish - the therapist will meet with the parents to discuss and reflect on the intervention and consider how the skills may have generalised into every day life.



WHO IS IT FOR?

In truth, everyone can benefit in some capacity from the power of play!

Play therapists work with a wide variety of children that may experience one or more of the below:

- Aged between 2-10
- May have a mix of social, emotional, behavioural and learning challenges
- Anxiety
- An autistic neurotype
- Trauma
- An ADHD neurotype
- Communication difficulties
- Grief and loss
- Family separation
- Significant life events or changes
- Difficulties with self-regulation
- Social communication difficulties
- Self esteem, self confidence
- Difficulty engaging in other therapeutic modalities

Play in therapy is the child's primary language of communication, for sharing their inner world, thoughts and feelings, and is a way for them to make sense of their life experiences.

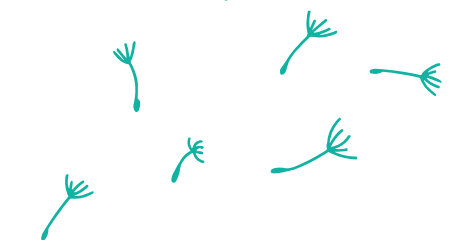
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Play therapy is regarded as a highly evidence-based, trauma-informed and systematic mental health counselling intervention for young children

~ Ray, & McCullough, 2016

WHY USE PLAY?

Play allows children to gather new understandings of their experiences, and reach new decisions about who they want to be and how they want to behave within a developmentally sensitive approach.



PLAY

therapy

with

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