

Play Therapy

Play Therapy is a structured, theoretically based approach to therapy whereby the child's natural means of expression, play, is used as a therapeutic method to assist him/her in coping with emotional stress or difficult behaviours. Using play, rather than relying on 'talk' allows the child to manipulate the world on a smaller scale, something that cannot be done in the child's everyday environment. Play Therapy is structured to take place on the same day, at the same time each week, for an agreed number of sessions, determined by assessment criteria and level of need. This format gives children a secure base from which to explore their inner world in a safe, accepting, permissive space. Play Therapy sessions will either be on a one-to-one basis or might involve a group of children experiencing the same issues and difficulties.

Play Therapy can be used to help children with a huge range of needs and concerns. It is suitable for children from the age of around 3 years old to approximately 14 years and is accessible to all children including those with special needs. The therapy is non-judgemental and accepting, allowing the child to safely explore traumas or emotions that they may otherwise not be able to be put into words. It doesn't matter about creative ability as this isn't a requisite of the therapy.

Play therapy can help children;

- Feel more confident in expressing their thoughts and feelings
- Develop their emotional vocabulary
- Improve their self-image and self-esteem
- Improve their ability to attach and have more positive relationships
- Improve concentration
- Become more confident and creative in their play.

Typical referral issues may include;

- Trauma
- Low self-harm
- Selective mutism
- Bed wetting
- Aggression
- Low confidence/self esteem
- Trauma such as a loss, abuse
- Social and communication difficulties
- Divorce
- Emotional dysregulation
- Struggles with friendships/peer relationships



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