

What is play therapy?

Children heal through play. They access creativity and imagination and try out different roles and learn about their world. Play is serious business for children it helps them to develop mentally, physically and socially. Children play what they can't verbalize yet; symbols substitute for language or play serves as language for the child.

Psychodrama and Gestalt techniques can be used in play therapy with children. Dolls or stuffed animals animate the characters in the children's story. They may use the sand tray and choose from many different figures from the therapist's shelf.

The therapist observes the child and may share some observations or ask questions to connect with the child. When connection and trust in the therapeutic alliance grows, the therapist may direct the child's awareness to emotions addressed in the play or ask the child to be one of her characters and act or talk as so.

Art materials like crayons, magazines for collages or clay are used to help the child express feelings in order to heal and grow stronger and more confident.

It is essential that parents cooperate in the therapeutic process. Parent sessions will be scheduled before the first session for assessment and later on at regular terms to review progress and improve parent-child communication.