

## **Play Therapy FAQ's**

### What is Play Therapy?

- An effective way to help children.
- Children use play therapy as a way to work through emotional, psychosocial, behavioral difficulties and family problems.
- During play therapy, a relationship develops between the child and his/her therapist which creates a safe and trusting environment for the child to utilize play.
- Play therapy sessions are usually held in a playroom that has a range of carefully selected toys and materials.
- In the playroom children can express their feelings, thought, experiences, and behaviors through play. The toys the child selects are used like words and become the child's natural language to act out feelings, thoughts, and experiences.
- The length of play therapy will vary from child to child. Research suggests that it takes an average of 20 play sessions to resolve problems of children referred for treatment with typical level intensity and complexity. Some children's symptoms will be alleviated in a few sessions whereas other children with more significant issues will take more time and patience to fully benefit from play therapy.

### How does Play Therapy help my child?

Play therapy helps a child manipulate his/her world on a smaller scale.

By playing with specially selected toys/materials and with the guidance of a play therapist who reacts in a designated manner i.e. unconditional acceptance, the child plays out his/her feelings bringing these hidden emotions to the surface where he/she can face them, understand them, and cope with them.

In the beginning phase, the child may use play as an icebreaker to establish a relationship between he/she and the play therapist.

A child may also use play as a diversion to avoid answering questions. If a child does this, the play therapist then recognizes that the child is uncomfortable and is not ready to express his/her feelings.

More information can be found at:

Association for Play Therapy: [www.a4pt.org](http://www.a4pt.org)

Kansas Association for Play Therapy: [www.ksa4pt.org](http://www.ksa4pt.org)

Missouri Association for Play Therapy: [www.moplaytherapy.org](http://www.moplaytherapy.org)