

## Why Play Therapy?

### Association for Play Therapy

“In Play therapy, the most troubling problems can be confronted and lasting resolutions can be discovered, rehearsed, mastered and become lifelong strategies.” Sandra Russ, Ph.D.

Play Therapy is a powerful tool for addressing cognitive, behavioral, emotional challenges. Play Therapy helps children process their experiences and develop more effective strategies for managing their worlds.

Play is a natural process that:

- Builds trust and mastery
- Fosters learning and acceptable behaviors
- Regulates emotions
- Reduces anxieties
- Promotes creative thinking and problem-solving
- Encourages open communication
- Elevates spirit and self-esteem

Play Therapy helps children work through many of life’s transitions such as moving and starting a new school to more difficult transitions such as a loss, divorce, or traumatic events.

Play Therapy can be ‘Directive Play Therapy,’ (whereby the therapist selects the activity to engage and address the issues), or ‘Indirective Play Therapy,’ (in which the child is in control and selects from a range of options provided in the play room). There many activities to engage children in the therapeutic process. A typical playroom will include a sand tray, figurines, doll house, puppets, toys, art supplies, and a range of games. Unlike typical play, Play Therapy allows the child free expression, control in the therapy and a process in which to communicate effectively. Parents are often taught Filial Play therapy that they can do at home with their child to assist in the treatment.