

Play Therapy Logistics

Before the session:

- Please take him/her to the bathroom. Play therapy can often be very emotionally freeing, causing the child sometimes to have to use the bathroom during therapy. It is helpful if the child goes to the restroom before the session begins.
- Please don't ask your child to 'be good' or check that he/she has been. Your child must feel free to express all feelings in an uncensored way.
- Don't insist that your child share certain things with me (positive or negative.) Instead, let me know of your concerns either by calling or at scheduled consultations.
- If your child is coming from school and is hungry, please give him/her a snack before therapy starts.
- Please know that the playroom has a variety of media that can be messy (e.g. easel paints, water-color paints, Play-Doh, clay, water, sand, etc.). Please dress your child in clothes that can tolerate mess or possible stains should the child spill paint on him/her
- If your child is allergic to any substance that falls into this realm, it is your responsibility to let me know so that appropriate modifications can be made for your child.

During the session:

- Because the session may need to end early at times (e.g. child gets sick; child breaks several toys, child chooses to leave and not return, etc.), please be sure to remain in the waiting room during the session
- Relax! You have 45 minutes to rest, read, or make some phone calls. Just please be sure to keep your voice(s) low as it can be distracting to the child in the playroom if he/she hears you in the waiting area .
- There are several books available on tomes of children and parenting for you to peruse. Feel free to read through these as you wait and ask any questions after the session or during your consultation time.
- Children in the playroom are not asked to clean the room following the session. The reason for this is as follows: If play is a child's language and toys are the child's words; having a child clean up the play room following the session would be analogous to asking the child to dean up his/her emotional world. It would be similar to having an adult take back everything he/she said at the end of the counseling session. This stipulation is unique to play therapy. Please know I am not advocating this action for other circumstances- only play therapy

After the session:

- It is best not to ask several questions, such as "Did you have fun?" or "What did you do?" While playing is a natural, pleasurable activity for the child, children in play therapy are involved in playing out problems and emotional struggle and, therefore, at times "playing" may not be so enjoyable. The answer to "what did you do?" will likely be "I played;" just as an adult might say "We talked."

- Understand that sometimes behavior gets worse before it gets better, and sometimes children leave a play session feeling tired or drained, just as adults often feel emotionally drained after working through emotional issues. Children may also leave feeling energized. Be aware of any changes and provide support and understanding

In Between play sessions:

- I will meet with you for parent consultation sessions on a regular basis (about every 4-6 play sessions) to give and receive feedback on your child's progress. While we will discuss overall play themes for your child, discussion on several specific play behaviors will not be discussed to protect the child's confidentiality. However, most certainly at times, it will be necessary to discuss specific play behaviors and what this may mean for your child
- Be consistent and encourage your child to attend sessions regularly, even if he/she doesn't want to. If your child consistently doesn't want to attend sessions, please schedule a consultation so that you and I can explore possible reasons for resistance and possible solutions which may include referral to another counselor if appropriate or requested.
- Realize that sudden termination of Play Therapy once a counseling relationship has been established could be harmful to your child. If you intend to terminate counseling prior to our agreed upon number of sessions, please allow for a minimum of two scheduled termination sessions in which your child and I will bring closure to the counseling relationship.