

# WE ARE READY TO HELP

Play Therapy is a method of providing counseling that utilizes play and toys as a way of communicating with and understanding a child.



## WHAT IS PLAY THERAPY?

Children are best helped in an environment that accommodates their needs, is relaxed, playful and can allow them to communicate in the ways that they feel safe and comfortable. Most of the time this is achieved through playing with various toys, artistic/creative expression (using paint, markers, crayons, clay) or sensory expression (using sand or water) to express feelings. Toys and play help children to communicate, express feelings, problem-solve, and heal emotions such as anger, anxiety, sadness, fear, worry, and stress.

## HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

Play Therapy sessions usually last around 50 minutes and are conducted on a weekly basis. While it is common for parents to inquire about the length of treatment, it is important to emphasize that the focus lies more on the therapeutic journey and the relationship built between the child and the play therapist. During sessions, the child takes the lead while receiving guidance and support from the play therapist.

# WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PLAY THERAPY?

- ✓ Become more responsible for behaviors and develop more successful strategies.
- ✓ Develop problem solving-skills.
- ✓ Develop respect and acceptance of self and others.
- ✓ Learn to express emotions.
- ✓ Cultivate empathy and respect for thoughts and feelings of others.
- ✓ Learn new social skills and relational skills with family.
- ✓ Develop a better assuredness or confidence about their abilities.

## WHAT CAN YOU AS A PARENT OR CAREGIVER DO TO HELP THE THERAPY PROCESS AND ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO SUCCEED IN THERAPY?



Be consistent and encourage your child to attend sessions regularly.



Provide your child with a snack before arrival and encourage them to go to the bathroom before sessions.



Please don't ask your child to "be good" or check in with their therapist about session content. Your child should feel free to express their feelings in an uncensored way.



Be open minded to Play Therapy and the methods that are used in the process. If parents are judgmental or critical of Play Therapy, it is very likely that the child will be resistant to engage and little progress will be made.



Do not insist that your child share certain things with their therapist (positive or negative.) Instead, share your joys and concerns with your therapist either through email, a phone call, or at scheduled consultations. Please do not discuss joys or concerns with the therapist in front of your child.



Do not question the child or inquire about their session or if they had "fun" in session. While they may tell you portions of what they experienced, it is important not to question them or to criticize what they report. It is important for all children to not feel graded or evaluated for what they do or do not chose to do in play therapy

"Toys are children's words and play is their language"  
*-Garry Landreth*

"Children need the freedom and time to play. Play is not a luxury. Play is a necessity."  
*-Kay Redfield Jamison*