

# PLAY THERAPY

*Play is the  
natural  
language of  
all children*

## What is Play Therapy?

Children are unable to effectively communicate in the same way that adults can. Oftentimes their cognition and language skills are not fully developed in a way that allows them to express themselves freely and comfortably with adults through verbal means alone.

Play therapy is an evidence-based treatment that allows young children to express themselves in a way that feels most comfortable for them while the mental health professional provides acceptance, unconditional positive regard and empathy. Since play is the natural language of all children, using this treatment modality allows children from various backgrounds to communicate in a way that is most natural for them while being fully engaged and accepted by the therapist. Research suggests that play therapy is an effective approach regardless of a child's age, gender, or the nature of the problem. Using play allows children to fully explore their environment, naturally solve problems and gain personal insight into their behavior.

Play therapy conducted by a trained and experienced therapist is a useful resource for decreasing symptoms of anxiety and depression, increasing social skills and awareness, regulating emotions, alleviating confusion regarding life circumstances, development of coping skills, building trust and mastery, improving self-esteem and increasing communication.

**For more information on play therapy, ask your therapist or visit the Association for Play Therapy at [www.a4pt.org](http://www.a4pt.org)**

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