

Four Segment Evaluation with Feedback

The *first evaluation session* is with the parent(s) without the child, so that adults are able to talk freely without the child present. This includes addressing the present concerns and taking a developmental history.

The *second evaluation session* is in the play therapy room with the parent(s) present with the child. This session usually includes siblings.

The *third evaluation session*. One or both parents attend the first 15 minutes with the child. In the remainder of the session, the child has time in the play room, with or without a parent (therapist and parents decide who is present).

The *fourth evaluation session* is used to help to understand the child's symptoms in light of the larger family context. The therapist's understanding of the problem is shared, along with suggestions on how to work with it.

* Additional sessions are needed for evaluation of children sharing two households.

Recommendations Include

Play-Family Therapy, parent education, therapy for individual adults, couple therapy, family therapy, or a combination of options. Play therapy may be recommended weekly, every other week, or not at all. Play therapy occurs in a room with the appropriate equipment and includes art therapy, puppets, role-playing, sandplay, and a range of toys. The toys are the child's words for sincere expression of thoughts and feelings, which is needed for healing to occur.

Dottie Higgins Klein, LMFT, RPT-S, received her Master of Family Therapy from Hahnemann University. She is a supervisor for the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and a registered play therapist supervisor for the Association for Play Therapy (APT). Dottie has spent the last 26 years combining the fields of play therapy and family therapy. The best of both fields is combined in directed and non-directed Play-Family Therapy, the theory that Dottie has developed. The family therapy aspect gives attention to each family member and his or her extended world. The play therapy aspect allows a particular child to address his or her needs, symptoms, or problems in individual sessions. Play-Family Therapy is respectful of the legitimate concerns that family therapists have about children being asked to speak about their family members without a parent or guardian present. Such issues are addressed in a family setting. The play therapy for a child from age three to eleven engages the child's imagination in play. This allows the child to tap into his or her own intuitive healing powers, similar to the value of meditation. Therapists who have been trained primarily in play therapy are encouraged to involve the family more in the process and are exposed to more of the skills of a family therapist.

The Advanced Child Development Course assumes that it is important for the therapist to understand the typical developmental expectations of a child during the first six years of life. Issues and symptoms that arise at a later age can often be helped more effectively when the significance of the problems encountered in earlier years are understood.

Sandtray Therapy, an optional adjunct method for teenagers and adults, offers a powerful way of communicating, which therapists have found to be deeply meaningful. The training at the Family & Play Therapy Center offers four levels of Sandtray Training, with classes for each level held one morning a month. The Advanced Child Development Course offers an introduction to these skills as well as individual and group supervision.

The Family & Play Center, Inc., is approved by the Association for Play Therapy to offer continuing education specific to play therapy. Our provider number is 96-030. The Family & Play Therapy Center, Inc., maintains responsibility for the program.

**Dottie Higgins Klein, LMFT, R-PTS,
Director of the Family & Play Therapy Center**

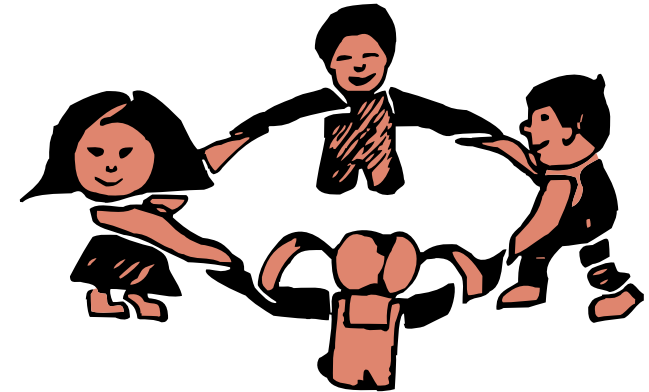
Phone or Fax: (215) 844-4321

OK to call any time: day, evening, weekends.
Voice mail will take your call if we are not available.
Office manager available M-F 9:30 to 4:00.

Visit our Web Site: www.fptcenter.com

Information about the Center
Print-out brochures

What is Play-Family Therapy?



Play-Family Therapy uses both directed and non-directed approaches in the play therapy component. It is a most effective and enjoyable tool for working with children ages two to twelve years in a family context. Over the past twenty-six years, the director of the center has developed a way to use play therapy as an important adjunct to family therapy. In the play therapy, the child's individual personality and unique self are given direct attention within the context of the family. The child is not singled out in a negative way, nor is the child excluded.

Play-Family Therapy includes Mindful Parenting sessions. The adults often begin to see the symptoms in a larger context and feel empowered to make changes in themselves.

Play-Family Therapy includes the use of Contextual Family Therapy with families. Many Play-Family Therapists receive additional training in Contextual Family Therapy in order to see individual adults and couples.

Family & Play Therapy Center, Inc.

6811 Quincy Street
West Mt. Airy
Philadelphia, PA 19119
(215) 844-4321

Web Site: www.fptcenter.com

EXAMPLES OF PROBLEMS HELPED BY PLAY-FAMILY THERAPY:

- low self-esteem
- immaturity
- aggressiveness
- sadness
- anxiety
- nightmares
- social phobia
- difficulty with social cues
- difficulty playing in an age appropriate way
- attention and engagement problems
- clumsiness
- extreme shyness
- separation problems
- withdrawn behavior
- speech and language problems
- self-consciousness
- misbehavior in school
- difficulty with peers
- lying
- temper tantrums
- toilet training complications
- adjustments to death, divorce, new baby, various handicaps, sibling of a child with special needs

Longer term work is necessary for children who may have experienced trauma from the following, for example:

- death
- divorce
- accidents
- past or present medical trauma
- physical or sexual abuse

Children with Attention Deficit Disorder or Developmental Delays and children on the Autism Spectrum require longer term therapy. Our special adaptations of play therapy offer significant help for children in the prevention or remediation of attention processing problems.

HOW PLAY THERAPY WORKS AND WHY IT IS VALUABLE FOR YOUR CHILD:

- The child uses his or her whole mind and body in the play and innocently reveals the deepest unconscious thoughts, fears, anxieties, wishes, etc. The reflections and the silences of the therapist follow the child and s/he opens to unconscious or stuck thoughts.
- The play therapist is trained to read the metaphors of the play (similar to understanding dreams). Then, the patterns that emerge are shared with the parents along the way to work with the healing process at home.
- The play therapy experience itself is actually healing to the child, in a similar way that an adult can have powerful moments of truth revealed in a therapy session. This can happen frequently in subtle ways, and it causes shifts that are evident in the child's life.
- Three major goals of working with play therapy, regardless of the symptoms, are the enhancement of self-esteem, self-responsibility, and decision-making skills. At its best, play therapy reaches into the place of self-love deep within the child.
- Some problems presented in private practice will see significant shifts in twenty sessions. Parents realize that the experience often raises issues in the broader family. Without addressing the roots of the symptoms in an adult context, the desired changes may not remain intact. Many issues indicate a need for more than 20 sessions.

SIX STAGES OF PLAY THERAPY

1. A family member is with the child.
2. The child explores the environment.
3. The child tests the limits and learns expectations.
4. Deeper awareness and meditative stage.
5. The integrative growth stage. (*Weaving It All Together*)
6. Termination of play therapy.

As the trust relationship develops, the child learns to open him/herself and reveal the innermost world. S/he plays out accumulated feelings of insecurity, fear, anxiety, anger, frustration, confusion, inadequacy, etc. The feelings come to the surface and eventually s/he is able to control them, express them, and let go of them. In the integrative stage, s/he begins to realize his/her own personal power, to think for him/herself, to make decisions, and to become a more mature, independent person. When a family is supportive of the process, play therapy works!

Fees are on a sliding scale.

Some of our therapists are out-of-network for PPO insurance plans.

Victims Compensation Assistance Program