

# Areas of Concern:

Play Therapy can address issues related to:

- ◆ ADHD
- ◆ Divorce
- ◆ Making Friends
- ◆ Behavioral Problems
- ◆ Trauma
- ◆ Fear and anxiety
- ◆ Bed-wetting
- ◆ Nightmares
- ◆ Shyness
- ◆ Grief
- ◆ Aggressive behavior or rage
- ◆ Sexual / physical / emotional abuse
- ◆ Self concept & self esteem
- ◆ Adapting to new situations (such as a new school, family set-up, etc.)
- ◆ Symptomatic behavior (stomach or headaches, anxiousness, depression, enuresis, etc.)



*Great Plains Psychological Services is committed to providing quality mental health services to individuals at all life stages and levels of need, assisting them in improving their quality of life.*

# Call Today!

To schedule an appointment with a therapist, call:

# 323-2345

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# Play



# Therapy



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# What is Play Therapy?

Like adults, children have big worries too. Play therapy helps children understand muddled feelings and upsetting events that they haven't the chance or skills to sort out properly. Young children don't always feel comfortable in what is known as traditional "talk" therapy. Play therapy is a widely-accepted, very effective tool for helping children in problematic life situations learn to express their feelings and explore coping

skills. Play therapy involves the use of toys, blocks, dolls, puppets, drawings and games to help the child recognize, identify, and verbalize feelings. The therapist observes how a child uses play materials and identifies themes or patterns to better understand the child's problems. Through a combination of talk and play the child has an opportunity to better understand and manage their conflicts, feelings, and behaviors.



# How will play therapy benefit my child?

Play is vital to every child's social, emotional, cognitive, physical, creative and language development. It helps make learning concrete for all children and young people including those for whom verbal communication may be difficult.

Play Therapy helps children in a variety of ways. Children receive emotional support and can learn to understand more about their own feelings and thoughts. Sometimes they may re-enact or play out traumatic or difficult life experiences in order to make sense of their past and cope better with their future. Children may also learn to manage relationships and conflicts in more appropriate ways.

The outcomes of Play Therapy may be general e.g. a reduction in anxiety and raised self-esteem, or more specific such as a change in behavior and improved relations with family and friends.



# As a parent, what can I do?

- You are very important in supporting your child through the process. Be consistent and encouraging to your child about attending sessions regularly.
- Resist the urge to ask your child what they did, as this will put pressure on them to comment on something they may have difficulty understanding themselves.
- Please don't ask your child to 'be good' or check if they have been. Therapy is not about being 'good' or 'bad' and your child must feel free to express 'bad' feelings in an uncensored way.
- Don't insist that your child tell certain things: it is their time and they must feel free to express themselves at their own pace. Instead tell your concerns to the Play Therapist on a separate occasion.

During any therapeutic intervention behavior may appear to get worse before it gets better - please tell your child's Play Therapist if you have any concerns. Please also feel free to ask your child's Play Therapist any questions throughout the process

