

What is Developmental Play Therapy?

A therapeutic intervention using play in natural settings to promote global* development in young children.

When children are involved in play, they are not worried or concerned with expectations. Therefore, play is an ideal and safe space for active learning to occur.

As a developmental therapist, I aim to expand a child's play skills, leading to developmental advancements.

I will inform and support parents on utilizing strategies and activities to encourage continued growth at home.

*Cognitive, communication, physical, social emotional, and life skills/adaptive development

What does Developmental Play Therapy look like?

A play session can include a variety of activities, depending on the child's interests and abilities. These include:

- Sensory play - water, playdough, sand, shaving cream, etc.
- Movement
- Music and singing
- Art activities
- Constructive/building play- blocks, Legos, Magna-Tiles, pegs, etc.
- Dramatic/Symbolic/Pretend play

Individual, sibling, and peer play sessions are offered

Who could benefit from Developmental Play Therapy?

Children who are challenged by:

- Playing independently
- Interacting with peers and/or siblings
- Understanding and following directions
- Physical and emotional regulation
- Sustaining attention
- Processing sensory stimuli

Truly, ALL CHILDREN would benefit from additional play support!

What are the benefits of Developmental Play Therapy?

For young children, play is the source of all learning.

Cognitive:

Play helps to build skills in the areas of literacy, scientific reasoning and math readiness.

- Some examples of concepts learned in play are:
 - Colors, shapes, size
 - Sorting, recognizing patterns, spatial relationships
 - Balance and gravity, cause and effect
 - Planning and sequencing
 - Making predictions and testing hypotheses
 - Experimenting, observing, and comparing



Social Emotional:

Through play, Children will:

- Encounter natural opportunities to understand shared materials and turn taking
- Form a sense of confidence, competence, and self-esteem
- Cope with mistakes, be challenged, and learn to persevere
- Develop creativity, imagination, and flexibility
- Grow problem-solving, communication, self-help, self-control, and relationship building skills
- Practice processing and expressing emotions
- Understand that objects are used to represent something else, and that people take on roles to represent someone else
 - This leads to the understanding that letters represent sound and numbers represent quantities.

Physical:

Physical (including sensory) play is utilized to help children reach and maintain an optimal state of regulation, making them available for learning.

Physical play promotes:

- Strength, endurance and balance
- Motor planning skills
- Body awareness and hand-eye coordination
- Fine and gross motor development
 - Fine motor: refined use of the small muscles in hands and fingers
 - Gross motor: large muscles in the arms, legs, and torso

