



# Washington State Association for Play Therapy

## Winter Newsletter



Hello Play Therapists!

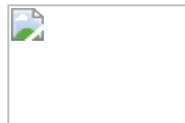
Thank you for being a member of the Washington State Association for Play Therapy, or for showing interest in learning more about Play Therapy. This newsletter issue will provide you with information about local trainings, opportunities to meet other play therapists and play therapy news and resources!

## National APT News

By: **Rosie Newman, LMHC, RPT, & WAAPT President**

As the WA Branch of Association for Play Therapy (APT), we actively support the APT in their efforts to promote and advocate for Play Therapy in the community. APT has begun efforts to boost public awareness and the understanding of the terms **PLAY THERAPY** and **REGISTERED PLAY THERAPIST** to widen public understanding of these terms and promote our field. The March 2013 poll revealed the number of people that were familiar with those terms was:

Play Therapy, 24.1%  
Registered Play Therapist, 16.4%



We all know that in WA, there are few play therapists, and fewer Registered Play Therapists. But, what if each of our 69 members talked to one person about play therapy each day for a whole week, that would be 483 people that will have a knowledge of play therapy by the end of that week. Join the challenge, talk to one person new each day during the week of February 2nd-8th Play Therapy Awareness Week and tell them about what you do, your passion for play and the healing benefits of play! Go the extra step and pass around the [FREE Why Play Therapy? Brochures](#) around your local spots in Washington. We are committed to making Play Therapy and Registered Play Therapists more widely known, understood and recognized! Stay tuned next newsletter to hear the results of all of your hard work!

## Sand Tray: Beginning a Miniature Collection

By: **Rebecca Rudd PhD, LMFT, LMHC, RPT-S**

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## Play Therapy Awareness Week Contest!

We need your help! We have been posting definitions of play therapy and encouraging folks to share the post to help us spread the word and educate others about **Play Therapy** and the **Registered Play Therapist Credential!**

### Enter the Contest:

On Facebook, write your definition of Play Therapy, encouraging people to share the post AND tag us, [WAAPT](#) in your

I have been working with clinicians for several years who work with a variety of populations from children to adults, individuals to families and groups and a variety of behavioral or mental health problems and while their knowledge of play therapy may be limited, a great majority of them have expressed interest in using the sand tray in therapy. Every clinician will admit at one point in their therapeutic work with clients that the spoken language has failed the client and the process of therapy. Experiences, feelings, and thoughts are not always best expressed through words which lend itself well to the appealing properties of sand tray and hundreds of miniatures. I have conducted sand tray with five-year-olds and fifty-five-year-olds. I have facilitated individual, group, and family trays. Furthermore, I have learned that people struggling with a whole host of problems can benefit from creating a new lens to see their lives or experiences in a different way. However, the appeal and success I have experienced with clients would not have been as satisfactory without my immense sand tray miniature collection.

Sand tray miniatures should be collected in all of these categories (Homeyer, & Sweeney, 2011):

People	Animals	Buildings	Transportation
Vegetation	Fences/gates/signs	Natural items	Fantasy
Spiritual-Mystical	Landscaping	Household items	Miscellaneous items

I have collected sand tray miniatures for the past ten years and have amassed over 1000 pieces. This process has taken on a life of its own and I now enjoy finding a rare or unique miniature for my collection. Homeyer & Sweeney (2011) suggest building a collection of 300 miniatures before beginning sand tray with clients. The process requires a range of expression opportunities which could be limited with smaller collections. However, building these collections does not have to be time consuming nor expensive. While several specialized play therapy stores such as [Toys of the Trade](#), [Self Help Warehouse](#), [Child Therapy Toys](#), or [Anna's Toy Depot](#) sell miniatures, your local stores such as Target, Walmart, or specialty toys stores may also carry inexpensive toys. One of the best and fastest ways to build your miniature selection is going to thrift stores, garage sales, ebay, or even asking friends with kids for unused toys. Before long you will have an abundant collection to use with clients from child to adulthood.

#### References

Homeyer, L.E. & Sweeney, D.S. (2011). [Sandtray Therapy: A practical manual](#). New York: Taylor and Francis Group.

## DIY Play Therapy Toys

**By: Alex Molleston Luke, MS, LMFT**

Let's be honest, the toys we use in our trade can be expensive! The cost of specialized toys such as puppets and sand trays can sometimes feel prohibitive. In the process of setting up a private practice, some clinicians have opted for other avenues for acquiring toys. For example, I have scoured the Goodwill every Saturday for many a weekend in search of some discarded Playmobil treasure. I have chosen to use my childhood toy chest as a "kitchen set" by painting the top to look like a sink and stove-top, instead of purchasing a bulky and pricey kitchen set. I mean, kids have great imaginations don't they?

post to qualify for the prize drawing. Extra points for having Registered Play Therapist in the post as well!



**Prize:** An *autographed* copy of David Crenshaw, PhD, RPT-S and Cathy Malchiodi, PhD, LPCC's newest book, [Creative Arts and Play Therapy for Attachment Problems](#).

## WAAPT Training

### A Guide to Play Therapy and the Modern Family

Clair Mellenthin, LCSW, RPT-S

Holly Willard, LCSW

February 26, 2014

Bellevue, WA

6 APT/NASW Approved CEs

**Only 1 More Week to Register at the Early Bird Rates:**

[Click here to register!](#)

## WAAPT Elections!

We are searching for dedicated play therapists, or those interested in play therapy, to join our board and help us continue to promote and expand play, play therapy and educational opportunities for play therapists in our state. Open positions include: President Elect, Treasurer and Secretary. For more information about the board check out our [website](#). Interested parties must be a WAAPT member (visit [www.a4pt.org](http://www.a4pt.org)) and be willing to volunteer 10-20 hours over the year for quarterly meetings and conference planning and attendance.

Please send nominations (and self-nominations) including a short description of your background/training, your interest in play therapy, and your hopes to contribute to the organization

If you're interested in other creative ways therapists have set up their playrooms, check out [this link](#) and feel free to post your ideas on our [Facebook](#) page to share with others. Keep an eye out for a DIY sand tray tutorial in our next newsletter!



Courtesy [Kim's Counseling Center](#).

to [pattycannon@gmail.com](mailto:pattycannon@gmail.com) by March 1st, 2014.

## Organization Update

We are working hard to provide you with useful information, more training opportunities and more outreach and networking events in your area!

### Changes to our Training Calendar:

In the past, we have offered one annual training every September. For 2014, we plan to offer more smaller-scale training opportunities, both in the Eastern and Western WA to give you more access to APT approved CEs. Our plan is to work towards a 2-day annual conference in 2015! Our next workshop, [A Guide to Play Therapy and the Modern Family](#), by Clair Mellenthin, LCSW and Holly Willard, LCSW will be held in Bellevue on [February 26th, 2014](#).

Stay tuned for our next WAAPT trainings planned for May 2014 and September 2014!

### Website Updates:

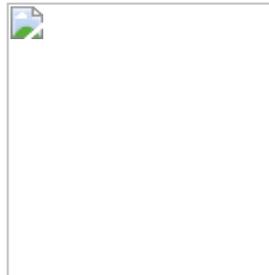
We revamped our [website!](#) Be sure to check out the newly organized website with our new ["Find a Play Therapist"](#) feature for our members! The Find a Email [info@wa4pt.com](mailto:info@wa4pt.com) if you have changes/additions you would like to make to your profile!

## Member Spotlight:

### Cary McAdams Hamilton, MA, LMHC, CMHS, RPT-S

By: [Krystel Stryczek, BS, MAc](#)

Cary completed her Masters degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at George Fox University, Newberg, OR. Cary plays many roles as a professional community-therapist, teacher, supervisor, presenter--and she is a parent. She is a member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, the American Mental Health Counselors, and the Association for Play Therapy.



**Practice:** Cary specializes in the treatment of childhood trauma, adult survivors of childhood trauma, ADHD, and autism. "I use it [play therapy] with everybody!" Cary uses play therapy with children, adolescents, and adults. "Buy-in" can be more challenging for adults, "Once I have more rapport I start integrating it [play therapy]." Cary finds that play therapy can be useful for helping adults "get out of their head." Cary describes her general therapy approach as "prescriptive," in the likeness of Paris Goodyear-Brown's approach, "It's not that I'm eclectic. After building rapport and establishing a direction, I look to find the best modalities and techniques that I can draw on" to offer the most efficient, effective treatment approach that minimizes pain while supporting individualized treatment.

**Who has influenced your work?** Paris Goodyear-Brown, Gary Landreth, Daniel Sweeney, and Eliana Gill.

**Teaching & Supervision:** Cary is currently teaching courses at Brandman University, in Lacey, WA, and supervises Master's level interns in a private practice setting, Olympia Therapy LLC. "I love teaching." Cary provides continuing education workshops to master's level student and post-graduates, but she is working with local educational institutions to develop play therapy training in academic settings and local continuing education centers. "I find that even in MFT programs, play therapy is glanced over in child development and theory sections... I want there to be a treatment focus for kids" with emphasis on the new scientific evidence for the benefits of play, including neuroscience, theory, and evidence-based foundations for practice. As a supervisor, "I'm a stickler for the basics." Cary focuses on guiding her supervisees in learning the basics of traditional client-centered play therapy and understanding the theory driving their work with clients.

## You Know You're A PT When....

...You have testified in court with pink paint on your clothes

... You hit up your neighbors for their happy meal toys to add to your sandtray collection

... Or you drive thru the McDonalds and order a happy meal to get the toy yourself

**Why become an RPT?** "By having the RPT designation it gives you credibility besides just saying I do play therapy." Many members in the professional community say they practice play therapy, but are unable to articulate the theoretical approach guiding their play practices. The increasing availability of scientific evidence supporting the benefits of play therapy, e.g. treatment of trauma, are helping to raise awareness of the effectiveness of the approach, "Doctors are sending kids to me for play therapy... because I have that [RPT] designation I think I am getting recognition from other professionals that it is a specialty versus something I do, like CBT or solution-focused. It's not something I say I can do, it's something I am trained to do... It's a specific techniques based in theory, modality, and concept."

**Question from a graduate student:** What are ways you can help children to identify and understand their feelings beyond using a face chart?

"I do mirroring with them [kids], I make a happy face and they make a happy face... You can make it fun. It really does help beyond the feeling sheets. I send parents home to work on identifying feelings, 'You're really disappointed now...you're really excited right now...' getting parents to use the vocabulary so the kids get the correlation... it's another word for them [kids] to use for application."

**What is Cary reading?** "There is always so much more new science coming out... I just got Dan Siegel's Brainstorm book because I loved his The Whole-Brain Child book. I'm curious to see what the new science is saying about the teenage brain."

**Future projects:** In addition to her tireless efforts to expand the availability of quality play therapy education and training in Washington, Cary plans to return to writing. "I want to write something on being pregnant and going through the play therapy process with kids," to explore the therapist-client relationship and interaction process with children when their therapist is pregnant. "It's a very different [experience] for kids in play therapy than adults." Cary's last publication, with Daniel Sweeney, explored spirituality with children in counseling (McAdams & Sweeney, 2006).

#### **Recommended Reading for new/aspiring Play Therapists:**

- Gil, E. (2006). *Helping Abused and Traumatized Children*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Goodyear-Brown, P. (2009). *Play Therapy With Traumatized Children: A Prescriptive Approach*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Landreth, G. L. (2002). *Play Therapy: The Art of the Relationship (2 ed)*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis Books.
- Ray, D.C. (2011). *Advanced Play Therapy: Essential Conditions, Knowledge, and Skills for Child Practice*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Schaefer, C.E. (2003). *Foundations of Play Therapy*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Sweeney, D. S. (1997). *Counseling Children Through the World of Play*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

#### **Next training with Cary:**

Play Therapy Applications in the Mental Health Field; Techniques, Theories, Mental Health Disorders, and Relevancy  
Feb. 8, 2014, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm, Brandman University, Lacey, WA  
6 hours APT & NBCC  
<http://www.olympiatherapy.com/PlayTherapy.en.html>

#### **References**

Cain, J. (2000). The way I feel.

... You can honestly say you get handcuffed and shot at about once or twice a week.

... You can't close your suitcase to go home at the end of an APT conference because of all the puppets, books and toys you bought!

Have a quote or picture that you would like to share in an upcoming newsletter? Email us at [info@wa4pt.com](mailto:info@wa4pt.com)!

### **Mark Your Calendar**

**Feb 8, 2013, Lacey, WA**  
[Cary McAdam Hamilton, LMFT, RPT-S.](#)

Play Therapy Applications in the Mental Health Field: Techniques, Theories, Mental Health Disorders and Relevancy.

**Feb. 26, 2014, Bellevue, WA**  
[Washington Play Therapy Association's Conference:](#)

Clair Mellenthin, LCSW, RPT-S,  
Holly Willard, LCSW, RPT  
A Guide to Play Therapy With The Modern Family.

**Feb 28 - March 2, 2014**  
**Vancouver, BC**  
[British Columbia Play Therapy Association Conference:](#)

Play and Process: In Play, Sandplay and Expressive Therapies.

**Save The Date! March 2014**  
[Western WA4PT Movie Night!](#)

We are in the process of solidifying the details on the next movie night in Western Washington (hint: it's looking like the second or third week in March). Keep an eye out for an email in the next coming weeks!

**April 4 - April 5, Boise, Idaho**  
[Idaho Association for Play Therapy Annual Conference:](#)

Pam Dyson, MA, LPC, RPT: Day 1: Ready, Set, Play: The ABC's of Play Therapy and Beyond and Day 2: All in the Family: Using Play Therapy with Families.

**April 25 - April 26, Victoria, Canada**

McAdams, C., & Sweeney, D. (2006). Exploring spirituality with children in counseling. In K. Helmeke & C. F. Sori (Eds.), *Therapist's notebook for integrating spirituality in counseling* (Vol. 2, pp. 83-92). Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.

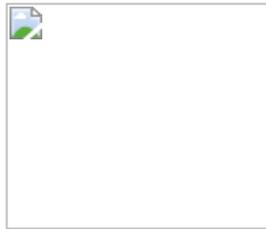
**Author:** Krystel Stryczek, BS, MAc, is a current graduate student in Antioch University's (Seattle, WA) MA Psychology, Couples and Family Therapy, program and the Graduate Student Representative for Washington State Association for Play Therapy.

## What You Need to Know About Becoming a Registered Play Therapist (RPT):

Many therapists with varying levels of training work with children and may utilize play as part of their therapy. Registered Play Therapists receive specialized training to meet the rigorous credentialing requirements through the national Association for Play Therapy. Currently, there are only 15 Registered Play Therapists (RPT)/(RPT-S) in the state of Washington.

### Requirements

- \* Masters level or higher mental health educational degree
- \* Licensed in your state to practice mental health (LMHC, LMFT, LCISW)
- \* 500 hours of supervised play therapy experience that includes 50 supervision hours
- \* 150 APT- Approved Education hours- like CEs from WAAPT's conferences or join us for one of our movie nights!



### Useful Tips:

- \* **You can start accruing APT approved hours before you graduate or have your license!**
- \* Of your 150 education hours, 50 can be accrued online! Check out [APT e-learning center](#) to download audio lectures from this years conference. You can also earn CEs from reading books and watching DVDs

Working on becoming and RPT/RPT-S and need some mentoring? Contact us at [info@wa4pt.com](mailto:info@wa4pt.com). We are happy to support you!

## Ideas for Future Newsletters?

Want to see something in the WAAPT newsletters that we haven't addressed yet? Please feel free to contact us at [stacy.glover@wa4pt.com](mailto:stacy.glover@wa4pt.com) with any requests you have regarding content that you would like to see in future editions of our newsletter! All ideas are welcome!

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[Canadian Association for Child and Play Therapy \(CACPT\)](#), Annual Conference and Meeting: Multiple Workshops

**June 5-8, 2014, Seattle, WA**  
[Sandplay Therapists of American National Conference](#).

**Oct 7-12, 2014, Houston, TX**  
[Association for Play Therapy Annual Conference](#).

Check our [website](#) for updated trainings!

## Networking Updates

The networking events are proving to be a big success! We are working on offering more and more networking and movie night events! Please keep an eye out on our [Facebook](#) page as well as our event section on the [website](#)! Events are held every 6-8 weeks in both in Spokane and Seattle areas!



Eastern Washington's January Networking Event!

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