Happy Holidays 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 training’s, opportunities to meet other play therapists, and play therapy news and resources. Please feel free to give us feedback on content you would like to see in future newsletters at info@wsapt.com!

Introducing our Spring Keynote Speaker!

We are pleased to introduce our spring keynote speaker, Sueann Kenney-Noziska! Here is some information on what Sueann will be presenting about during our two day conference March 18th & 19th, 2016!

Presentation Title: Integrative Play Therapy for Treatment of Abuse & Trauma
Presenter: Sueann Kenney-Noziska, MSW, LISW, LGSW, RPT-S/Play Therapy Corner, Inc.

Brief Overview: This workshop will emphasize an integrative approach to using play therapy with victims of abuse & trauma in a matter which reduces symptoms & promotes healing, growth, & recovery. Recent research, studies, & literature pertaining to trauma’s impact on the brain, treatment of post-traumatic stress, & trauma-informed treatment will be reviewed. Attendees will learn strategies for addressing the complex treatment needs of abused & traumatized individuals using both post-traumatic play metaphors & directive play therapy interventions.

Learning Objectives:

1. After the session, participants will be able to define integrative play therapy.
2. After the session, participants will be able to describe at least 1 way that posttraumatic play can be utilized in clinical practice with abused & traumatized children & adolescents.
3. After the session, participants will be able to identify a minimum of 5 play-based interventions to utilize as part of the treatment for abuse & trauma.
4. After the session, participants will be able to discuss a minimum of 1 advantage & 1 limitation of utilizing integrative play therapy.

For more information regarding our 2016 spring conference click HERE!

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Mark Your Calendars

January 08, 2016
9:00am-4:30pm Shoreline Center, Shoreline, WA
Title: Introduction to Play Therapy: Theory, Application, and Techniques
Presenter: Cary McAdams Hamilton, MA, MFT, LMHC, CMHS, RPT-S
Click HERE for more info!

January 26th, 2016
8:00am-4:00pm Hilton Garden Inn, Bothell, WA
Title: The Power of Play: Proven

If you have the knowledge and experience in play therapy that others can learn from? Have you experienced successes with a particular model or type of play that others may find helpful? Perhaps you have experience with a specific population of children that you can bring to others.

WA-APT is now accepting presentation proposals for the 2016 Two-Day Annual Conference March 18 & 19, 2016 with Sueann Kenney-Noziska, LCSW, RPT-S!

Proposals will be accepted through January 15, 2016. Presenters will be contacted regarding the decision of the conference committee by February 1, 2016. For more information please click HERE.

Recap: Annual APT Conference
By Cary Hamilton, MA, MFT, LMHC, CMHS, RPT-S

"I attended the International Play Therapy conference in Atlanta, Georgia earlier this month, hosted by the Association for Play Therapy. Antioch University was recognized during the keynote presentation and awards breakfast as the 27th Approved Provider Site in the United States. The conference was full of exceptional trainings on play therapy, supervision, and diversity. I felt immersed in play the entire week! Antioch is entering into a close-knit community of like-minded play therapists with the goal of serving the community. Currently, as I am the President for the Washington State Association for Play Therapy and the Director of the Play Therapy Concentration for Antioch, we are a "shining light" in the Northwest. I was proud to share information about our WAPT branch and specialization at Antioch University and I look forward to continuing to promote the therapeutic powers of play therapy in the Pacific Northwest."

![Some of our WA-APT board members!](image)

Intervention: Anger Volcano
By Elizabeth Peixoto, MS, LMHC

An anger outburst can be like a volcanic eruption. Many kids and parents have a hard time seeing how they can go from feeling and acting "okay" to having a complete meltdown in such a short time. The anger volcano is a way to help explain meltdowns for both children and adults. It can also be used as a tool to teach coping skills. Here's how to do it:

* Draw an outline of a volcano
* Draw various levels of lava building up by using different colors for each level. Each level of lava represents something that builds up (anger/frustration/anxiety/etc).
  Examples: Not getting enough sleep, skipping breakfast or a snack, leaving homework at home, getting a paper cut, a friend said something mean, you lose during a game
* Once the volcano is full of lava, identify a problem that usually makes the child or someone they know "explode," and then draw the volcano exploding with lava
* Once your volcano eruption is completed, you can then start to discuss how little things can build up over time, and what it take to "cool off" some of that lava or vent out the pressure in order to prevent an eruption!

Recap: November Seattle Networking Event
By Elizabeth Peixoto, MA, LMHC

WAAPT's latest networking meeting in Seattle was held on November 11th at Meghan Whitlock's office. A total of 7 attendees participated in all. Attendees enjoyed a pleasant and professional atmosphere and engaged in meaningful conversations.

!["...you use a toy cash register to total up your business deposit..."](image)
Explaining Child-Centered Play Therapy to Parents
By Becky Rudd, PhD, LMFT, LMHC, RPT-S

While the professional community becomes more educated and aware of play therapy, parents often come to us uneducated or even unaware of what play therapy really is. While they may understand the meaning of “play” and “therapy” independently, combining the two words does not necessarily describe what Play Therapists do for their children. As a result, educating the parents is as important as the consent for treatment and intake assessment. I often begin my sessions asking parents what they already know about play therapy. I am able to assess their exposure to this modality and complement, or in some cases correct, their current knowledge. I describe why traditional talk therapies do not work with younger children - emphasizing the silliness of sitting a 4 year old down to talk in-depth about his or her feelings regarding such topics as divorce, death in the family or recent foster placement change. I would often say “it would be unlikely that your child would say ‘it had me really confused and frustrated. I am unsure how to effectively communicate my feelings in ways that adults can understand and respond to’.” At this point my comment is usually met with laughter and parents are ready to hear how I plan to approach their concerns in a therapeutic way. I then educate the parent on the developmental stage of their child to include how their child expresses thoughts, feelings and the use of behavior - and most importantly that children are concrete thinkers and live in the moment.

I involve parents by asking for examples of these developmental behaviors, and most are happy to oblige. Most share examples of their child acting out behaviorally when they are upset instead of using words. If appropriate, I will inquire how long the child remained upset and how long the parents remained upset about the situation. Most often the child, who lives in-the-moment, will move on to more exciting things while the parents are still living in the behavioral episode. This further highlights how sitting his or her child down to talk about past events would be futile. I emphasize the need to allow the child to re-experience this problem-event in a moment that is concrete and malleable. I then explain the purpose of the play room. I mentioned the room is full of specific toys selected to allow children a wide range of emotional experiences. I make a point to mention that the concerns and behaviors that prompted them to bring the child to therapy will show up in the play room -whether it is anxiety, anger and frustration or poor coping skills. It is through this real-time experience, and a trusting unbiased relationship that I am able to assist the child.

I have found this method of introduction quite beneficial and rewarding. Furthermore, I schedule a parent-only session every 4th session or so to brief parents on my work with their child and gain their input on how things are going. I also make it a point to include a play-based description or examples of their child’s coping skills, insights and changes.

Recap: WAAPT at WCA!

WAAPT was pleased to be an exhibitor at the 2015 Washington Counseling Association in Spokane Nov 6-7. The Conference theme was ‘Common Roots, Stronger Branches: Counseling Across Specialties.’ Past WAAPT president, Becky Rudd, presented Play Therapy Techniques for Children and Families and Navigating Ethical Issues in Child, Play and Family Therapy. APT credit was offered.

We Want You!

Want to see something in the WAAPT newsletters that we haven’t addressed yet? Or better yet, want to contribute to the newsletter(s) yourself?!

Please feel free to contact us at info@wa4pt.com with any requests you have regarding content that you would like to see in future editions of our newsletter or in what capacity you would like to contribute to the newsletters yourself. All
A commonly asked question received at the WAAPT booth: “Will there be a play therapy conference in Spokane?” We are working on it! Thanks to those for who expressed interest and enthusiasm for play therapy training on the east side! As a result of our presence at the WCA conference, 15 new people signed up to become a part of the interest list. Welcome aboard!

**Does Play Therapy Work? A Parent’s Perspective**

By: Stacy Glover, MA, LMFT

As the WAAPT newsletter editor, I spend several hours each newsletter finding content, pictures, dates, and all kinds of goodies on the world wide web to help make all of the board’s hard work look spiffy. In my recent attempt to gather information for this newsletter, I ran across an article on the Huffington Post website that seemed as though it was written to compliment this newsletter (and Becky’s article)! It is an article titled, “Children of Divorce Benefit from Play Therapy.” I read the first line of the article—where the author states she is not a therapist or social worker—and frankly, almost quit reading because I thought it was going to be an article written by someone who doesn’t have the proper knowledge or training to speak on behalf of our beloved play therapy. I pushed through and continued reading and was pleasantly surprised that the writer, Laura Lifshitz, was talking about her perspective of play therapy as a parent and how she is a total advocate for play therapy!

As a budding play therapist myself, I know I have struggled with explaining play therapy and the benefits of play therapy to some parents and sometimes wonder if parents truly believe that this “play therapy stuff” really does work. Reading Becky’s article and how she goes through the process of explaining play therapy has changed the way I plan on talking with parents about the importance of play therapy (thank you, Becky). It was also nice to read a real personal experience from a parent who is such an advocate for our field—no to mention a parent that has the eyes and ears of thousands of online readers whose interest may have been piqued by Ms. Lifshitz’s article! Go Team Play Therapy! Let’s take a moment and pat ourselves on the backs!

If you would like to read the article yourself, please click [HERE](#). Enjoy!