



What is Play Therapy?

Children often express themselves through play before they have the words to explain their feelings. Play therapy uses toys, art, stories, and pretend play to help children express emotions, work through challenges, and develop healthy coping skills.

A trained play therapist creates a safe, supportive space where children can explore their feelings and build confidence.

Parents are part of the process, too. Your therapist will work with you to support your child's progress beyond the playroom.

Clear Minded Counseling offers play therapy for children and families. If you have questions or want to get on our schedule, please contact us.

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PLAY THERAPY

Helping children understand their feelings, work through challenges, and build skills to thrive.



How Play Therapy Can Help

- Recognizing and expressing feelings
- Managing big emotions and frustration
- Developing coping and problem-solving skills
- Working through worries, grief, or difficult experiences
- Building confidence and strengthening relationships
- Every child is different. Therapy goals are based on the child's needs, developmental level, and the concerns bringing the family to therapy.

Why Does Training Matter?

Play therapy requires more than creating a welcoming playroom with toys in it. Specialized training helps therapists understand children's developmental needs, use play therapeutically, and choose approaches that support treatment goals.

The Registered Play Therapist (RPT) credential reflects additional education in play therapy, supervised experience, and ongoing professional development. This training helps therapists use play intentionally to support children's emotional and behavioral needs.

How Play Therapy Works

Young children may find it difficult to sit and talk directly about their feelings or experiences. Play offers another way to communicate, explore concerns, and practice new responses.

In child-led play therapy, the child leads the play while the therapist follows attentively, reflects feelings, builds trust, and responds therapeutically. The therapist is not simply watching a child play—each session is guided by the child's needs and treatment goals.

A Child's Way to Communicate

A child may express through play what they cannot yet explain in words. The therapist pays attention to the child's communication and context without assuming that a particular toy or action always has one meaning.

What To Expect

Sessions typically last 45–60 minutes. Children use developmentally appropriate toys and materials in a safe, supportive setting. Your therapist will explain how caregiver involvement, updates, and treatment goals will work for your family.

Who May Benefit

Play therapy may be helpful for children who are having difficulty with:

- Anxiety, worries, or fears
- Big emotions or frustration
- Grief, loss, or difficult experiences
- Separation, divorce, or family changes
- Social relationships or expressing needs
- Behavior challenges at home or school

Our Play Therapists



Shannon Nesland

MS · LPC-MH Supervisee · Registered Play Therapist (RPT)

Works ages 2–21 experiencing emotional challenges, anxiety, trauma, or life changes. Her compassionate approach helps clients build coping skills, strengthen relationships, and feel safe expressing themselves.



Jody Bockorny

MS · LPC-MH · RPT-Supervisee

Works with children ages 3–10, using child-centered, integrative play therapy to address anxiety, big emotions, ADHD, social and learning challenges. Helps children build skills and navigate challenges at home, daycare, school, and with peers.



Miranda Held

MA · LPC Supervisee · RPT-Supervisee

Works with children ages 3–12 experiencing anxiety, big emotions, behavioral challenges, grief, trauma, or family changes. Helps children express feelings, strengthen coping skills, and develop emotional regulation while partnering with caregivers.