

**THE PLAY THERAPY INSTITUTE  
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - ST. LOUIS**

**UMSL  
PLAY THERAPY  
CONFERENCE**

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**JULY 18 - 19, 2024**

**UMSL** | Counseling and  
Social Advocacy Center

NBCC Provider #3054



APT Approved Provider #21-641

# **CONFERENCE SCHEDULE**

## **THURSDAY**

SESSION 1 - 9:00 - 10:30AM

BREAK - 10:30 - 10:45AM

SESSION 2 - 10:45AM - 12:15PM

LUNCH - 12:15 - 1:15PM

SESSION 3 - 1:15 - 2:45PM

BREAK - 2:45 - 3:00PM

SESSION 4 - 3:00 - 4:30PM

## **FRIDAY**

SESSION 5 - 9:00 - 10:30AM

BREAK - 10:30 - 10:45AM

SESSION 6 - 10:45AM - 12:15PM (BREAKOUT SESSIONS)

LUNCH - 12:15 - 1:15PM

SESSION 7 - 1:15 - 2:45PM

BREAK - 2:45 - 3:00PM

SESSION 8 - 3:00 - 4:30PM

## **SESSION 1**

### **Child Centered Group Play Therapy**

Dr. Emily Brown, LPC, RPT-S, NCC

Group play therapy is an optimal approach for helping children enhance communication, relationships, emotional regulation, and personal strengths - the therapeutic powers of play. This interactive session will provide an overview of the rationale and techniques for using child-centered group play therapy in school and clinical settings. (*Play Therapy Skills and Methods*)

Learning Objectives:

1. List at least three benefits of group play therapy
2. Explain unique skills and considerations for the child-centered group play therapy approach
3. Demonstrate basic skills for group play therapy

## **SESSION 2**

### **On the case! Developing a deeper understanding of case conceptualization using Play therapy techniques.**

Marie Bonner-Horon, MA, LPC, RPT-S, NCC

Case conceptualization is a must have skill for every play therapist. Play therapists can use case conceptualizations when they are feeling stuck with a client, needing to complete a treatment plan review, or to do self work and reflections. This session builds play therapist case conceptualization skills that are grounded in Child-Centered Play therapy. (*Play Therapy Skills and Methods*)

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe 3 components of a play therapy case conceptualization.
2. Discuss the benefits of using case conceptualization in the play therapy process.
3. Create 1 case conceptualization using a play therapy client.

## **SESSION 3**

### **Embracing Diversity: a Playful Approach to Neurodiversity Affirming Care**

Tyler Z. Tooley, MS, LPC, C-APT

As the field of neurodiversity-affirming awareness continues to evolve, it is crucial for play therapists to explore and understand the unique challenges and strengths that arise for this population. In this interactive workshop, participants will embark on a journey to explore innovative and inclusive play therapy practices that celebrate diversity, foster self-acceptance, and create therapeutic spaces that honor the complexity of the individual. (*Play Therapy Cultural and Social Diversity Topics*)

#### Learning Objectives:

1. List three (3) unique challenges and three (3) strengths commonly experienced of neurodivergence identity.
2. Describe two (2) inclusive play therapy techniques for neurodivergent youth during simulated therapeutic scenarios, demonstrating adaptability and competence.
3. Identify strengths-based solutions play therapists can use to support challenges faced by neurodivergent individuals in at least two (2) scenarios, actively celebrating diversity and incorporating affirming language..

## **SESSION 4**

### **A Child Centered Play Therapy Approach to Limit Setting in Schools, Small Spaces, and Sticky Situations**

Hannah Almeida, Ed.S, LPC, RPT & Erika Kennedy, M.Ed., LPC, RPT

The Child Centered Play Therapy ACT limit setting model was created to help the child develop self direction and self responsibility. This session aims to review the ACT model created by Gary Landreth and apply it across various settings in which practitioners work. Discussion of behaviors in the playroom, therapist's own feelings about limit setting, scenarios of the ACT model across various settings of play therapy, and practicing ACT limit setting skills will be explored during this session. (*Play Therapy Seminal or Historically Significant Theories*)

#### Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the Child Centered Play Therapy (CCPT) approach to limit setting using the ACT model.
2. Apply knowledge of the CCPT ACT limit setting model to various play therapy settings and situations, such as but not limited to schools, private practices, and agencies.
3. Reflect and analyze practitioners' own usage of the CCPT ACT limit setting model in case scenarios and clinical experiences in the playroom.

## **SESSION 5**

### **Burnt and Blocked: Play Therapy Interventions for Parents Suffering Burnout**

Jasmine Berger, LCSW, RPT

Working with parents who are at their wits end can be a challenge, especially when their child simultaneously needs their attention and connection. This workshop is intended for play therapists, counselors, and psychotherapists who are looking for effective ways to work with families that have burnt out parents experiencing blocked care. Participants will learn about blocked care and parental burnout and the impact of each on children and attachment. Participants will be introduced to, and have a chance to practice, play therapy interventions to help support parents and foster healthy connections between children and their caregivers. These playful interventions have proven effective with families who have not achieved positive results with more traditional parenting advice and behavioral treatments. This training is especially beneficial for play therapists and their colleagues who are working with children of varying ages who engage in "big behaviors." (*Play Therapy Special Topics*)

Learning Objectives:

1. Analyze the 4 types of blocked care that can occur with caregivers.
2. Describe appropriate assessments for child and parent relationships
3. List 3 play therapy interventions to use with children and families to foster healthy attachment

## **SESSION 6 (Breakouts)**

### **a) Using Play Therapy in Schools**

Sara Carpenter, Ph.D., LPC, RPT

This workshop will illustrate how play therapy can be facilitated in a school setting for individual and group use. Participants will discuss materials and skills useful in providing school-based play therapy. This session will provide you with practical suggestions and interventions when using play therapy with students presenting with a variety of concerns. (*Play Therapy Skills and Methods*)

Learning Objectives:

1. Discuss research supporting the use and benefits of play therapy in school settings.
2. Examine materials useful in providing play therapy in school settings.
3. Identify the application of play therapy interventions to respond to various student concerns

## **SESSION 6 (Breakouts)**

### **b) Making room for play! Creative ways to utilize play therapy techniques in clinical supervision**

Dr. Meredith Moore, Ph.D., LPC

The use of play therapy techniques in individual and group supervision may improve supervisee's experience by raising their self-awareness and helping them work through complex client situations (Bratton et al, 2008; Drewes et al., 2008). Supervisors can also utilize supervision to model play therapy techniques that supervisees can use with clients. This experiential session will introduce participants to a variety of play therapy techniques that can be utilized in clinical supervision. (*Play Therapy Supervision*)

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify three benefits to utilizing play therapy techniques in clinical supervision
2. Describe how to select developmentally appropriate play therapy techniques based on the skill level and demonstrated needs of supervisees
3. Demonstrate effective use of play therapy supervision interventions

## **SESSION 7**

### **Art Thou For or Against Me? Parents as Allies in the Play Therapy Process**

Danielle White, MS., LPC, RPT-S

Let's face it, as mental health professionals who work with children, parents can either be your greatest ally or seem like an adversary! During our time, we will discuss common barriers play therapists face when working with children and their parents. And ways to overcome and move through the therapy process in more effective ways. (*Play Therapy Skills and Methods*)

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe 3 barriers parents face that can obstruct the play therapy process.
2. Describe 3 barriers clinicians face with parents in working with their children in the play therapy process.
3. Identify 3 play therapy skills that help build rapport with parents.

## **SESSION 8**

### **Beyond the Playroom: EcoTherapy with Children & Families**

Dominique Begnaud, MA, ATR, IL-LCPC, MO-LPC, NCC

Ecotherapy, also known as nature therapy, is a growing practice in the mental health profession that play therapists can apply within play therapy treatment as well. Nature-based activities allow the play therapist to take play therapy sessions beyond the playroom, but there are important ethical considerations to ensure confidentiality and safety are still priorities in outdoor play therapy sessions. This workshop will help play therapists apply the Therapeutic Powers of Play to nature-based activities in individual, family and group play therapy sessions with clients across the lifespan. (*Play Therapy Special Topics*)

Learning Objectives:

1. List the benefits of ecotherapy activities in play therapy sessions
2. Identify ethical considerations in outdoor play therapy sessions
3. Describe the application of nature-based mindfulness and art based activities in outdoor play therapy sessions



# PRESENTERS

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**Hannah Almeida**, Ed.S, LPC, RPT has been working with children and adolescents for over 10 years. She has experience working in schools as a middle school counselor and crisis counselor, mental health agencies, non profits, and is currently seeing clients part time at a behavioral health agency in Hannibal, MO. Hannah has been an adjunct teacher at UMSL, teaching Intro and Advanced Play Therapy to masters level students and is currently an Instructional Faculty member in the Behavioral Science department at Hannibal LaGrange University, working with undergraduates pursuing their degree in Psychology.

**Dominique Begnaud**, MA, LPC, LCPC, ATR, NCC is the proprietor and sole therapist at Create Play Grow Therapy Services, a private practice in South City St. Louis focused on supporting individuals from age three through the lifespan. Dominique is a registered art therapist, registered play therapist, and garden therapist who believes in the power of creativity for healing.

**Jasmine Berger**, MSSW, LCSW, RPT is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Registered Play Therapist. She graduated with her MSW from Washington University in St. Louis. Jasmine worked in community mental health and as a school social worker, before starting Bud to Bloom Play Therapy a small group practice. She specializes in working with children with trauma, big behaviors and attachment disruptions using play therapy. She is a theraplay foundational practitioner and enjoys using this approach to help caregivers and children connect and build healthy relationships. Jasmine also is an adjunct professor at the Brown School of Social work at Washington University in St. Louis.

**Marie Bonner-Horon**, MA, LPC, RPT-S, NCC is the owner of Ways of Play Counseling and Co-founder of the Playhouse Collaborative. Marie enjoys teaching and supporting her fellow clinicians while they help their clients become successful and content with their lives. Marie has been in the field since 2013 and a supervisor since 2018.

**Emily Brown**, PhD, LPC, RPT-S, NCC is an Assistant Professor of Counseling and Director of the Play Therapy Institute at the University of Missouri - St. Louis. She specializes in counseling children experiencing loss, crisis, and trauma. She is a former elementary school counselor with over 15 years of experience practicing play therapy, and now teaches and supervises future play therapists at UMSL.

# PRESENTERS

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**Sara Carpenter**, Ph.D., LPC, RPT is a practicing middle school counselor, Registered Play Therapist, and counselor educator at the University of Texas at Austin. In 2018, she received her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. As a certified K-12 school counselor, Carpenter has practiced across all three levels; elementary, middle (her favorite!), and secondary; and frequently uses play therapy interventions to support the social and emotional development of students.

**Erika Kennedy**, M.Ed., LPC, RPT has been working with children for 20 years, the majority of the time in the public school setting. She has 11 years experience as an Elementary School Counselor and 4 years experience as an Educational Support Counselor. The few years she worked outside of the public school system, she worked part-time in a group practice providing play therapy to children ages 4-10. Erika has been a Licensed Professional Counselor and Registered Play Therapist for 6 years.

**Meredith Moore**, Ph.D., LPC is a counselor educator and supervisor who focuses on embodied healing through creativity and connection. She is specialized in college counseling, eating disorders, disordered eating, and working with individuals who have experienced weight stigma. In the classroom and the counseling space she focuses on creating connection utilizing creative methods such as sand tray, expressive arts, and other experiential techniques.

**Tyler Z. Tooley**, MS, LPC, C-APT is a licensed professional counselor (LPC) and a certified AutPlay® Therapist Supervisor, and he is pursuing his Registered Play Therapist (RPT) certification. Tyler completed his Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Missouri State University in May of 2020 and his Bachelor's in Psychology at Missouri State University in May of 2017. Tyler has experience working with individuals of all ages, including children, adolescents, teenagers and adults. Tyler specializes in working with people who are neurodivergent (Autistic, ADHD, OCD, gifted, etc.) and has a proclivity for integrating technology, video games, and virtual reality into sessions.

**Danielle White**, MA, LPC, RPT-S, NCC is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor. She specializes in early childhood play therapy (ages 18 months-5) but also works with individuals 5-18 and adults. Danielle implements play therapy to help heal children and families on a wholistic level.