



Glossary of Terms

Professional Credentialing Program

Approved Center and Approved Provider Programs

Terms Used in the Credentialing, Approved Provider, and Approved Center Programs

To ensure clarity of understanding and to both simplify and standardize usage, the meaning of these words and phrases are described below.

1. **Academic Year** refers to the 12-month period defined as the “academic year” by each institution.
2. **Application Fees** are non-refundable fees paid to have your application reviewed and processed.
3. **Approved Centers (AC)** refers to APT-approved university centers providing play therapy graduate education, supervised experience, supervisor training, research, etc. This program parallels the Approved Provider program.
4. **APT** refers to the Association for Play Therapy, a national professional society in the United States.
5. **APT Approved Providers** refers to those individuals, organizations, and businesses that are designated by APT as “Approved Providers of Play Therapy Continuing Education” to provide post graduate-level play therapy trainings presented by graduate-level instructors for individuals with Master’s or higher mental health degrees.
6. **Authorization Fee** is determined by APT after review of the Approved Provider application and corresponds with designated approval period awarded by APT.
7. **Board Chair** refers to the Chair of the Board of the Association for Play Therapy.
8. **CE** is the acronym for “continuing education” hours earned at conferences, workshops, webinars, and other forums.
9. **Certificate of Attendance** is the certificate issued by Approved Providers to verify attendance and completion of their continuing education programs. Also referred to as Continuing Education Certificate.
10. **Chair** refers to the chair of the Registration & Continuing Education Committee of the Association for Play Therapy. This Committee also oversees the Approved Provider program.
11. **Clock Hours** are used to convert certain training-related activities into hours. Graduate coursework may be converted to clock hours based on the information listed in Table 3.2 of the Credentialing Standards. Hours for publishing and presenting may be converted to clock hours based on the calculation described in the Credentialing Standards.
12. **Clinical Practitioner or Practitioner** refers to a licensed clinical mental health professional authorized to independently provide clinical mental health services in the general practice disciplines of counseling, marriage and family therapy, psychiatry, psychology, or social work.
13. **Code of Ethics** refers to the specific code of ethics promulgated by a primary mental health disciplinary board or organization and observed by 1) Approved Providers, individuals who present their play therapy programs, and the Required Program Reviewer, and 2) licensed mental health professionals who are credentialing applicants.

14. **Competency** refers to the possession of the necessary knowledge, skills, and ability to successfully practice play therapy ethically.
15. **Complaint Process** refers to the process a complainant will follow to address concerns regarding the Approved Provider or Credentialing programs.
16. **Conflict of interest** (or competing interest) refers to situations, issues, or commitments that may arise from situations such as: 1) a personal, professional, business or volunteer position, responsibility, or interest; or 2) a conflicting duty to another entity where the individual's allegiance may be split between two competing interests. Though not uncommon, it is ethical to disclose any potential conflicts of interest with training program attendees.
17. **Consultation** differs from supervision in that the 'supervisor' and 'supervisee' both hold individual clinical mental health licenses issued by their respective state licensing boards that permit for independent practice. In consultation, the 'supervisor' is asked to share *expert advice* specific to play therapy to the existing competent care being provided by the 'supervisee'. This type of 'peer supervision' or 'ongoing consultation' may meet APT Credentialing requirements.
18. **Contact** hours/trainings refer to those in which attendees enjoy in-person, live instruction in real time. Live webinars are **NOT** considered contact trainings.
19. **Contact or In-Person Supervision** is when you meet face-to-face with your supervisor to discuss your play therapy case, notes, reports, session video. There is no limit to the number of hours that you may obtain in this manner.
20. **Continuing Education** refers to play therapy training taught at a post-graduate level.
21. **Continuing Education Certificate** refers to the certificate issued by Approved Providers to verify attendance and completion of their continuing education programs. Also referred to as Certificate of Attendance.
22. **Continuing Education Program Administrator (CEPA)** is responsible for the administrative aspects of the Approved Provider program, serves as the primary contact, and may or may not be a mental health professional. The CEPA may also serve in the role of Program Reviewer and Presenter.
23. **Credit Hour** or **CE Hour** refers to 60 minutes of instruction earned by attendee.
24. **Cultural & Social Diversity** refers to the ability of play therapists to 1) become and remain aware of their own cultural backgrounds, influences, and biases (including but not limited to religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability difference, and race), 2) acquire and continuously seek knowledge about how cultural backgrounds, influences, and biases operate in the lives of their clients/audience, and 3) demonstrate awareness and appreciation of how diversity impacts clients/ therapists/ students/ audience needs, case conceptualization, clinical treatment and perspectives. See also [Cultural & Social Diversity FAQ's](#).
25. **Direct Client Contact Hours** refers to the in-person time spent with the client in session using play therapy.
26. **Distance Supervision** occurs when you meet with your supervisor via telephone or online to discuss your play therapy case notes, reports, or session video. The applicant/supervisee is responsible for assuring acceptance and compliance with state board regulations in their specific discipline.
27. **Doing Business As** (or DBA) refers to the name that you, whether an individual or organization, might use to represent your Approved Provider services.
28. **Format Delivery** refers to the type of CE hours/trainings and type of credit awarded, contact or non-contact. All webinars and live webinars are non-contact.

29. **Golden Thread**, a metaphor commonly used in business and adopted by APA, refers to the process whereby continuing education programs in play therapy demonstrate intentionality and integration of all key components necessary for successful delivery of continuing education programs that increase conceptual and applied competencies of play therapy practice and supervision.
30. **Graduate** generally refers to play therapy and supervisor continuing education programs offered at a level that builds upon a Master's or higher mental health degree.
31. **Group Supervision** consists of one supervisor and at least two, but not more than 10 supervisees.
32. **Historically Significant Play Therapy Theories** have roots in seminal theories and are considered landmark works in the field of psychotherapy. They are a second layer of theoretical richness from which third-generation theories and models may be emerging.
33. **Hybrid Training** are continuing education programs that provide a combination of contact and non-contact training and credit opportunities.
34. **Individual Supervision** is defined as one supervisor and one supervisee.
35. **Individual in Group Supervision** refers to individual supervision hours obtained within a group where the focus was on your play therapy case, notes, reports, or session video and does not exceed 10 supervisees. There is no limit to the number of hours that may be obtained in this manner.
36. **Institutions** refer to institutions of higher education, i.e., colleges and universities. Several institutions have been designated by APT as "Approved Centers of Play Therapy Education" because they provide graduate-level programs presented by graduate-level instructors for individuals with or earning Master's or higher clinical mental health degrees.
37. **License or Clinical License (RPT™ and RPT-S™)** refers to an individually issued current, unconditional, and active clinical mental health license in the general practice fields of counseling, marriage and family therapy, psychiatry, psychology, and social work AND permits for the independent provision of clinical mental health services. Also, deemed the highest level of practice for that particular field and is generally termed "independent," "clinical," or Independent clinical." Examples of licenses are Licensed Clinical Psychologist (LCP), Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT). Excluded are limited, temporary, and learning licenses issued to interns, associates, and to those engaged in clinical practice under the supervision of another's license.
38. **License or State Certification (SB-RPT™)** refers to an individually issued current, unconditional, and active school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker issued by the Department of Education in the state the applicant practices. Excluded are temporary and learning licenses issued to interns, associates, and to those engaged in mental health practice under the supervision of another's license.
39. **Mandatory Phrase** refers to the statement that includes an Approved Providers number, written as: APT Approved Provider XX-XXX. This phrase must be predominately displayed on all marketing materials (print and digital) and certificates of attendance.
40. **Member** refers to a Professional, International, or Affiliate member of the Association for Play Therapy. You do not need to be a member to earn and maintain the RPT™, RPT-S™ or SB-RPT™ credentials.
41. **Mental Health Degree** refers to earning a Master's or higher clinical mental health degree in the general practice fields of counseling, marriage and family therapy, psychiatry, psychology, and social work from an institution of higher education.
42. **Mission** refers to the greater purpose of APT which all its programs must satisfy.

43. **Multicultural Orientation** as defined by Davis et. al, is a framework that articulates a “way of being” in session for therapists (e.g., cultural humility), a way of identifying and responding to therapeutic cultural markers in sessions (e.g., cultural opportunities), and a way of understanding the self in these moments (e.g., cultural comfort). Moreover, the MCO framework challenges therapists to fully examine their motivation to have an “orientation” that guides their lived experiences around cultural dynamics. <https://societyforpsychotherapy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Davis-et-al-2018.pdf>
44. **Non-contact** hours/training are home study or other programs that do not include in-person interaction with the instructor such as book studies and webinars. See also “Webinars.”
45. **Peer Supervision** see “consultation.”
46. **Play Therapist** refers to those mental health professionals trained to systematically use a theoretical model to establish an interpersonal process wherein the therapeutic powers of play are applied to help clients prevent or resolve psychosocial difficulties and achieve optimal growth and development.
47. **Play Therapy** refers to “the systematic use of a theoretical model to establish an interpersonal process wherein trained play therapists use the therapeutic powers of play to help clients prevent or resolve psychosocial difficulties and achieve optimal growth and development.”
48. **Play Therapy Approach** requires applicants to include documentation that demonstrates education/training in more than one approach. Examples of play therapy approaches include, but are not limited to: nondirective play, directive play, expressive arts, sandtray, drama, etc.
49. **Play Therapy Experience** refers to applicants’ clinical session time with clients using play therapy theory(ies) to inform their play therapy practice (assessment, conceptualization, treatment planning, etc.). Play Therapy Experience is also known as direct client contact hours.
50. **Play Therapy Training** refers to the applicants’ play therapy instruction or education via graduate coursework or continuing education workshops.
51. **Post-Graduate** generally refers to play therapy and supervisor continuing education programs offered at a level that builds upon a Master’s or higher mental health degree.
52. **Primary Areas** refer to the five (5) required play therapy areas of instruction: play therapy history, play therapy seminal or historically significant theories, play therapy skills and methods, play therapy special topics, and play therapy cultural and social diversity.
53. **President/CEO** refers to the President & CEO of the Association for Play Therapy.
54. **Program Reviewer** refers to an active Registered Play Therapist[™](RPT[™]), Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor[™](RPT-S[™]) or School-Based Registered Play Therapist[™](SB-RPT[™]) in good standing contracted by the Approved Provider to ensure training quality and consistency of all programs offered for APT CE. An individual may act as Program Administrator, Program Reviewer, and Presenter.
55. **Renewal Date** refers to the month and year that an Approved Center’s approval period expires.
56. **Renewal Fees** for both Approved Providers and Credentialed play therapists are due when billed to maintain a current and active status. Annual APT membership dues are unrelated and billed separately.
57. **RPT[™]** is the acronym for the Registered Play Therapist[™] credential.

58. **RPT-S™** is the acronym for the Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor™ credential.
59. **RPT/S** is the collective acronym for the Registered Play Therapist™ (RPT™), Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor™ (RPT-S™), and the School Based-Registered Play Therapist™ (SB-RPT™) credentials.
60. **SB-RPT™** is the acronym for the School Based-Registered Play Therapist™ credential.
61. **School Based Practitioner** refers to a licensed or certified school counselor or school psychologist authorized to independently practice as such by the State Department of Education
62. **Seminal Theories** from the three major schools of thought are the original and influential theories from which historically significant theories have originated. They represent the foundational work that has been used to develop future theories and models.
63. **Sequential Three Phase Approach** is accomplished by integrating play therapy instruction, clinical experience, and supervision that builds upon a completed graduate degree, and requires depth and breadth of play therapy instruction, experience, and supervision to ensure competencies in this specialty.
64. **Sponsorship** refers to the offering (and co-offering) of play therapy programs for which Approved Providers are solely and ultimately responsible.
65. **Starting Date** refers to the month and year that Approved Center's approval period begins.
66. **State Department of Education** refers to a state department of education or equivalent state government agency, which promulgates school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker standards and practices, and investigates and penalizes violations of such standards and practices. For SB-RPT™ candidates and designees who are employed in a school setting, their state department of education license or certification must allow them to practice in the state in which the school is located.
67. **Supervision** refers to the ongoing relationship between supervisor and supervisee for the purpose of developing the supervisee's competency in the practice of play therapy. Typically, this occurs between a licensed supervisor and an unlicensed supervisee.
68. **Supervisors** are clinical mental health professionals who are licensed to practice in the general practice fields of counseling, marriage and family therapy, psychiatry, psychology, or social work and recognized by their licensing boards as eligible to supervise; expected to know and abide by their respective ethics and standards; subject to disciplinary action by their respective licensing boards and accountable for the actions of their supervisees.
69. **Webinars** are defined as play therapy trainings where instruction occurs virtually and are classified as non-contact hours. **All webinars** are classified as non-contact for both application and renewal of the RPT.
70. **Well-rounded** refers to the applicant's play therapy education and supervised experience attained in an array of seminal or historically significant play therapy theories and models. It also refers to the attainment of these skills and instruction in a manner that permits for the absorption of content and the demonstration of proficient play therapy skills in the applicant's supervised play therapy experience.