



Mining Report – May 2019

Which *change drivers* might rock the play therapy world? APT *mines* recent mental health *intelligence* (i.e. publications) and disseminates quarterly Mining Reports with cutting-edge trends, emerging wisdom, and other information to play therapy practitioners, instructors, and supervisors. Consult the publications or links displayed for answers to the questions.

Intelligence

What role does attachment style play in one's reaction to trauma and how can attachment style be incorporated into trauma treatment?

"Assessing attachment is likely to inform how distress is expressed: Individuals with a preoccupied attachment style are more likely to experience elevated PTS symptoms, whereas those with a dismissing attachment style tend to under-report symptoms and may be more likely to somatize. Beliefs and perceptions about the availability of social support and the likelihood of seeking help appear to vary amongst different attachment styles" (Barazzone, Santos, McGowan, & Donaghay-Spire, 2019, p. 42-43).

- Suggested practitioners consider attachment styles in formulation of treatment plans
- Assessment attachment style in therapy may improve treatment outcomes
- Authors concluded type of trauma may influence attachment style

Barazzone, N., Santos, I., McGowan, J., & Donaghay-Spire, E. (2019). The links between adult attachment and posttraumatic stress: A systematic review. *Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*, 92(1), 131-147.

Contributor: Tisha Way Gaynor, MSSA, LISW-S, RPT-S, Cincinnati, OH

Are we overlooking the role of paternal attachment and its role in childhood anxiety?

"This study aimed to expand existing empirical knowledge regarding the unique contribution of insecure parental attachment and negative behavior on childhood anxiety disorders and the interaction between these risk factors regarding mothers and fathers, given the field is relatively unexplored but still important in understanding/preventing anxiety in children and understanding their social world, which includes influences from both parents" (Breinholst, Tolstrup, & Hoff Esbjørn, 2019, p. 46).

- Suggested fathers and mothers might play different roles in childhood anxiety
- Suggested paternal variables might need to be included in assessment of anxiety and case formulation
- Explored the inclusion of fathers in the treatment of anxiety

Breinholst S., Tolstrup M., & Hoff Esbjørn B. (2019). The direct and indirect effect of attachment insecurity and negative parental behavior on anxiety in clinically anxious children: It's down to dad. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 24(1), 44–50. <https://doi.org/10.1111/camh.12269>

Contributor: Tisha Way Gaynor, MSSA, LISW-S, RPT-S, Cincinnati, OH

What play intervention is effective in treating food aversion in infants who have experienced intestinal failure?

"Messy play therapy (MPT) seems to be a positive intervention to overcome FA (food aversion)" (Chiatto et al., 2018, p. 412).

- Introduced MPT as a safe method to expose children to range of textures and smells
- Researchers assessed tolerance to oral diet following MPT

Chiatto, F., Coletta, R., Aversano, A., Warburton, T., Forsythe, L., & Morabito, A. (2018). Messy play therapy in the treatment of food aversion in a patient with intestinal failure: Our experience. *Journal of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition*, 43(3), 412-418. doi:10.1002/jpen.1433

Contributor: Stephanie Pratola, PhD, LCP, RPT-S, Roanoke, VA

How does focal play therapy impact therapist–parent alliance, parental stress and parenting response in the treatment of children referred for eating disturbances and/or evacuation disorders?

"[T]he first ...6 sessions were effective in promoting a positive parent-therapist alliance as a pre-condition for a successful child and family treatment. However, changes in parental levels of distress and parent-child relationships did not reach statistical significance...." (Chirico et al., 2019, p. 1017).

- Treatment designed to model healthy behaviors included three puppet play sessions and three parent sessions
- Fathers and mothers differed in their sensitivity to child cues and communication
- Authors described focal play therapy as a psychodynamic model of intervention

Chirico, I., Andrei, F., Salvatori, P., Malaguti, I., & Trombini, E. (2019). The focal play therapy: A clinical approach to promote child health and family well-being. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 7. doi:10.3389/fpubh.2019.00077

Contributor: Stephanie Pratola, PhD, LCP, RPT-S, Roanoke, VA

What family-based interventions are effective for working with children and teens who present with functional somatic symptoms (FSS)?

"Systemic therapy and CBT are currently found to be the predominant treatment approaches used in family-based interventions for youngsters with FSS. Although both types of interventions focus on family illness beliefs and on shifting the focus away from a somatic attribution of the child's symptoms, they also represent different views on how family factors may develop, precipitate and maintain FSS in youngsters" (Hulgaard, Dehlholm-Lambertsen, & Rask, 2019, p. 24).

- Identified family factors which may be involved in the development and perpetuation of somatic symptoms
- Risk factors included: Family health problems, adverse family climate, and insecure attachment style
- Described lack of consistent definitions of family-based interventions for FSS

Hulgaard, D., Dehlholm-Lambertsen, G., Rask, C. U. (2019) Family-based interventions for children and adolescents with functional somatic symptoms: A systematic review. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 41, 4-28. doi:10.1111/1467-6427.12199

Contributor: Laura Tejada, PhD, LMFT, LCPC, Chicago, IL

How does social support influence adolescent girls' physical activity?

"Adolescent girls are not sufficiently active to achieve health benefits. Social support from friends and family has been positively associated with physical activity in adolescent girls; however it is unclear how social support influences physical activity behaviour" (Laird, Fawcner, & Niven, 2018, p. 1).

- Explored significant others' influence on girls' physical activity through social support and modelling
- Reported the girls' physical activity is associated with performance improvements, self-efficacy, enjoyment, and motivation

Laird, Y., Fawcner, S., & Niven, A. (2018). A grounded theory of how social support influences physical activity in adolescent girls. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*, 13(1), 1-14. doi.org/10.1080/17482631.2018.1435099

Contributor: Yih-Jiun Shen, DEd, NCC, CSC, Edinburg, TX

What are the change mechanisms for child participants in therapeutic horse riding?

"This article considers the wider impact of THR on children's health, beyond a focus on changes in physical outcomes" (Martin, Graham, Taylor, & Levack, 2018, p. 510).

- Proposed a framework to understand riders' experience with how they applied it to life contexts
- Reported self-concept growth improvements correlated with learning to move, succeed, connect, and adapt

Martin, R. A., Graham, F. P., Taylor, W. J., & Levack, W. M. M. (2018). Mechanisms of change for children participating in therapeutic horse riding: A grounded theory. *Physical and Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics*, 38(5), 510–526. doi.org/10.1080/01942638.2017.1400492

Contributor: Yih-Jiun Shen, DEd, NCC, CSC, Edinburg, TX

How are parents deciding on the best mental health treatment for their child?

"...parents in the mental health service system may need more specialized information due to the fact that their child is more likely to have dealt with social, emotional, or behavioral issues. Moreover, mental illness and treatment-related stigma can be a deterrent to help-seeking behavior" (O'Conner & Langer, 2019, p. 719).

- Survey of information-seeking behavior among 196 parents of children ages 4-17
- Suggested that using unfamiliar theoretical concepts can create confusion for parents seeking recommendations
- Described the limited information parents had regarding various treatment approaches
- Concluded parents trust healthcare professionals most and suggested practitioners utilize an integrated approach

O'Conner, E. E. & Langer D. A. (2019). I heard it through the grapevine: Where and what parents learn about youth mental health treatments. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 75, 710-725. <https://doi.org.1002/jclp.22706>

Contributor: Kenisha Gordon, PhD, NCC, LPC-S, ACS, RPT-S, Clinton, MS

What is the need for screening children with pediatric injury to assess risk of posttraumatic stress disorder?

"Children with pediatric injury and their parents are at risk for developing posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Although challenging to implement, standardized screening for risk of developing PTSD can identify families most at risk" (Price et al., 2019, p. 48).

- Quantitative study of trauma registry data of children from birth to age 17 years
- Analyzed the need for assessing the risk for posttraumatic stress disorder in the hospital
- Described external barriers and facilitators that influence the STEPP screening process

Price, J., Genuario, K., Romeo, D., Pruden, K., Elwell, S., Matwiejewicz, D., ... Jaszczyszyn, D. (2019). Implementation of a standardized screening program for risk of posttraumatic stress disorder among youth hospitalized with injury. *Psychological Services*, 16(1), 48-57. doi:10.107/ser0000271

Contributor: Jennifer L. Gregg, EdS, LPC, RPT, NCC, Cullman, AL

How can trauma-informed play be integrated into multidisciplinary pediatric healthcare?

"The results document aspects of pediatric medical experiences that providers recognize as potentially traumatic, highlighting the importance of trauma-informed care. They also identify ways to use play to engage with children and families in a trauma-informed way" (Stenman et al., 2019, p. 7).

- Possible traumatic events in healthcare settings included health problem diagnosis, medical procedures, and interactions with multiple providers
- Providers believed play had a positive effect in medical settings and should be an essential component of treatment
- Identified lack of provider training, intense pain as situations when play is not beneficial

Stenman, K., Christofferson, J., Alderfer, M. A., Pierce, J., Kelly, C., Schiffano, E. ... Kazak, A. E. (2019). Integrating play in trauma-informed care: Multidisciplinary pediatric healthcare provider perspectives. *Psychological Services*, 16(1), 7-15.

Contributor: Elizabeth R. Taylor, LPC-S, LMFT, RPT-S, Fort Worth, TX

What are the similarities and differences in functional and symbolic play between typically developing children and children with Autism Spectrum Disorder?

"Outcomes suggest that compared to children without disabilities, children with Autism Spectrum Disorder [ASD] have comparable functional play skills and struggle with the transition to some, but not all types of symbolic play" (Thiemann-Bourque, Johnson, & Brady, p. 77).

- Compared 29 children with ASD to typically developing peers [TDP]
- Just over 50% of those with ASD showed emerging symbolic play compared to 95% of the TDP

Thiemann-Bourque, K., Johnson, L. K., & Brady, N. C. (2019). Similarities in functional play and differences in symbolic play of children with autism spectrum disorder. *American Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 124(1), 77-91.

Contributor: Elizabeth R. Taylor, LPC-S, LMFT, RPT-S, Fort Worth, TX

How do difference of caregiver race or ethnicity influence perceptions of need for psychological services for adolescents?

"Black caregivers may perceive mentoring programs as a less stigmatizing and more culturally congruent support service for addressing externalizing problems. Integration and dissemination of evidence-based intervention strategies to underserved populations using culturally acceptable intervention modalities is needed" (Vazquez & Villodas, 2018, p. 1).

- Quantitative research of 741 caregivers' perception of their adolescent children's psychopathology and need for mental health services
- Researchers identified the need to consider caregiver perceptions as they influence psychological services for adolescents

Vázquez, A. L., & Villodas, M. T. (2018). Racial/Ethnic differences in caregivers' perceptions of the need for and utilization of adolescent psychological counseling and support services. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1037/cdp0000255

Contributor: Jennifer L. Gregg, Ed.S., LPC, RPT, NCC, Cullman, AL

What are the experiences of play, playfulness and self-efficacy of parents of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) during parent-child play encounters?

"Perceived ability to interact with the child and positive emotions experienced during play moments were among the main aspects that participants associated with self-efficacy during play. Fathers derived a greater sense of self-efficacy from play encounters while mothers were more likely to identify areas of their own performance that they wanted to improve" (Román-Oyola et al., p. 7).

- Mothers of children with ASD were more likely to be playful in activities that were part of daily routines
- Fathers were more likely to play with their children outside of routine daily activities
- Parents reported efficacy in being involved in positive emotions with their children during play
- Parents may be overwhelmed caretaking and forget to include playfulness in interactions with their child

Román-Oyola, R., Figueroa-Feliciano, V., Torres-Martínez, Y., Torres-Vélez, J., Encarnación-Pizarro, K., Frago-Pagán, S., & Torres-Colón, L. (2018). Play, playfulness, and self-efficacy: Parental experiences with children on the Autism Spectrum. *Occupational Therapy International*, 2018, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2018/4636780>

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Reader feedback regarding how these Mining Reports might be improved and made more helpful for play therapy practitioners, instructors, and supervisors is welcomed. Mining Reports are archived in the Members Only section of the APT website (www.a4pt.org).