



## Mining Report – November 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

#### Can evidence-based trauma-focused family therapy be implemented with children and parents/caregivers in conjoint sessions?

“Developmentally, young children and school-aged children could benefit from hands-on learning experiences to put the psychoeducational components into practice with their parents, caregivers, or guardians. Together they could learn how to create a safe space during play” (Boyer, 2019, p. 180).

- Trauma-focused family therapy may address the impact of trauma symptoms on children and caregivers.
- Providers may assist families by interrupting interactional patterns influenced by posttraumatic dysregulation.
- Providers may support caregivers’ ability to support their child to process traumatic experiences.

Boyer, W. (2019). Trauma-focused family therapy with children and their families. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 27(2), 175-182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1066480719832503>

Contributor: Laura Tejada, PhD, LMFT, LCPC, RPT-S, Chicago, IL

#### What are some effective approaches to treating anorexia nervosa and depression in a five-year-old girl?

Researchers explored “how the combination of refeeding the child during family meals, participating in focused family play therapy..., and prescribing sertraline to treat her depression was an effective treatment for both anorexia nervosa and depression” (Chatoor, Webb, & Kezner, 2019, p. 1065).

- Case study of a child diagnosed with anorexia and major depression following illness.
- Focused family therapy included the family enacting mealtimes using plastic food and utensils and dolls.
- Therapy included rehearsing family mealtimes, and reframing fear as courage.

Chatoor, I., Webb, L. E., & Kezner, B. (2019). Anorexia nervosa and depression in a 5-year-old girl: Treatment with focused family play therapy and medication. *Journal of Eating Disorders*, 52, 1065-1069. doi:10.1002/eat.23129

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

#### How can professionals support parents in their decision to talk, or not talk, to their child about their child's autism diagnosis?

“There was a sense that telling a child about their diagnosis was empowering and that a child’s confidence and self-esteem would improve once they were able to better understand themselves and why they found certain things challenging” (Crane, Jones, Prosser, Taghrizi, & Pellicano, 2019, p. 1976).

- Emphasized personal process and tailoring the autism information based on the child’s readiness level as perceived by the parent.
- Discussed how disclosing has impact on siblings.
- Highlighted the need for professional to be more supportive when parents inquire about how to disclose autism to the child and other family members.

Crane, L., Jones, L., Prosser, R., Taghrizi, M., & Pellicano, E. (2019). Parents’ views and experiences of talking about autism with their children. *Autism*, 23(8), 1969-1981. doi:10.1177/1362361319836257

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

### **What are the most beneficial play therapy trainings for clinicians working with deaf or hearing-impaired clients?**

"There are many gaps in the training needs for mental health professionals who use play therapy with deaf and hard-of-hearing clients" (Dowtin & Day, 2019, p. 195).

- Explored training methods for clinicians working with deaf or hearing-impaired clients.
- Discussed the perceived efficacy of the trainings related to deaf, and/or hearing impaired, clients received by the mental health professionals involved in this study.

Dowtin, L.L. & Day, L.A. (2019). Signs and barriers: Play therapy training experiences of deaf and hearing clinicians. *International Journal of Play Therapy, 28*(4), 195-206. doi:10.1037/pla0000105

Contributor: Vanessa Gaona, MEd, NCC, LPC-S, RPT-S, Sugar Land, TX

### **How does living in a combat zone affect the themes of children's' play?**

"Children's play typically becomes one of the first targets of armed conflict. Even before hostilities reach a fever pitch and mortality figures soar to appalling heights, families rush children from vulnerable play spaces, curtail their outdoor games, and interrupt everyday play in many other ways because children's basic safety, obviously, takes precedence over recreational activity" (Feldman, 2019, p. 288).

- Presented observations of the active and imaginary play of children living in combat zones in the Syrian Civil War.
- Discussed observations in the context of play observed in child refugees during the Holocaust and other armed conflicts.
- Highlighted how Syrian children's play incorporated themes of warfare and coping with the aftermath of attacks.

Feldman, D. (2019). Children's play in the shadow of war. *American Journal of Play, 11*(3), 288-307.

Contributor: Laura Tejada, PhD, LMFT, LCPC, RPT-S, Chicago, IL

### **Can behavioral technicians adequately promote clients' learning in less structured environments?**

"Often behavioral technicians are unable to adequately promote their clients' learning in less structured environments, which can limit opportunities for generalization of the clients' skills to the natural environment" (Jimenez, McGarry, Crochet, & Chong, 2019, p. 396).

- Reported a program that trained five behavioral technicians to use a play-therapy-based intervention.
- Stated all trainees reached mastery criteria and applied the skills with new clients afterwards.

Jimenez, G. C., McGarry, K., Crochet, E., & Chong, I. M. (2019). Training behavioral technicians to implement naturalistic behavioral interventions using behavioral skills training. *Behavioral Interventions, 34*(3), 396-404. doi.org/10.1002/bin.1666

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

### **What do play therapy students remember about their training?**

"The findings in this study suggest that students responded to play therapy training with positive changes and were able to retain these changes across time. Limitations of this study and recommendations for play therapy training and future research are addressed" (Tsai & Lin, 2019, p.175).

- Studied whether an introductory play therapy course changed students' attitudes, knowledge, and skills.
- Study utilized the PTAKSS-R.
- Authors found students' self-perceived knowledge, skills, and attitudes remained increased after three months.

Tsai, M. & Lin, Y. (2019) Immediate and retained learning effects of child-centered play therapy training with college students in Taiwan on attitude, knowledge, and skills. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Counseling, 5*(2), 175-188. doi:10.1080/23727810.2019.1586418

Contributor: Pedro J. Blanco PhD, LPC-S, RPT-S, CHST, The Colony, TX

### **Should we re-visit classroom interventions?**

"Greater emphasis should be placed on methods to support both special and general education teachers in utilizing effective classroom management skills and implementing behavioral supports in the classroom with integrity" (Weber, Rich, Gann, Duhon, & Kellen, 2019, p. 471).

- Explained principles and purposes of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and Check-ins Check-outs (CICO).
- Identified areas where lack of understanding about interventions can alter the efficacy.
- Identified benefits of implementing CICO components separately to reduce disruptive behavior.

Weber, M. A., Rich S.E., Gann C. J., Duhon, G.J., & Kellen, S. S. (2019). Can less be more for students at-risk for emotional and behavioral disorders: Evaluating components of check-in/out. *Education and Treatment of Children, 42*(4), 469-488.

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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](http://www.a4pt.org)).