



Mining Report – February 2021

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

1. How do families utilize social media to maintain relationships?

“For families with limited opportunities for face-to-face interaction, social media can be a vital communication medium to help shape the family identity, maintain bonds, and accomplish shared tasks” (Abel et al., 2020, p. 1).

- Conducted a systematic review of 51 studies published between 1997 – 2019.
- Reported social media can be utilized by families with distressed relationships to maintain bonds.
- Found chat is utilized to manage emotional conversations and for conflict resolution.

Abel, S., Machin, T., & Brownlow, C. (2020). Social media, rituals, and long-distance family relationship maintenance: a mixed-methods systematic review. *New Media & Society*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444820958717>

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

2. What policies may promote the sense of normalcy for youth in foster care during the coronavirus pandemic?

“COVID-19 has impacted the normalcy in all lives, not just those of youth in foster care. But youth in care have heightened vulnerabilities and thus the impact of COVID-19 disruptions may be far more acute and long lasting” (Collins & Baldiga, 2020, p. 215).

- Reviewed policies and practices that promote normalcy for youth in American foster care.
- Reported how a local foundation supported those youth through the requests of foster care parents.
- Provided materials including water tables, mini trampolines, bikes, scooters, laptops, tables, and craft supplies.

Collins, M. E., & Baldiga, S. (2020). Normalcy for children in foster care in the time of coronavirus. *Journal of Children's Services*, 15(4), 215–219. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCS-06-2020-0023>

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

3. Can self-awareness training mitigate the negative impact of racialized attitudes on child welfare cases?

“This study focuses on social worker attitudes toward caregiver race, which is a known influence in the removal of children who are African American from their biological home into foster care, and on how attitudes about race can be altered through the educational, self-awareness experience called Knowing Your Lens—Cultural Humility Awareness Training [KY-CHAT]” (Crawford Fletcher & Akapo, 2020, p. 1).

- Called for cultural awareness and cultural humility training to fight racism in child welfare.

Crawford Fletcher, A. M., & Akapo, T. (2020). We can do better: Mitigating negatively racialized attitudes in child welfare through self-awareness training. *Child Welfare*, 98(3), 1-23.

Contributor: Alyssa M. Swan, PhD, LCPC, RPT, NCC, Bloomington, IL

4. How can play therapist use Adlerian Play Therapy to engage parents?

"In working with children, parents, and families as a whole, the Adlerian play therapist can use the concept of personality priorities to shape interactions with parents to increase engagement and improve therapeutic outcomes" (Dickinson & Daly, 2020, p. 357-358).

- Provided descriptions of personality priorities as exhibited by parents and suggestions for working with each type.
- Demonstrated Nelsen and Lott's "top card" activity to identify priorities and associated animal representation based on least-preferred experiences.
- Recommended further processing and returning to reference animal metaphors to promote therapeutic change.

Dickinson, R., & Daly, E. (2020). Using personality priorities in Adlerian play therapy parent consultation. *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 76(4), 342-360.

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

5. What are the differences in play experiences before and after the transition to secondary school in the United Kingdom?

"Findings indicated that temporal, spatial, and psychological factors affected both Year 6 and Year 7 pupils' play access" (Finney et al., 2020, p. 10).

- Analyzed findings from focus group of six students in each year separately and compared them.
- Reported schoolwork, weather, and parental restrictions as interfering with play in both groups.
- Highlighted the need to play for both groups due to the difficulties of transitioning to secondary schools.

Finney, R., Atkinson, C., Barclay, M., & Tawail, B. (2020). How does transition to secondary school influence home, school, and community play? *Educational and Child Psychology*, 37(4), 10-24.

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

6. Can transitioning parenting skills training to teletherapy provide the same level of quality as in-person service delivery?

"When treatment fidelity is used as a guiding tool, telepsychology parent training groups can be delivered with high fidelity and appear to be acceptable and feasible to caregivers" (Fogler et al., 2020, p. 983).

- Led virtual groups for parents of children ages 5-11 years newly diagnosed with ADHD.
- Emphasized outcomes in content and process to evaluate fidelity.
- Described challenges and possible adaptation regarding participant engagement and length of session for teletherapy.

Fogler, J. M., Normand, S., O'Dea, N., Mautone, J. A., Featherston, M., Power, T. J., and Nissle-Tsiopinis, J. (2020). Implementing group parent training in telepsychology: Lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, 45(9), 983-989.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jpepsy/jsaa085>

Contributor: Cathi Spooner, LCSW, RPT-S, Mesquite, NV

7. How does parental stress during infancy affect children's mental health as they age?

"We found that stress in the parent-child system during infancy was associated with subsequent mental health problems in preschool-aged children. Indeed, while parenting stress during infancy is associated with negative affect, its contribution to preschool mental health problems is beyond that of temperament factors known to be linked. This finding expands our understanding of modifiable predictors during infancy and toddlerhood and suggests that parenting stress is an important potential target for intervention" (Hattangadi et al., 2020, p. 4).

- Conducted a quantitative study of 148 3-year-old children and their parents.
- Found that preschool-aged children whose parents reported stress during infancy were twice as likely to develop mental health concerns.
- Supported the need to identify parental stress during infancy to improve mental health concerns in preschool-aged children.

Hattangadi, N., Cost, K. T., Birken, C. S., Borkhoff, C. M., Maguire, J. L., Szatmari, P., & Charach, A. (2020). Parenting stress during infancy is a risk factor for mental health problems in 3-year-old children. *BMC Public Health*, 20(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-09861-5>

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

8. Can therapists serve both parents and transgendered youth in family therapy?

"If a family is unable to support their transgender child, then the distress experienced by the child could be seen as a symptom in the family system—whereby the anxiety, created also by a lack of communication and parental understanding, becomes bound within the family system. Nonetheless, the child functions to bring the family to a therapeutic encounter. If well facilitated by the therapist, a young person's transition can lead to a new homeostasis in the family" (Healy & Allen, 2020, p. 404).

- Identified reasons gender-diverse minors and families seek treatment.
- Presented a case study of a "filibustered transition".
- Concluded differentiation of self is important in supporting the transgendered minor and parents.

Healy, R.W., & Allen, L.R. (2020). Bowen family systems therapy with transgender minors: A case study. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 48, 402–411. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10615-019-00704-4>

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

9. Can machine learning algorithms predict youth self-harm in Australia?

"A major priority for mental health services is to prevent self-harm, which is a considerable source of distress, morbidity, ongoing health care utilization and mortality, particularly in youth. This study evaluates the potential utility of machine learning as a tool that can improve clinical decision-making" (Iorfino et al., 2020, p. 7).

- Reported models had a fair overall prediction and a positive net benefit.
- Presented seven strongest predictors in ranked order with the first being a history of self-harm.
- Concluded models may be helpful in recognizing large populations for further intervention.

Iorfino, F., Ho, N., Carpenter, J. S., Cross, S. P., Davenport, T. A., Hermens, D. F., et al. (2020). Predicting self-harm within six months after initial presentation to youth mental health services: A machine learning study. *PLoS ONE*, 15(12), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0243467>

Contributor: Alyssa M. Swan, PhD, LCPC, RPT, NCC, Bloomington, IL

10. Is STEM-based Expressive Therapy a helpful intervention for providers in school-based settings?

"An exploratory descriptive qualitative approach was utilized to explore how STEM-based activities provide a non-traditional expressive therapeutic approach to address children and family systems in school-based settings" (Kelchner & Campbell, 2020, p. 1).

- Reported reluctance to engage in expressive therapy among counselors-in-training based on client age and gender.
- Found low parent engagement negatively impacted some outcomes.
- Reported increased opportunities for participants to address communication issues present in family systems.

Kelchner, V. P., & Campbell, L. O. (2020). Engaging students and families with STEM-based expressive therapy. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 1-12.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2020.1820927>

Contributor: Crystal Amundson, MS, LCPC, RPT-S, Billings, MT

11. Does a culturally grounded parenting curriculum increase protective factors in American Indian (AI) families?

"P2W participants reported significant increases in AI ethnic identity attachment and exploration, AI spirituality, as well as an increasing sense of identification with AI culture and mainstream culture" (Kulis et al., 2020, p. 443).

- Described Parenting in 2 Worlds (P2W) as designed to promote family functioning and reduce risky behaviors.
- Recruited 575 parents of AI youth (ages 10-17) and randomly assigned to P2W or family health curriculum.
- Concluded parents who completed the P2W program improved on several measures of cultural engagement.

Kulis, S. S., Tsethlikai, M., Harthun, M. L., Hibbeler, P. K., Ayers, S. L., & Parkhurst, N. D. (2020). Parenting in 2 worlds: Effects of a culturally grounded parenting intervention for urban American Indians on participant cultural engagement. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 26(4), 437-446. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000315>

Contributor: Crystal Amundson, MS, LCPC, RPT-S, Billings, MT

12. Does gender and/or race contribute to circumstances preceding teen suicide?

"Using postmortem data from the National Violent Death Reporting System, the authors investigated whether White, Black, Native American, Asian Pacific Islander American, and Latinx youths aged 10 to 18 varied in their rates of circumstances that either preceded or appear to have contributed to their suicides" (Lee & Wong, 2020, p. 532).

- Analyzed NVDRS data of 3,996 youth who died by suicide from 17 different states.
- Indicated that the race of a youth corresponded with increased risk of particular antecedents to death by suicide.
- Found no gender differences related to disclosure of suicidal intent, substance abuse problems, or exposure to the death or suicide of a loved one.

Lee, C. S., & Wong, Y. J. (2020). Racial/ethnic and gender differences in the antecedents of youth suicide. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 26(4), 532-543.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000326>

Contributor: Crystal Amundson, MS, LCPC, RPT-S, Billings, MT

13. Are youth in foster care prepared to manage their mental health as they transition out of foster care services?

"Mental health service use remains high among youth in foster care. Youth with particular characteristics may benefit from interventions aimed at preparing them for managing their mental health in adulthood. Youth reported high rates of mental health service use and one-fifth of the sample reported feeling less than prepared to manage their mental health. Youth who screened positive for mental disorders were less prepared than their peers to manage their mental health" (Munson et al., 2020, p. 225).

- Identified physical or sexual abuse as a predictor of counseling services accessed within the last year and sexual abuse predicted use of medication.
- Reported youth who did not identify as 100% heterosexual were more likely to use counseling services.
- Reported mental health issues as associated with youth feeling significantly less equipped to manage their own mental health as they transition out of foster care.

Munson, M. R., Katz, C. C., Okpych, N.J. & Courtney, M.E. (2020). Mental health management among older youth in foster care: Service utilization and preparedness, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 67(2), 225-231. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.02.017>

Contributor: Rebekah Byrd PhD, LPC, (TN), LCMHC (NC), NCC, RPT-S, Fairfield, CT

14. Can a creative intervention based in narrative therapy aid the grief process?

"This intervention promotes clients' understanding of grief and loss adaptation through creating new perspectives on loss. The intervention can be easily adapted for a variety of ages and groups and employed to facilitate client growth within different counseling settings" (Rafaely & Goldberg, 2020, p. 492).

- Introduced the grief snow globe expressive activity as a means of reframing loss.
- Provided procedure for implementing, processing questions and a case example.
- Reported benefits as easily accessible materials and a tangible representation of the counseling experience.

Rafaely, M. & Goldberg, R. M. (2020). Grief snow globe: A creative approach to restorying grief and loss through narrative therapy. *Journal of Creativity In Mental Health*, 15(4), 483-493. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2020.1725704>

Contributor: Gail Rizzo, EdD, LPCC-s, LICDC, CCMHC, RPT-S, Amelia, OH

15. Can children's play themes be assessed to inform play therapy practice in Australia?

"This study found that children's play themes and pretend play ability can be identified using a time limited, standardized assessment" (Sarah et al., 2021, p.265).

- Utilized the Child-Initiated Pretend Play Assessment (ChIPPA).
- Identified play themes for 26 children aligned with Ericksons' life tasks.
- Suggested use of a baseline assessment of play to inform intervention model.

Sarah, B., Parson, J., Renshaw, K., & Stagnitti, K. (2021). Can children's play themes be assessed to inform play therapy practice? *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 26(1), 257-267. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359104520964510>

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

16. How do natural disasters and global emergencies impact violence against children?

“...while the level of violence increases after many emergencies in comparison to before disasters, the rate of violence reporting is less than the real rate due to disruption in infrastructure and the reporting mechanism” (Seddighi et al., 2021, p. 183).

- Shared systemic review of research finds, highlighting differences among countries, types of emergencies, and types of violence.
- Noted that child abuse can appear differently when societies are experiencing these conditions.
- Emphasized how training and specifically targeting lower-socioeconomic families can help reduce violence against children.

Seddighi, H., Salmani, I., Javadi, M. H., & Seddighi, S. (2021). Child abuse in natural disasters and conflicts: A systematic review. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse, 22*(1), 176-185. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838019835973>

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

17. How effective is a group Theraplay© approach with adolescents in a treatment hospital setting?

“Participants reported a positive impact on the young people’s connection with facilitators and each other, observing improvements in confidence and social skills within and outside the group” (Thorpe et al., 2020, p. 32).

- Described an adaptation of Theraplay© for adolescents.
- Conducted a qualitative study of Thinkgymibob group composed of four adolescents.
- Reported eight themes from interviews with group facilitators reflecting connection, safety and new ways of engagement.

Thorpe, A. H., Willbourne, J. A., & Burdock, M. J. (2020). Thingymibob group: Staff experiences of implementing a play-based therapy group in an adolescent secure hospital. *Educational & Child Psychology, 37*(4), 25-36.

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

18. What accounts for the high rate of attrition among young children receiving trauma-focused therapy?

“...child and family factors appear to play a small role in predicting attrition; however, higher levels of externalizing problems and lower levels of PTSS [pretreatment posttraumatic stress symptoms] may increase the risk for dropout” (Wamser-Nanney, 2020, p. 564).

- Reported 70.3% of children between ages three and five prematurely terminated therapy.
- Found family characteristics did not significantly impact attrition though clinic distance was associated with inadequate treatment dose.
- Reported increased levels of externalizing symptoms associated with dropout and completion of fewer than 12 sessions.

Wamser-Nanney, R. (2020). Predictors of attrition among young children receiving trauma-focused therapy. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 33*(4), 564–574. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22513>

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

19. Is expulsion or suspension in preschool necessary for students with disabilities?

"Children with ADD or ADHD may also have higher rates of exclusionary discipline due to low-resource early childhood programs, where teachers and program directors do not have the necessary resources or strategies to support this vulnerable population" (Zeng et al., 2021, p. 210).

- Presented quantifying data related to preschool suspensions or expulsions.
- Discussed how children with ADHD or ADD in early childhood programs lack skills to express themselves when engaging in challenging behavior.
- Encouraged stakeholders to develop more resources or strengthen strategies to decrease the use of expulsions or suspensions.

Zeng, S., Pereira, Larson, A., Corr, C., O'Grady, C., & Stone-MacDonald, A. (2021). Preschool suspension and expulsion for young children with disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 87(2), 199-216. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402920949832>

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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).