

## Chapter 17

# Considerations for Setting Up Play Therapy Training Clinics: Recommended Play Therapy Toys, Materials, and Other Professional Considerations

**Nicola Shea Hughes-Brand**

*University of Central Florida, USA*

**Julie A. Clifton**

*University of Central Florida, USA*

**Columbus Edward Brand**

*University of Central Florida, USA*

### **ABSTRACT**

*When setting up a play therapy training clinic, there are many considerations to explore regarding designing a therapeutic space, selecting toys and other materials, exploring the rationale for the toy selection and examining the cultural considerations in play therapy settings. This chapter will review the different types of play therapy clinics and the specific toys recommended based on the fourteen primary play therapy theoretical orientations. General considerations will be reviewed when utilizing art media and other materials, books and bibliotherapy, puppets and puppet theaters, sandtrays and miniatures, and psychotherapeutic games. Recommendations will be made for establishing community and university-based play therapy training sites offering clinical and mock play therapy services. Suggestions will be made regarding the importance of establishing play therapy laboratories in the classroom setting when providing graduate play therapy instruction. Additional recommendations will be made for the 2019 Play Therapy Best Practices published by the Association for Play Therapy.*

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Considerations for Setting Up Play Therapy Training Clinics: Recommended Play Therapy Toys, Materials, and Other Professional Considerations**

There are many uncharted, yet important, considerations for setting up a play therapy training clinic given the limited available literature. In the process of researching factors to consider when setting up a university-based or a community-based play therapy training clinic for this chapter, the authors reviewed the play therapy literature; reflected upon over their 25 years each of clinical practice in multiple settings including university-based, community out-patient, school-based, in-home counseling, hospital, residential, and inpatient /psychiatric care; and considered their teaching experiences at multiple universities, both at Approved Centers of Play Therapy Education, as defined by the Association for Play Therapy (APT), and universities lacking the approval status.

This chapter will highlight considerations for setting up university-based and community-based play therapy training clinics due to the limited available research on this important topic. Much thought and research are required in order to create an appropriate therapeutic space for providing play therapy services. Play therapy clinics need to create spaces that accommodate various cultural considerations, clinician's theoretical orientations, and even technological considerations. Clinicians must carefully select, acquire, and organize toys and materials in the play therapy room based on evidence-based practices, including the use of art media and other materials, books and bibliotherapy, puppets and puppet theaters, sandtrays and miniatures, and psychotherapeutic games. Specifically, this chapter is divided into five sections: 1) the different types of play therapy clinics, 2) the cultural considerations regarding the play therapy setting and toys, 3) the method for selecting toys and materials; 4) the limitations of this research review; and 5) the recommendations for setting up a community-based and a university-based play therapy training site providing clinical services and services for mock clients.

The APT is the national professional organization that standardizes the field of play therapy and offers national credentialing in play therapy. The organization developed *The Play Therapy Best Practices* as an on-line publication with the goal of establishing clinical, professional, and ethical guidelines for the field (APT, 2016). When researching considerations for setting up a play therapy clinic, the authors reviewed the APT best practices publication as a starting point; however, recommendations for structuring a play therapy room were not addressed in this document. This online publication further did not address the recommended play therapy room size, diverse settings in which play therapy occurs, playroom characteristics, cultural considerations when selecting toys and providing clinical services, the rationale for selecting play therapy toys and materials, and the playroom set-up including the toy organization and display (APT, 2016). The authors then researched available play therapy literature to find appropriate best practices for the field to create recommendations for setting up appropriate play therapy clinics.

## TYPES OF PLAY THERAPY CLINICS

Whether one is establishing a university-based play therapy training clinic, a community-based play therapy clinic, or a university-based training site serving mock clients, there are many factors to consider. Before setting up a play therapy clinic or training site, one must consider the location of the clinic (university-based or community-based) and the purpose of the playroom. Some playrooms will be used

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