

PLAY THERAPY

WHAT IS IT AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Visit the Association for Play Therapy for more information.



Catalyst Counseling, LLC
www.catalystcounselingllc.org



What is play therapy?

Play therapy is an evidenced based, neurologically informed approach of therapy when working with children, adolescents, and even families. This type of therapy is a powerful way for children to communicate their feelings, explore relationships and learn more about their world. Toys, games, art, and other creative interventions are used during Play Therapy to engage children in a natural and fun way as they process their experiences and build healthier, more effective ways for managing themselves.

Your counselor is a licensed mental health professional who has many hours of training, education and supervision around Play Therapy.

It is impossible to predict exactly how long therapy will last, due to an array of factors (such as the child's presenting problem, therapist's professional orientation, parental involvement, financial constraints, etc.). What each child and their family needs is unique as they are! Some issues are resolved quicker, while other more serious or ongoing problems may take longer.

A counselor's job is not to "fix" your child. Your counselor's goal is to work alongside you and your child to empower you all to find the solutions to your issues. Sometimes the counselor might help you or your child learn new skills or find new ways of approaching a problem, but the hope is to bring you closer together as a family so that moving forward, you feel more confident in facing life's challenges together.

How long does play therapy take?

What happens during a session?

At Catalyst, most therapists work full time in the schools. Your counselor will meet with your child once a week for 45-53 minutes during the school day. School-based counselors work closely alongside the teachers and staff in the building to encourage your child's progress not only at home, but at school as well.

Each session is unique to your child! Your counselor works to ensure the session is developmentally, neurologically, and emotionally appropriate for your child. The first few sessions are all about developing trust and understanding what therapy looks and feels like. The next stage of therapy is the working phase, where children begin to make changes. This stage may bring up more negative behaviors in your child for a short time - that is totally normal! Change is uncomfortable and hard, so this is where encouragement and support from you is very important. A slip in behavior can (and probably will happen). Again, everyone needs to trust the process, celebrate the gains and try not to worry too much about any occasional slips.

Absolutely! Parents and families are encouraged to be involved in the therapy process. Family sessions are sometimes the most special and meaningful sessions for children. Real change can begin to happen when families and caregivers learn and grow alongside their child. Counselors also work hard to support parents and caregivers so that they can become the parent they have always wanted to be. As a parent or caregiver, you are the most important person in your child's life and your love and support is more important and impactful than any amount of play therapy.

Are parents and families allowed to come to session?

Find a Play Therapist today!

Catalyst Counseling, LLC takes your child's mental health care seriously! Each master's level clinician has the knowledge and competency to provide your child with the best care. All clinicians pursue ongoing training in the field of mental health as well as evidenced based approaches for working with children and teens. Ask your therapist today about their training and qualifications.

If you're moving or need help finding a play therapist, visit the Association for Play Therapy's website today.