

What is Play Therapy?

A Play Therapist is someone who is trained to help children who have some kind of problem in their lives. When you hurt yourself on the outside you feel sad so the people that care for you might put a plaster on the sore bit or take you to a doctor to make you better. The job of a Play Therapist is to help children who are hurting on the inside, with their feelings.

Why am I going to see a Play Therapist?

The Play Therapist has been asked to see you because you feel sad or angry or scared about something or perhaps because something horrible has happened. Maybe you can't help fighting or crying or you feel bad about yourself. Sometimes, it is hard to talk about your feelings so your Play Therapist will try to help you feel better without you having to explain things. That's because children play their feelings better than they talk about them.

What will my Play Therapist do?

Your Play Therapist will meet the grown ups who know you best to find out how you are and plan how to help you. Then you and your Play Therapist will play together, so you can get to know each other. Your Play Therapy sessions will usually last about an hour and happen at the same time and in the same place each week.

Will my Play Therapist tell other people what we've been playing?

When you first meet, your Play Therapist will talk to you about what is private and just between the two of you and what they might sometimes need to share with other people. Your Play Therapist won't tell anyone the actual details about what you have played or talked about, but sometimes they will need to talk to a grown up about how you are. Your Play Therapist will have to tell other grown ups if they are really worried about you – it is really important that other people get to know if you are not safe. Your Play Therapist will want to talk to you about this.

Do I have to keep it private too?

That's up to you – Play Therapy isn't a secret. You can talk about what you've been doing to anyone you want to, but you don't have to. If you feel like keeping it to yourself, that's OK.

How will Play Therapy help me?

Your Play Therapist will help you to understand your feelings while you play. Children's problems can get better when they understand their feelings. It might take a long time but in the end you and your Play Therapist will both feel ready to say goodbye and you will feel able to manage without them. This ending bit might feel hard but your Play Therapist will help you with this.