

Play Therapy in Video/ Telehealth Sessions:

- 1) Meet the kids where they are. Ask what room they are in. Ask if there's anything cool they want to show you like a pet or a favorite toy. Remember you are building rapport and establishing trust and authenticity.
- 2) Have a game on your screen before the session starts. You will have something fun to show them in the ongoing establishing of rapport. Here are some ideas:
 - Puzzles
http://www.hellokids.com/c_25763/free-online-games/kids-puzzles-games/back-to-school-kids-puzzles/kid-s-school-drawing
 - More Puzzles
https://www.digipuzzle.net/digipuzzle/animals/puzzles/puzzle_blockpuzzle.htm?language=english&linkback=../../main/animals/index.htm
 - Jigsaw (teens & older)
https://www.jigsawexplorer.com/online-jigsaw-puzzle-player.html?puzzle_id=sleeping-tiger
 - Simple logic game- connect colored dots
<http://flowfreegame.com/>
 - Similar with emoji faces
<https://www.safekidgames.com/smiles-match-3/>
 - Mancala
<https://www.proprofs.com/games/mancala-multiplayer-game/>
 - Snakes & Ladders, 2 players on one screen
<https://poki.com/en/g/snakes-and-ladders>
- 3) Ask if anyone is going to be in the room with the child. Most of my sessions, a parent stays in the room to help with any technical difficulties and helps facilitate the session. For this reason, it is very helpful if you have already established rapport with the parent. For a new client, this might mean a separate session first with a parent.
- 4) Art based games for an art therapy approach
 - Coloring/ free draw
<http://www.nickjr.com/nick-jr-originals/games/nick-jr-free-draw/>
 - Colored Sand Art
<https://thisissand.com/>
 - Mandala coloring
<https://colormandala.com/>

- 5) Creative games for more traditional play therapy feel
 - Dollhouse build, decorate
<https://www.agame.com/game/family-dollhouse-4>
 - Genogram maker (read up on Virginia Gil's ideas for genograms w/ kids)
<https://online.visual-paradigm.com/diagrams/features/genogram-software/>
- 6) Games for frustration tolerance & taking turns
 - Flappy frog (cross the road quickly)
<https://www.safekidgames.com/jumper-frog/>
 - Connect 4, classic, 2 player on one screen
<https://poki.com/en/g/connect-4>
- 7) Bibliotherapy
 - Therapist can read a book and hold so client can see the pictures
 - You can watch many books online (be aware many show "ads")
 - A book about feelings:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIfLgHBwYx4&list=RDCMUCvdUKabPUkx6p-zYlrxmJJw&start_radio=1&t=0
 - A book about being yourself:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NauioZG-Nsc&list=RDCMUCvdUKabPUkx6p-zYlrxmJJw&index=3>
- 8) Games you can do the old fashioned way (not screen share)
 - Charades- you act out a feeling and child guesses, then swap
 - Genogram work
 - Timeline work
 - Art therapy where they draw and show you what they are making, drawing
 - Puppet play- ask the child to grab two socks from their room & use as puppets
 - Role play- ask child to get 3-5 favorite toys (plastic figures, stuffed animals, etc) and do role play
- 9) Emotional regulation exercise (combines breathing, sensory, & regulation)
 - Countdown from 10-1 (found on facebook)

- 10: have the child take 10 slow breaths in through the nose out through the mouth
 - 9: find 9 colors in the room and list each one
 - 8: list 8 of your favorite things to eat
 - 7: go touch 7 things in the room and identify each
 - 6: close your eyes and think of 6 of your favorite things to do and share
 - 5: take 5 slow breaths, use your hand and follow your fingers up to breathe in through your nose and down to breathe out through your mouth
 - 4: Name 4 people you love
 - 3: Think of 3 things you can hear & tell me
 - 2: What are 2 things you can smell & list
 - 1: Take one big breath in through your nose so you can feel it all the way in your belly button and blow it out through your mouth as if you are blowing up a balloon as big as possible
 - Now ask the child to tell you how they feel? Talk about different feeling words depending on age.
 - Then have the child read a book or you read a book and ask to have them listen for feeling words & tell you when they hear one or stop and ask at appropriate times how they think a character is feeling
- 10) You need to bring energy to the session. When you are upbeat and engaged, the child will be also. Don't worry about eye contact as much. Let the child disengage eye (may be intimidating or hard for attention span) contact but try to keep the content focused.
- 11) As would be typical, set limits. Keep the child on topic. Remind child to be kind to others in the room if needed. Reinforce family rules as noted. ("I hear mom asking you to not stand on the chair. Let me wait a minute until you find a comfortable way to sit in that big chair.")
- 12) Affirm the child and the family and end with clear summary of what the child accomplished and how supportive the family was of the session time.