At *Holistic Healing Counseling*, your child’s therapist may use sandtray therapy (or other play therapy techniques) to help work towards your child’s therapy goals. Sandtray therapy is a type of therapy where your child will have the opportunity to create stories or worlds in the sand using figures, among other toys. This might include building houses, creating landscapes, battles between good and evil, or arranging figures in different ways.

The sand and toys serve as a form of communication for your child, allowing them to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in a non-verbal way. It's like storytelling without words. Through their creations, children can explore their inner world, work through challenges, and express emotions that may be difficult to put into words. Telling a story through a figure’s perspective gives your child a way to distance themselves from the story, which may feel safer than if they were talking about themselves directly.

The therapist will observe your child's creations and may ask questions or offer reflections to help your child process their thoughts and feelings. Sandtray therapy is a safe and supportive space for your child to explore their emotions and develop coping skills.

As a parent, you may not always understand the specific meanings behind your child's creations, and that's okay. The important thing is to support and encourage your child's participation in therapy, knowing that they are in a nurturing environment where they can express themselves freely.

Some things parents should not do, and what to do instead, during the witnessing of a sandtray (or play therapy) session or briefing after a session are:

1. **Interfering with the Process**: It's important for parents to allow their child to lead the session and express themselves freely. Avoid interrupting or trying to control the direction of the therapy session.

2. **Projecting Their Own Interpretations**: Parents should refrain from projecting their own interpretations onto their child's creations in the sandtray. Each child's symbolism and meaning behind their creations are unique to their own experiences.

3. **Pressuring for Details**: Parents may be curious about the specifics of their child's sandtray creations, but it's important not to pressure their child for details or explanations. Respect their boundaries and allow them to share at their own pace if they choose to do so.

4. **Judging or Criticizing**: Sandtray therapy is a space for children to explore their emotions and experiences without fear of judgment. Parents should avoid criticizing or judging their child's creations, no matter how unconventional they may seem.

5. **Minimizing or Dismissing Feelings**: Children may express difficult emotions or experiences through their sandtray creations. It's important for parents to validate and acknowledge these feelings, rather than minimizing or dismissing them.

6. **Comparing with Others**: Every child's therapeutic journey is unique, and comparisons with other children's progress or creations should be avoided. Focus on supporting your own child's growth and healing.

7. **Pressuring for Immediate Results**: Healing and progress in therapy take time, and parents should avoid pressuring their child for immediate results or changes. Trust in the therapeutic process and be patient with your child's journey.

8. **Using Therapy as Punishment**: Avoid using therapy sessions, including sandtray therapy, as a form of punishment or consequence for misbehavior. Therapy should be viewed as a positive and supportive resource for your child's emotional well-being.

9. **Sharing Confidential Information**: Respect the confidentiality of the therapy session by refraining from sharing details or information about your child's session with others, unless explicitly permitted by your child.

10. **Overanalyzing or Overreacting**: While it's natural for parents to want to understand their child's experiences in therapy, overanalyzing or overreacting to their child's sandtray creations can create added pressure and stress. Trust in the therapeutic process and focus on providing unconditional support and love for your child.