

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL POLICY & PRACTICE
SWRK798: Play Therapy
Fall 2021

Instructor: Allison Werner-Lin
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Course Location: Williams Hall, room 209

Office hours: Thursdays 12-2pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

ASSIGNMENTS & EXPECTATIONS

GRADING: ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE	Total of 100 points
Class participation	ongoing	20 points
Assessing the child/teen in context	Oct 6 th	30 points
Pecha Kucha	Nov 3 rd to Dec 8 th	30 points
Clinical applications assignments	Dec 10 th	20 points
TOTAL		100 points

1. **CLASS PARTICIPATION (20% OF FINAL GRADE).** You are expected to have completed the required readings and to participate actively in class discussion and activities. Class participation will be graded on quality of participation, not quantity. Contributions should reflect a critical understanding of assigned readings, application of the material to social work practice, and the ability to integrate and build on the contributions of others.
 - a. **REQUIRED READINGS** – Students are expected to complete the required readings in advance of class. You are also encouraged to complete recommended reading, particularly those that are relevant to your field placement or specific area of interest. Articles and book chapters not in the required books will be available for download on Canvas or through the library.

Required Texts

- Gil, E., & Drewes, A. A. (2021). Cultural issues in play therapy. *2nd Edition* (Eds.); Guilford Press.
- Davies, D. & Troy, M. F.(2020). Child development: A practitioner’s guide, *4th Edition*. Guildford Press.
- O’Connor, K. J., Schaefer, C. E., & Braverman, L.D. (2016). The handbook of play therapy, *2nd Edition* (Eds). Hoboken, JN: Wiley. (full text available via the library)
- Rogers, A. (1995). A Shining affliction: A story of harm and healing in psychotherapy. Penguin Books, New York, NY.
- Axline, V. (1986). Dibs: In search of self. Ballentine Books

Recommended Texts

- Ford Sori, C., Hecker, L.L., & Bachenberg, M.E. (2016). The therapist’s notebook for children and adolescents: Homework, handouts, and activities for use in psychotherapy. Routledge.
- *International Journal of Play therapy*

- b. **Attendance is mandatory. Missing more than two classes could result in failing the course.** Classroom learning is a fundamental component of your professional education. Students are expected to attend each class session in full. If you are unable to attend class for any reason, you must notify your instructor in advance and propose how you will make up the content. If students miss 2 or more classes the instructor will submit a course problem notice.
- c. **Required Supplies:** Please bring a pad of blank paper or construction paper, and either crayons, markers, or colored pencils to class with you on a regular basis for art projects.
- d. **Eating in Class:** You may bring coffee and a small meal or snack. However, be courteous of those around you by avoiding “loud” foods. Gum chewing is not allowed.

- e. **Use of electronic devices:** All pagers and cell phones must be turned off during class unless the instructor has granted special accommodations.
- f. **Academic Integrity.** Students are expected to conduct themselves consistent with the University of Pennsylvania's Code of Academic Integrity, which presents standards regarding plagiarism, multiple submissions of academic work, and other infractions. Students are expected to be familiar with the Code, <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html>. Student assignments may be assessed using "Turn-it in" or other plagiarism tools. If a student is suspected of plagiarism or any other violation of academic integrity, the student will be referred to the University Office of Academic Integrity.

EVALUATING WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS. All papers are to be of second-year graduate level quality, well documented, using APA format, and submitted on time. Papers will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Extent to which the paper follows specified requirements of the assignment
- Organization & conceptual clarity
- Incorporation and demonstrated understanding of course concepts
- Use of scholarly literature as well as evidence of critical thinking and engagement with the literature (no name dropping)
- Quality of writing (includes spelling, grammar, punctuation)
- Integration of assignment with field experiences
- Reflection on one's use of self
- Evidence of cultural awareness

2. **ASSESSING THE CHILD/TEEN IN CONTEXT (30% of final grade, Due October 6th 11:59pm to canvas)**

In class we discussed three facets of assessing children in context: (1) the child's developmental history; (2) factors related to the presenting problem, and factors in the child's support system that may support or inhibit recovery. For this assignment, you will apply this model to a case you are presently working with. Please talk to the instructor if you do not (yet) have children or teens on your caseload. Write a 7-8 page paper with at least 3 references from course materials or your own research in which you present this case.

- a. **Introduce the client system**, including each of the three parts of the assessment mentioned above and in class. Include any medical, educational, or psychiatric diagnostic information that may be relevant to the presenting problem and intervention design.
- b. **Describe the interactions** you've had with the child/teen or family system.
- c. Who are the critical collateral in this case? Where and how have you gathered information?
- d. **Discuss "risk" and protective factors** in the child's environment, with attention to adverse childhood events.
- e. **Identify goals of the social work intervention** with this case, including target of change at relevant systems levels.
- f. **How might PLAY-BASED INTERVENTIONS support the client/system** to meet identified goals?
- g. **Include the following APPENDICES**, as relevant:
 - APPENDIX 1: Include a process recording (3-4 pages single spaced) that illustrates your intervention with this client and includes your reactions and ongoing thinking about the client, your relationship with the client, your use of self, and your application of course material.
 - APPENDIX 2: Completed tripartite assessment or agency assessment forms
 - APPENDIX 3: Attach a genogram or ecomap
 - APPENDIX 4: Attach any projective art tasks completed by the client, if possible.

3. **PECHA KUCHA (30% of final grade, scheduled or in class presentation, Nov 3rd to Dec 8th with supporting materials uploaded to canvas before class on the day of your presentation)**

A *pecha kucha* presentation is 6:30-minute presentation that serves as a fun teaching and learning tool for students. Each *pecha kucha* includes 20 powerpoint slides presented for 20-30 second each on a topic of interest to the speaker and their audience.

- **Select a presenting problem or special population of interest to you and do your own research to learn about this topic area.** POSSIBLE TOPICS: physical abuse/neglect, homelessness, divorce, foster care, adoption, terminal illness, grief & loss, community violence, anger management, bullying & victimization, childhood sexual abuse & incest, migration & immigration, physical disability, developmental disability, including autism spectrum disorders, psychiatric illness, trauma, substance (ab)use exposure
- **Create a powerpoint** with 20 slides. This is your opportunity to teach the class what you've learned about this special content area. Your presentation should include:
(1) the nature of the problem or population, including prevalence and relevance;
(2) common concerns, behaviors, or outcomes of the problem or for the population if left untreated;
(3) evidence to support play therapy as an appropriate approach to treatment
(4) role for social work in intervention, prevention, treatment planning, advocacy
(4) an intervention that students can add to their toolbox
- **Write and submit a script for your pecha kucha presentation** that cites at least **ten** resources including 4 or more scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles in your chosen area. Articles must be published in the last 15 years (older sources may be referenced if pertinent). In addition, relevant class readings, "popular" or fictional accounts or films, and other journal or internet sources may be selected to thoroughly review the specialized practice area.

4. **USE YOUR TOOLBOX: INTERVENTIONS IN PRACTICE (20% of final grade, Due Dec 10th by 11:59pm to Canvas)**

Select ONE intervention from your toolbox. This intervention may be one taught in class or one of your own choosing. Apply this intervention with a child, teen, adult, family, or group in your field placement. Write a 6-8 page paper citing at least 4 references from the course, and using APA Style and 12 point, double-spaced font. In this paper, describe the procedures of the intervention, intended aims, and outcomes. Explain how you introduced and implemented the intervention with a client/group. Explore the extent to which you achieved your clinical goals by using this intervention.

COURSE OUTLINE

Sept 1 **Introduction to Clinical Practice with Children: Therapeutic Powers of Play**

Learning goals: Orientation to the course, introductions, History of play therapy

Toolbox: Breaking the Ice: *Spin me a Yarn*

Required Reading:

- Drewes, A. A., & Schaefer, C. E. (2016). The therapeutic powers of play. In O'Connor, K. J., Schaefer, C. E., & Braverman, L.D. (Eds). *The handbook of play therapy*, 2nd Edition (35-60). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Johnson, J.L. (2016). The history of play therapy. O'Connor, K. J., Schaefer, C. E., & Braverman, L.D. (Eds). *The handbook of play therapy*, 2nd Edition (17-34). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Davies, D. & Troy, M. F. (2020). *Child development: A practitioner's guide*, 4th Edition. Guildford Press. (Chapter 1, pp. 3-8).
- Ceballos, P.L., Post, P., & Rodriguez, M. (2021). Practicing child-centered play therapy from a multicultural and social justice framework. In E. Gil & A.A. Drewes (Eds). *Cultural Issues in Play Therapy*, 2nd Edition (p. 13-31). New York, NY: Guilford.

Sept 8 **What is Normal? Assessing the Child in Context**

Learning goals: Identifying Symptoms in Children, Domains of clinical assessment

Toolbox: Projective Drawing: *House, Tree, Person*

Required Readings:

- Boyd Webb, N. (2003). *Social work practice with children*, 2nd Ed, Guilford: New York, NY. Ch. 4
- Nadar, K. (2007). Assessment of the child following crisis: The challenge of a differential diagnosis. In N. B. Webb (Ed) *Play therapy with children in crisis: Individual, group, and family treatment*, 3rd Ed. New York, NY: Guilford, pp. 21-44.

Sept 15 **Theories of Normal Childhood Development & Psychopathology**

Learning goals: Attachment, Cognitive and Moral Development, Psychopathology

Toolbox: Bibliotherapy: *How are you Peeling?*

Required Readings:

- Davies, D. & Troy, M. F. (2020). *Child development: A practitioner's guide*, 4th Edition. Guildford Press. (Chapter 2, pp. 65-111).
- Freud, A. (1965). *Normality and pathology in childhood*. New York: International Universities Press.
- Blakely, T. J., & Dziadosz, G. M. (2015). Application of attachment theory in clinical social work. *Health & social work*, 40(4), 283-289.

Sept 22 **Adverse Childhood Events**

Learning goals: Sociocultural settings that impact children’s long term emotional health and well-being

Toolbox: Projective Drawing: *Picture of a Person in the Rain*

Required Readings:

- Davies, D. & Troy, M. F. (2020). Child development: A practitioner’s guide, 4th Edition. Guilford Press. (Chapter 3, pp. 112-130)
- Metzler, M. Merrick, M.T., Klevens, J., ... Ford, D. C. (2017). Adverse childhood experiences and life opportunities: Shifting the narrative. *Children and youth services review*, 72, 141-149.
- Pliske, M.M., Stauffer, S.D., & Werner-Lin, A. (2021). Healing from adverse childhood experiences through therapeutic powers of play: “I can do it with my hands” *International Journal of Play Therapy*. (advanced online copy).

Sept 29 **Play: The Work and Language of Children**

Learning goals: Setting the Stage: Building Trust, Safety & Boundaries

Toolbox: Stocking the Play Therapy Room: *What’s in your bag?*

Required Readings:

- Axline, V. (1986). Dibs: In search of self. Ballentine Books.
- Wheeler, N. & Dillman Taylor, D. (2016). Integrating interpersonal neurobiology with play therapy. *International journal of play therapy*, 25(1), 24.
- Gil, E. (2021). White privilege, anti-racism, and promoting change in play therapy. In E. Gil & A.A. Drewes (Eds). *Cultural Issues in Play Therapy*, 2nd Edition (p. 32-57). New York, NY: Guilford.

Recommended Readings:

- Davies, D. & Troy, M. F. (2020). Child development: A practitioner’s guide, 4th Edition. Guilford Press. (Infants: Chapters 5-6, pp. 139-194).
- Byers, J.G. (2016) Expressive arts in play therapy. In O’Connor, K. J., Schaefer, C. E., & Braverman, L.D. (Eds). *The handbook of play therapy*, 2nd Edition (277-288). Hoboken, JN: Wiley.

Oct 6 **Recognizing and Interpreting Themes in Play Therapy**

Learning goals: Directive and non-directive approaches

Toolbox: Expressive arts: *Sand Tray*

DUE: ASSESSING THE CHILD/TEEN IN CONTEXT

Required Readings:

- Axline, V. (1986). Dibs: In search of self. Ballentine Books (con’t)
- Gil, E. (2011). Helping abused and traumatized children: Integrating directive and nondirective approaches. Guilford: New York, NY, pp 2-19 (ch1) and 52-68 (ch3)
- Malchiodi, C. (2021). The impact of culture on expressive arts therapy with children. In E. Gil & A.A. Drewes (Eds). *Cultural Issues in Play Therapy*, 2nd Edition (pp. 75-89). New York, NY: Guilford.

Recommended Readings:

- Davies, D. & Troy, M. F. (2020). Child development: A practitioner’s guide, 4th Edition. Guilford Press. (Toddlers: Chapters 7-9, pp. 195-262).
- Homeyer, L.E. (2016) Sandtray/sandplay in therapy. In O’Connor, K. J., Schaefer, C. E., & Braverman, L.D. (Eds). *The handbook of play therapy*, 2nd Edition (243-258). Hoboken, JN: Wiley.

Oct 13 **Skills of Child-Centered Play Therapy: The Art of The Relationship**

Learning goals: Creating structure, empathic listening and imaginary play, in the playroom

Toolbox: *Setting Limits*

Required Readings:

- Axline, V. (1986). *Dibs: In search of self*. Ballentine Books (con't)
- Gonsler, A.M. (2016). Limit setting in play therapy. O'Connor, K. J., Schaefer, C. E., & Braverman, L.D. (Eds). *The handbook of play therapy*, 2nd Edition (539-548). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Smelser, Q.K. (2021). Exploring gender and sexuality using play therapy. In E. Gil & A.A. Drewes (Eds). *Cultural Issues in Play Therapy*, 2nd Edition (pp. 75-89). New York, NY: Guilford.
- Cochran, J.L., Cochran, N.H., Cholette, A., & Nordling, W.J. (2011). Limits and relations in child-centered play therapy: Two case studies. *International journal of play therapy*, 20(4), 236.

Recommended Readings:

- Davies, D. & Troy, M. F. (2020). *Child development: A practitioner's guide*, 4th Edition. Guilford Press. (Pre-School: Chapters 10-12, pp. 263-341)
- Pernicano, P. (2016). Metaphors and stories in play therapy. In O'Connor, K. J., Schaefer, C. E., & Braverman, L.D. (Eds). *The handbook of play therapy*, 2nd Edition (259-276). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Oct 20 **Animal Assisted Play Therapy**

Guest Lecture: Christina and Linus Bach

Required Readings: (tbd)

Oct 27 **Treatment Planning with Children & Adolescents**

Learning goals:

Toolbox: *Forest Family Genogram*

Required Readings:

- Rogers, A. (1995). *A Shining affliction: A story of harm and healing in psychotherapy*. Penguin Books, New York, NY
- Codrington, J. (2021). Culturally and racially attuned play therapy: Towards a social justice approach. In E. Gil & A.A. Drewes (Eds). *Cultural Issues in Play Therapy*, 2nd Edition (p 58-74). New York, NY: Guilford.

Recommended Readings:

- Davies, D. & Troy, M. F. (2020). *Child development: A practitioner's guide*, 4th Edition. Guilford Press. (Middle Childhood: Chapters 13-15, pp. 342-432).

Nov 3 **Treatment Planning with Families**

Learning goals: Working with parents and other collateral in play therapy; filial therapies

Toolbox: Playing with Rules: *Sorry!*

Due: *Pecha Kucha Presentations*

Required Readings:

- Rogers, A. (1995). *A Shining affliction: A story of harm and healing in psychotherapy*. Penguin Books, New York, NY (cont)
- Goldin, M. & Gil, E. (2021). Providing mental health services to undocumented families of color in our current culture. In E. Gil & A.A. Drewes (Eds). *Cultural Issues in Play Therapy, 2nd Edition* (p 111-130). New York, NY: Guilford.
- Stone, J. (2016). Board games in play therapy. In O'Connor, K. J., Schaefer, C. E., & Braverman, L.D. (Eds). *The handbook of play therapy, 2nd Edition* (309-325). Hoboken, JN: Wiley.

Recommended Reading:

- Malchiodi, C. (2021). The impact of culture on expressive arts therapy with children. In E. Gil & A.A. Drewes (Eds). *Cultural Issues in Play Therapy, 2nd Edition* (pp. 75-89). New York, NY: Guilford.

Nov 10 **Treatment Planning with Groups**

Learning goals: Working with children in group contexts

Toolbox: Finding common spaces: *The Alphabet*

Due: *Pecha Kucha Presentations*

Required Readings:

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Nov 17 **Negotiating Technology in Child, Adolescent & Family Treatment**

Learning goals: Managing social media, access to technology, and redefining virtual reality as play

Toolbox: Creating your avatar

Due: *Pecha Kucha Presentations*

Required Reading:

- Altvater, R.A. (2021). The culture of technology and play therapy. In E. Gil & A.A. Drewes (Eds). *Cultural Issues in Play Therapy, 2nd Edition* (p 172-190). New York, NY: Guilford.
- Berger, N. (2005) New medium, new messages, new meanings: Communication and interaction in child treatment in the age of technology. *Journal of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychotherapy*, 4 (2), 218-229.
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Dec 1 **Ethical & Legal Issues in Practice with Children**

Learning goals: Knowing our Limits, Confidentiality, Working with Client Belief Systems,
RED FLAGS: Mandated Reporting, Identifying abuse, suicidal ideation

Toolbox: *Good touches, bad touches*

Due: *Pecha Kucha Presentations*

Required Readings:

- Reynolds, C.A. (2016). Ethics in play therapy. O'Connor, K. J., Schaefer, C. E., & Braverman, L.D. (Eds). The handbook of play therapy, 2nd Edition (23-538). Hoboken, JN: Wiley.
- Seymour, J.W. & Rubin, L. (2006). Principles, principals, and process (P³): A model for play therapy ethics problem solving. *International Journal of Play therapy*, 15(2), 101
- Urquiza, A.J. (2010). The future of play therapy: Elevating credibility through play therapy research. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 19(1), 4.

Dec 8 **Forever Goodbyes: Creating Meaningful Termination Rituals**

Learning Goals: Termination in play

Toolbox: *Crafting Rituals: Where do Balloons Go?*

Due: *Pecha Kucha Presentations*

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Dec 10 (no class meeting)

Due: Final Assignment due to canvas by 11:59pm