



PLAY THERAPY

Play Therapy is a psychotherapeutic approach specifically developed to help children between the ages of 3 to 12 years in a variety of ways. Children receive emotional support and can learn to understand more about their own feelings and thoughts.

Nondirective play therapy, also called **child-centered play therapy**, is a form of psychotherapy that uses **play** to help children communicate their inner experiences through the use of toys and games. It's aim is to prevent or resolve psychosocial challenges, to help them towards better social integration, growth & development and emotional regulation.

Sometimes they may re-enact or play out traumatic or difficult life experiences in order to make sense of their past and cope better with their future.

Rod Lyall founded The Bungalow Partnership in September 2012. What started off as a small pilot project has become a registered charity and has supported over 800 children and their families in more than forty schools across the Tees Valley in the last 5 years.



With a long history in education Rod knew that what a child felt, had to deal with and how they viewed the world were as important as any other factors. Rod has always championed for those children who needed that extra support to learn, be with others, express themselves and sometimes just to simply smile again! Rod's philosophy was simply *"if we can help, then we should"*.

Rod was a champion smiler! He made you feel cared for and that everything was going to be OK. He was reassuring and very supportive to his workforce, along with colleagues in schools some of which said "he was always there", "he always offered the best advice", "he was no more than a phone call away", "he was always ready to help", and he joined people in their time of need — he operated from the heart and that is what was special about Rod.

Rod Lyall was, and always will be, the essence of The Bungalow Partnership. His spirit and energy is carried forward in everything that we do to continue his legacy of *HOPE* in what he named The Bungalow Partnership. **He is and always will be an inspiration to us all.**

Therapist Spotlight



Erica Winney is a Psychotherapeutic Counsellor who trained with The Northern Guild. Erica works across schools in Middlesbrough and Stockton and can be seen lugging her magic bag of tricks into schools, aiming to make her sessions fun and healing at the same time.

Within her work Erica has supported many young people to express themselves, resulting in positive outcomes being achieved for them.

Erica always approaches her work with empathy, wisdom and her delightful sense of humour! This makes her a welcome figure in the lives of some of our children, who need to feel that they are valued and know that although they may have difficult feelings to explore, Erica will always be their guide-on-the-side complete with games and glitter!

SPRING TERM TRAINING EVENTS

Using art to support children's emotional wellbeing

Wednesday 21st February 2018 : Lucy Hargan

Using therapeutic stories to support the emotional wellbeing of children and young people

Wednesday 7th March 2018 : Marie Blythe

Supporting children & young people through bereavement & loss

Wednesday 14th March 2018 : Sarah Atkinson

Full details available in January 2018



**The Bungalow Partnership team would like wish all our partner schools & organisations, colleagues & friends
A Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

More articles overleaf

USING SAND IN PLAY THERAPY

Sand play is a nonverbal therapy and is often used along with talk therapy and sandbox figures as communication tools, for those who are experiencing emotional distress or difficulties in communicating their thoughts and feelings.



Sand play provides different sensory experiences giving children an excellent medium to express their creativity. Moon sand can be built up, smashed down and molded into a variety of shapes that white sand can't be. Items like seashells, castle towers and other therapy toys can enhance the experience. When children are busy with their hands and letting their minds wander, it opens up lines of communication that they may not have pursued otherwise. This is especially useful with small groups as sand creates an opportunity for children to build something together.

Learning through play is something children do every day, and sand play therapy is another way for them to do just that. Sand trays are filled with sand, and the child chooses a selection of miniature toys to create a play world that reflects some aspect of real people and real experiences and reflects what is going on in their own lives. As well as giving children an activity to focus their attention on it allows for more directed activities and discussion which can foster reasoning skills and allow the child to find answers within themselves and make changes to the world they have created in the sand tray. With the help of sand trays, the child guided by the therapist, can begin to understand the connection between the world they created in sand and their own world. By making changes in their make-believe world, children are often empowered to make similar changes in the real world.



ANXIETY

in children

What it looks like, and why it's often mistaken for something else.

There are many kinds of anxiety—separation anxiety, social anxiety, selective mutism, generalised anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder and specific phobias. Sometimes anxiety is easy to identify—like when a child is feeling nervous before a test. Other times anxiety can look like something else entirely — an upset stomach, disruptive or angry behaviour. Anxiety tends to lock up the brain, making life hard for anxious children.

Some tips for recognising anxiety in children and what might be causing it.

When a child is squirming in his seat and not paying attention, we tend to think of ADHD, but anxiety could also be the cause. When children are anxious they might have a hard time focussing on the task in hand and ignoring the worried thoughts overtaking their brains. Some children may appear really focussed one minute, but then suddenly drift away. It looks like inattention, and it is, but it's triggered by anxiety.

Poor attendance at school may look like truancy, but for some children school is a big source of anxiety and refusing to go to school is quite common. Some children may have trouble separating from their parents, particularly after a holiday period and may complain of 'feeling sick'. If they don't adjust this makes going to school difficult or even impossible.

When a child is compulsively kicking the chair of another child, throwing a tantrum when there is a change in schedule or someone is not following the rules, anxiety may be the cause. Children who are feeling anxious often ask a lot of questions, including repetitive ones, because they are feeling worried and want reassurance. Anxiety can also make children aggressive. When children feel upset or threatened and don't know how to deal with their feelings, their '*fight or flight*' response to protect themselves kicks in—and some are more likely to *fight*. They may attack another child, teacher or family member, throw things or push over a chair because they are feeling out of control.

Some children do well on tests and homework, but when called on in class, teachers hit a wall. When children are anxious about answering questions in class they tend to disappear, *they are going to break eye contact, look down, start writing something even though they are not really writing anything*. They are trying to break the connection with the teacher in order to avoid what is making them feel anxious. The child may have been paying attention to the lesson and even know the answer, but when called on they freeze. Their anxiety level becomes heightened so that they can't respond.

The goal isn't to eliminate anxiety, but to help children manage and overcome their anxiety and learn to function as well as they can, even when they are anxious. As a result the anxiety will decrease and/or fall way over time.

For more information visit: www.childmind.org