

# Why Play Therapy?

## Four Benefits

### Child-Centered Play Therapy

Child-Centered Play Therapy is a developmentally sensitive therapy suitable for children ages 3 to 14. Current research shows it is the most effective form of therapy for children. While CCPT is effective for children with all types of mental health disorders, it also benefits children who are experiencing any type of stress. We all want happier, healthier children! Children who participate in CCPT with a trained professional will experience improvements in four areas. These include: emotional regulation, emotional literacy, expanded worldview, and self-esteem.

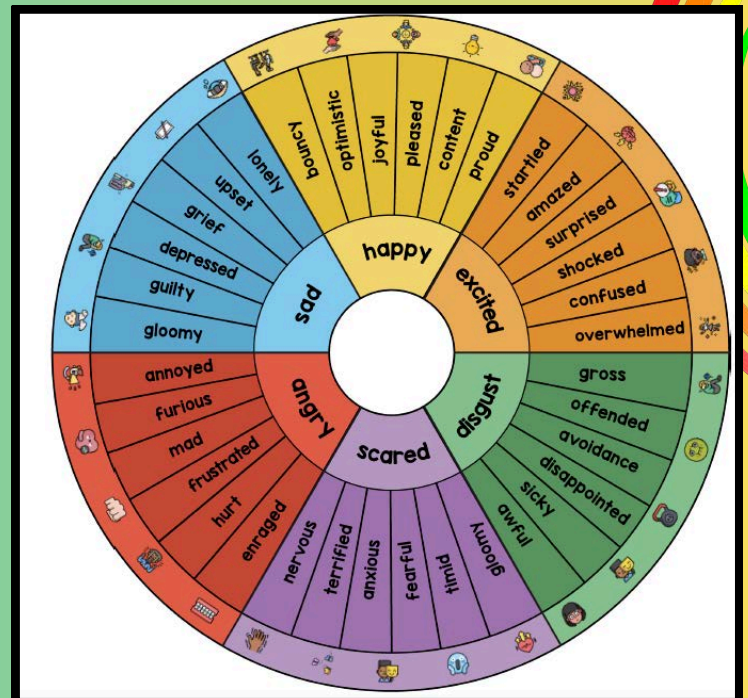
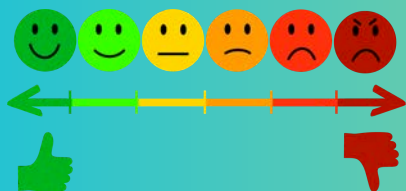


### Emotional Regulation

Improved emotional-regulation includes fewer and less intense emotional meltdowns. Some children explode in anger, while others dissolve in tears. Other children may internalize their emotions and struggle with fears that are paralyzing, disrupted sleeping, or somatic symptoms such as headaches or stomach aches. Dysregulation can result in physical or verbal aggression, non-compliance, moodiness, and decreased confidence.

### Emotional Literacy

The ability to name our feelings is a crucial step towards self-awareness. Children need support in learning new feeling words and connecting the words with their internal states. When a child is better able to communicate their feelings, they can also ask for what they need and begin realizing when to use coping skills.





## Expanded Worldview

An expanded worldview includes children understanding that actions have consequences. Children will gain insight in how their behavior affects others and begin taking personal responsibility for their actions. Parents will notice their child expressing more empathy and blaming others less. This will result in better relationships at home, school, and in the community.

## Healthy Self-Esteem

Positive self-esteem helps us navigate the world successfully. A child with a healthy self-esteem is able to connect with others in meaningful relationships. They are close to their parents, siblings, and extended family, and they can make and keep friends. They are also aware that while they may not be the best at everything, they have skills in some areas and they are competent to learn new skills. They also do not exhibit a “win at any cost” level of competitiveness when they feel competent. A healthy self-esteem also includes having the courage to try new things even if they might fail. Finally, they believe they are significant and their thoughts, opinions, ideas, and feelings are important and heard.



## A Personal Note

Parents often want to know how long therapy will last. The cycle of therapy typically lasts from 30-35 sessions with children moving through the predictable phases of initial, resistance, working, and termination. As a Registered Play Therapist, I use the skills of reflective responding, choice-giving, limit setting, and encouragement to guide your child through these phases. Parents are a critical component in achieving the best outcomes. Parents who attend regular consultations with me and reenforce the skills at home see better results and often spend less time in therapy. I also highly recommend listening to the podcast “Play Therapy Parenting” by Dr. Brenna Hicks. Dr. Hicks is known internationally for her work with children and parents.

Thanks for including me in your parenting journey as we seek your child’s health and happiness!

Denise Maxwell Registered Play Therapist