

Where Imagination Meets Intervention: Implementing Play Therapy Techniques in SBHCs

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Continuing Education Credits

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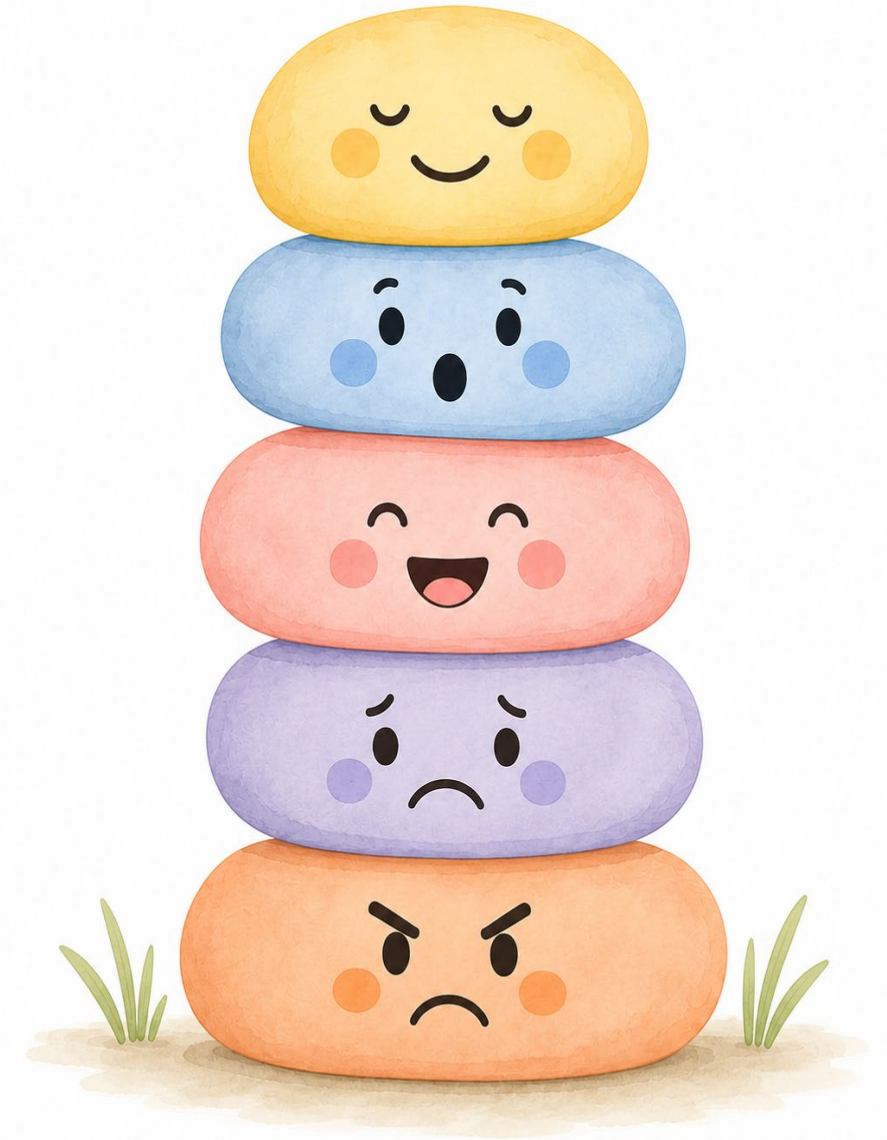


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Why Play Therapy in Schools

- Children communicate more naturally through play.
- School-based settings increase access to mental health services by reducing barriers.
- Schools provide an opportunity for early intervention.
- Therapeutic play can improve classroom behavior and support peer relationships.
- Small-group play interventions in schools promote teamwork, communication, and conflict resolution skills.



Theoretical Foundations of Play Therapy

- Person-Centered
- Child-Centered Play Therapy
- Developmental Theory
- Attachment Theory
- Trauma-Informed Theory
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy



Why Play Works Developmentally

Play Matches Brain Development

Play Supports Emotional Expression

Play Strengthens Regulation Skills

Play Builds Executive Functioning

Play Enhances Social Development

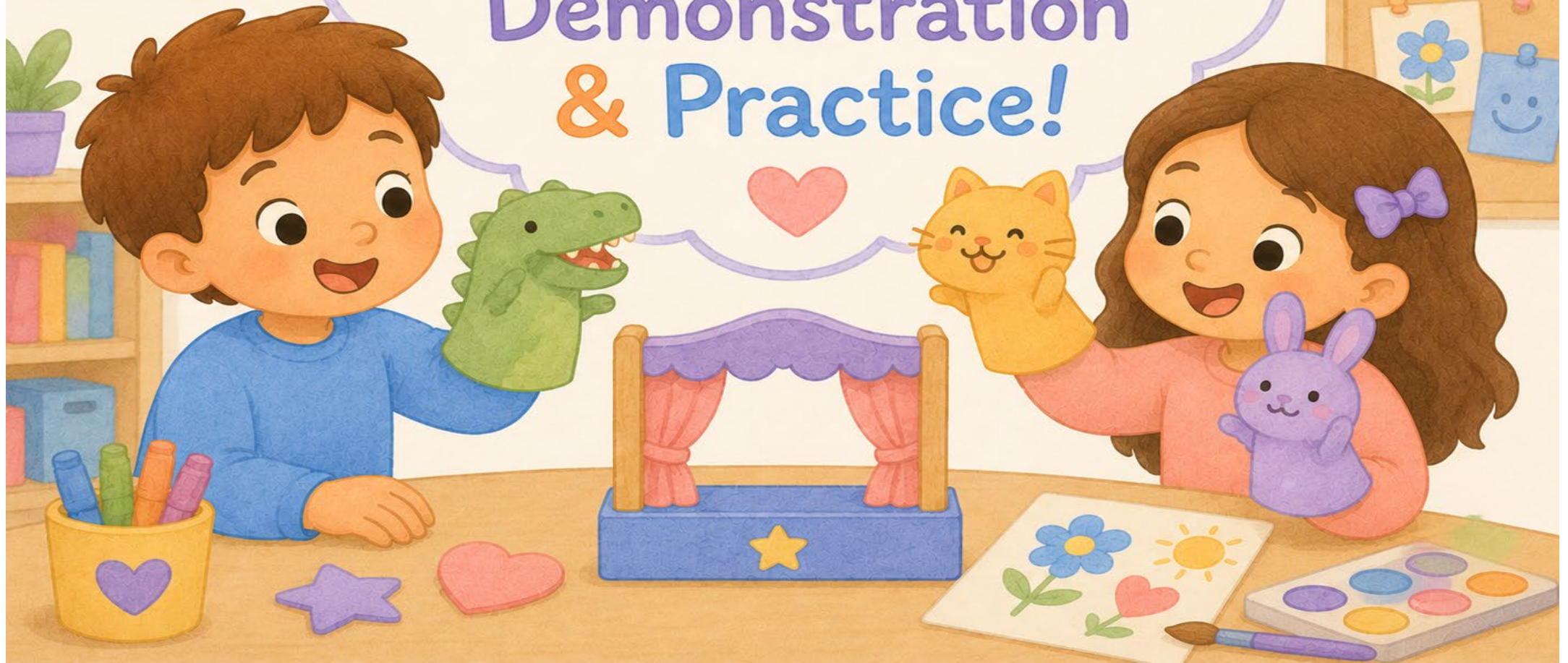
Play Creates a Safe Context for Growth

Play Reinforces Learning Through Experience



Time for
Hands-On
Demonstration
& Practice!

Learn ♥
Try ♥
Grow! ♥



Skills Strengthened Through Play



**Emotion
Regulation**



Social Skills



**Problem-Solving
Skills**



**Executive
Functioning**



**Resilience
and Coping**



**Self-Efficacy
and Confidence**



**Language and
Expression Skills**



**School-Related
Functioning**

Directive vs. Non-Directive Play Therapy

DIRECTIVE

The therapist takes an active role in guiding the child.



Therapist sets goals and plans activities.



Therapist leads the session and provides structure.



Therapist asks questions and gives suggestions.



Focus on skill-building and specific outcomes.



Often used for specific concerns or short-term goals.

NON-DIRECTIVE

The therapist follows the child's lead and allows for free expression.



Child leads the play and chooses the activities.



Therapist follows the child's lead and provides a safe, accepting environment.



Therapist reflects, listens, and accepts.



Focus on exploration, self-expression, and emotional growth.



Often used for building trust, processing emotions, and long-term growth.

Common School-Based Concerns

Anxiety

Behavioral
Dysregulation

Attention and
Executive
Functioning
Difficulties

Social and Peer
Relationship
Issues

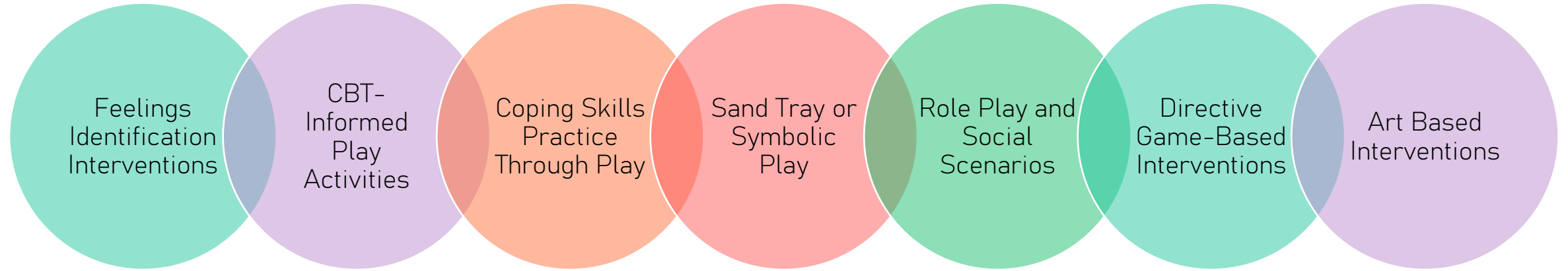
Trauma-Related
Symptoms

Mood-Related
Concerns

Adjustment
Difficulties

Learning-Related
Emotional Impact

Individual Play-Based Interventions



Happy



Sad



Excited



Worried



Angry

Time for
Hands-On
Demonstration
& Practice!

Learn ♥
Try ♥
Grow! ♥



Small Group Play-Based Interventions



Ethical and Practice Considerations in SBHCs

Scope of
Practice and
Competence

Informed
Consent

Confidentiality
in School
Setting

Collaboration
with School
Personnel

Boundaries
and Dual
Relationships

Documentation
and
Accountability



Questions?

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