

Play Therapy Newsletter

Far West Chapter
of the Texas
Association for
Play Therapy

Letter from the President

Sylvia Ochoa

Saludos! As the new FWTAPT President I would like to tell you a little about myself. I have had the pleasure to work with youth for approximately ten years. I am presently employed at the El Paso Juvenile Probation Department and work with adolescents and their families.

I am excited about the upcoming year and looking forward to sharing many new ideas with you. Just to give you a glimpse of what I have envisioned, I would like to work on encouraging other professionals in the community to be members of the FWTAPT. I would like to explore the idea of organizing a couple of open houses in various areas of El Paso in order to introduce FWTAPT. In addi-

tion, I would like to encourage participation from current members. I understand that we all have busy schedules, however, I would like to meet with you and hear some of your suggestions and opinions in order to help make this year a rewarding year.

Volume 2, Issue 1

Fall, 2007

Special points of interest:

- Find out about upcoming events
- Renew your membership for 2006-2007
- Learn about the sand tray
- Discover cases in which a child can consent to therapy

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Upcoming Play Therapy Events

October 9-14, 2007

APT Annual Conference in Hollywood, California

www.a4pt.org

December 6-8, 2007

Annual Conference

Intensive Play Therapy Training

Speakers to be announced

April 10-13, 2008

Texas Association for Play Therapy Conference, "Play Therapy: Creating Boundless Possibilities", Dallas, TX

Keynote Speaker: Scott Riviere

Sand Tray Therapy

Carlisle Navidomskis

Sand tray therapy is a useful in working with children, adolescents and adults. For children, the nonverbal modality of sand tray is an essential means of self-expression. For adolescents and adults it can provide a fresh perspective from which to view their situation. As in all forms of play therapy, sand tray provides a means of gaining a sense of control over one's experience.

The therapist's role in sand tray therapy is to embody the core conditions: to be fully present, to witness the client's building, and to be a safe container for the world the client builds. As with all forms of therapy, adequate training is necessary. Theresa Kestly of the Sand Tray Training Institute of New Mexico, based in Corrales, New Mexico, recommends four levels of training (each two days) before using sand tray with clients. Materials needed for sand tray therapy are a container (a plastic sweater box can be used, as well as wooden trays approximately 20 by 30 by 3 inches specifically made for sand tray therapy), washed sand (available from Toys R Us), and miniatures. Categories of miniatures include people (ordinary, imaginary, military),

buildings, animals and animal families, landscape items such as trees and flowers, and natural items such as shells and stones. Large containers, such as a sand box, can be used for group or family sand trays.

Unlike child-centered play therapy, the therapist does not verbalize during the building phase of sand tray. For a child who decides to make a sand tray during a play session, this

“. . . sand tray provides a means of gaining a sense of control over one's experience.”

can mean that the therapist switches from tracking behavior and reflecting feelings to silently witnessing a recording the building process. It is my experience that the child, absorbed in selecting and placing miniatures, does not appear to notice this shift in the counselor's behavior.

At the end of the building phase, the counselor stands by the child, silently taking in the finished product.

Kestly emphasizes the importance of joining with the client's energy and asking open-ended questions such as, "Is there anything you want to say?", "What can you tell me about this

world?" or "What's happening?" The therapist writes down the child's statements and does NOT interpret the tray. Interpreting takes away the builder's power; the therapeutic effect is in the building, not in the verbalization.

An 11-year-old with a history of inattentive-type ADHD behaviors in school had several sessions of play therapy at the beginning of her sixth-grade year. Talk therapy alone appeared frustrating for this client, and she seemed to see herself as too old for many of the activities in the play room. She did value the time for creating, and reflecting on, her world in sand tray therapy. With her mother's encouragement, the support of an understanding teacher, and the space for self-exploration and self-expression provided by the therapy sessions, she has begun the academic year completing assignments and even doing work for extra credit. With proper training, therapists may find that sand tray is a useful method of engaging children, adolescents and adults in the therapeutic process. And it's a good excuse to be on the lookout for miniatures to collect!

Letter from the Immediate Past President

Ruth Fierro-Glover

Greetings! On behalf of FWTAPT I would like to give you a brief update on the association. I would like to apologize and give you a brief explanation of the past year. The year started with Ms. Sandra Kern stepping down as the President due to an illness. I was approached and asked to step in as the President and was honored to represent the Association. In addition, Sylvia Ochoa stepped in as President Elect.

The schedule was set starting in October with Dr. Cruz. She presented on "The Theoretical Basis for Play

Therapy". On December 1st, Phronsie Kelly-Zion presented on "Self Care for Play Therapists" and, of course, in March, El Paso hosted the Texas Association for Play Therapy Annual Conference entitled "Understanding the Art of Play Therapy".

We had a lot going on, however, after our December workshop. I was in my 7th month of pregnancy and placed on bed rest. On December 29th. I was rushed to the hospital for a premature delivery and was also involved in a hit and run accident. I was injured and unable to do much at that point and, unfortunately, could not

participate in the TAPT Annual Conference.

At this point, we are trying to get back on track and hope to offer you more opportunities to experience and learn about play therapy. In addition, I am honored to introduce Ms. Sylvia Ochoa as our new President. We look forward to working with you this year.

Far West Texas Chapter of the Association for Play Therapy

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email: website: www.fwtapt.com

I would like to join FWTAPT (circle one): ANNUAL FEE New member (\$20) Renewing Member (\$15)
 Student (\$15) Renewing Student (\$15)

Name: _____ Licensure: _____

Address _____

City, State Zipcode: _____

Home phone: _____

Work phone: _____

Cell phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please list me in the directory: YES NO

Are you interested in becoming a registered play therapist? YES NO

Are you interested in assisting with board activities? YES NO

Languages Spoken: ENGLISH ___ SPANISH ___ OTHER _____

Make checks payable to FWTAPT.

Mail checks and application to 300Thunderbird, Ste 12, El Paso, TX 79912. No refunds.

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Paid with Cash _____ Check # _____ \$ _____

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Receipt Far West Texas Association for Play Therapy
 Membership Dues paid with Cash _____ Check# _____ \$ _____ Name _____

New Renewing Student Membership Student Renewing

Treasurer Signature _____ Date _____

Far West Chapter of the Texas Association

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We're on the
web!
www.fwtapt.com

The purpose of the Far West Texas Association for Play Therapy is to provide a forum for the discussion of play therapy ideas and concerns.

Consent to Treatment of Minors

Misty Duke

In most cases, consent to mental health treatment must be given by a child's parent. However, there are some exceptions:

- A child may consent to treatment for suicide prevention, chemical dependency, or abuse
- If the parent can not be located, the following people can consent to a child's treatment: grandparent, adult sibling, or aunt or uncle
- A child can consent to treatment if he/she is on active duty in the military or if he/ she is 16 and resides separately from his/her parents and manages his/her own financial affairs

For more detailed information, see Title 2, Chapter

FWTAPT News

- Membership dues for the 2006-2007 year were due in August. If you have not paid any dues since August, please complete the enclosed membership application form and submit it with your payment in order to continue receiving the benefits of membership, including free attending to quarterly workshops and discounted attendance to the annual conference.
- The FWTAPT board is attempting to build a slate of officers for the 2007-2008 year. Sylvia Ochoa will serve as President, Ruth Fierro-Glover as President Elect, Carlisle Navidomkis as Director at Large, Mary Kaiser as Chapter Representative, and Jim Rivera as Treasurer. If anyone is interested in serving in the positions of President-Elect or Secretary, please contact Sylvia Ochoa at sochoa@epcounty.com.
- If you have an article you would like to submit for this newsletter, please contact Misty Duke at mistyduke@yahoo.com.