

SUNY College at Oswego
School of Education
Counseling and Psychological Services Department

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office hours: TBA

This course will meet from 9-3:30 on the following Saturdays

9/13, 10/4, 11/8, 11/15, & 12/6/08

- I. Course Number & Credit: CPS 692 3 semester hours
- II. Course Title: Advanced Play Therapy: Theory and Practice
- III. Course Description: This course is intended to provide students with a critical analysis of theoretical approaches to play therapy with an emphasis on the dimensions of the process, the counselor's understanding of children's behavior and his/her perceptions of self, of the client, and of the therapeutic play relationship. It is intended that students will acquire an applied understanding of the Adlerian and Gestalt models of play therapy and the philosophy and skills necessary for counselors to include play therapy as a part of their intervention repertoire.
- IV. Prerequisites: Graduate student status in Counseling and Psychological Services or a related field and an introductory course in play therapy; or permission of the instructor.
- V. Justification for the Course: This advanced course in play therapy enables students to develop and apply their theoretical and **practical knowledge** for using play therapy as a part of their therapeutic repertoire. The specialized principles of play therapy are most appropriately understood and acquired in an **authentic learning** context. This course is appropriate for students who have already acquired a theoretical foundation in the area of counseling and play therapy. This course is offered as an elective. Because of the applied training aspect of this course, class size should be limited to 15 students.
- VI. Course Objectives: This course is designed to enable students to:
 - A. Describe the various theoretical approaches to play therapy (Knowledge).
 - B. Demonstrate the comprehension of and an ability to employ strategies of Adlerian and Gestalt models of play therapy (Knowledge & Practice).
 - C. Implement play therapy in order to create an accepting atmosphere for the client (Social Justice).
 - D. Perform physical attending skills that facilitate counselor-client interaction.
 - E. Employ the skills of **reflective** response, limit setting, and structuring during a play therapy session.
 - F. Identify and assess the client's concerns (Social Justice).

- G. Conduct an ongoing self-directed inquiry as it relates to the play therapy self-supervision skills (Reflection).
- H. Discuss the legal and ethical issues involved with the practice of play therapy (Social Justice, Leadership).
- I. Describe the impact of multicultural issues in play therapy (Social Justice).

VII. Course Outline:

The Advanced Play Therapy course is expected to give the student an understanding of two of the major theoretical approaches used in play therapy when counseling children. Specific models of play therapy will be introduced which will include using the skills of reflective listening, limit setting, structuring of sessions and identifying themes in children's play (Knowledge). Students will also gain experience in the clinical supervision of play therapy (Collaboration & Leadership). It is intended that the student will have exposure to and/or involvement in the following areas of learning:

- A. Models of play therapy;
- B. The Adlerian and Gestalt philosophies of play therapy;
- C. Limit setting and structuring in sessions, using **reflective** responses;
- D. Themes in children's play;
- E. Adlerian and Gestalt interviews;
- F. Play therapy sessions, both mock and real;
- G. Becoming a professional play therapist;
- H. Group supervision of play therapy sessions; and
- I. Clinical supervision of play therapy sessions.

VIII. Methods of Instruction:

Lecture, large group discussion, role playing, large group supervision, out of class assignments, video demonstrations, participation in play therapy session laboratory and *course space*.

IX. Course Requirements:

- A. Students will maintain a log of their experience of weekly in-class activities and any out-of-class processing assignments (Reflection). 25%
- B. Students are required to submit reaction paper(s) to assigned readings and collaborative presentation.
Students may choose **one** of the following texts: 50%

Kottman, T. (1995). *Partners in play: An Adlerian approach to play therapy*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Oaklander, V. (1988). *Windows to our children*. (4th ed.). Highland, NY: The Gestalt Journal Press.

- C. Students will engage at least one volunteer child using a specific, prescriptive theoretical play therapy approach. This session is to be video taped for later playback (Practice, Authentic Learning).
 - D. Students will participate in Association for Play Therapy professional endeavors to be described further in class. 25%
 - E. Students will be required to engage in clinical supervision laboratory (Practice, Authentic Learning).
 - F. Students will attend class meetings regularly and to be prepared to participate in class activities and discussions.
 - G. Students will complete readings assigned by the instructor.
- X. Means of Evaluation: Letter grades will be assigned. To successfully complete the course each student will be expected to:
- A. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of Adlerian and Gestalt play therapy theories and an ability to employ the skills necessary to perform these modalities, as evidenced by class performance and video-taped sessions (Authentic Learning, Knowledge, Practice);
 - B. Complete written and **reflection** assignments on the due date to the satisfaction of the student and the instructor; and
 - C. Attend all classes and participate appropriately in discussions and feedback.