

Theraplay®

What to expect in Theraplay sessions: a quick guide

Theraplay® is an intervention focused on building and enhancing attachment relationships. You and your child will be encouraged by the therapist to engage in a range of games and activities which are intended to deepen the attachment relationship between you. The activities will be based on the patterns of interaction between a parent and child and are shaped around four particular dimensions of parent-child interactions; Structure, Nurture, Challenge and Engagement.

The therapist will guide you through a number of different activities, which replicate the interaction between a parent and a very young child, but shaped to engage your child whatever their age.

The games are adult-led with your child being encouraged to engage with you as their parent and to accept your lead. This helps to model the adult being in charge in a safe way rather than the child controlling the interaction.

The games will involve the use of touch in a playful and nurturing way. This sensitive use of touch will facilitate the deepening of your relationship and give your child the experience of safe touch.

The games will be developmentally challenging to the right degree for your child. This will help build their sense of self-esteem and ability to try new things as they manage the challenge of the games set for them.

The therapist will create opportunities for you and your child to have fun together and create a sense of playfulness and joy in your relationship.

The therapist will guide you through nurturing activities that may include feeding your child, giving them a massage or singing to them, using the different senses in the interaction between you as they experience being cared for by you.

The therapist will give the sessions a high degree of structure which will help your child develop a sense of safety and security in your relationship.

Theraplay will give your child the opportunity to experience interaction with you that is fun and playful as well as caring and sensitive to their needs and difficulties.

Theraplay® is a registered service mark of The Theraplay Institute, Evanston, IL, USA.