The Use of Play Therapy for Assessing and Treating LGBT Children and Their Families

Instructor: Quinn K. Smelser, LPC, RPT

Program Goals and Schedule

Program Description

This program will focus on the intersection of play therapy with gender and sexual identity development. The training will highlight how play therapy inherently encourages gender and sexuality exploration. Little research has focused on best practices to allow children to safely explore their sexual and gender identity in therapy. The DSM-V has removed Gender Identity Disorder and replaced it with Gender Dysphoria for children, adolescents and adults. As part of the growing emphasis on social justice and diversity within counseling and play therapy, attention to best practices with gender diverse adults has increased, but little of this attention has focused specifically on working with children in play therapy. Techniques to assess and treat for traumatic experiences this population has experienced will be shown, practiced, and discussed. Presenter will facilitate a conversation about this emerging area of need and discuss ideas for play therapists to better advocate for these children. The presenter will provide opportunities for participants to reflect on their worries, biases, and awareness around sexual and gender identity issues with children.

Program Schedule

The schedule will consist of didactic presentations, experiential work, and processing clinical case material.

9:00 – 9:30 Introductions, worries/fears, and needs assessment of participants

9:30 -10:45 Experiential exercises that highlight intersections of identity

10:45 -11:00 Break

11:00 -12:00 Didactic presentation of basic play therapy and LGBT identity development as well as sexual and gender identity development, the relevance of phenomenological experiences, and basic principles to working with LGBT children and their families

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH

1:00 - 2:30 Discussion of trauma as it relates to LGBT children and families and LGBT youth in Foster Care

2:30 - 2:45 BREAK

2:45 - 4:30 Experiential exercises, videos, All Children/All Families content, group work to develop responses to clinical case discussions, close

Course Objectives

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

* Define play therapy and list two basic principles
* Define at least two constructs of gender and sexual identity development for play therapists to consider
* Give two examples of how play therapy and gender and sexuality exploration can be viewed as compatible by play therapists
* List two myths that play therapists may have about gender and sexual identity development and exploration in therapy
* Identify 3 experiential play therapy activities for children and families
* Provide 2 reasons explaining the importance as play therapists of supervision, continuing education, and advocating for children who are gender-non-conforming

General Course Information

This course is limited to 15 participants and is designed to facilitate experiential work, group discussion, and processing of clinical material. Participants will have ample opportunity to discuss their specific needs and clinical questions. Participant feedback will be sought out throughout the day. Clinical case discussions will adhere to HIPPA regulations regarding client confidentiality.

This event is sponsored by Starbright Training Institute. Starbright Training Institute is an approved provider by the Association for Play Therapy and as such is authorized to offer continuing education specific to play therapy (APT Provider No. 96-029).

Additional Continuing Education clock hours, not specific to play therapy, will be provided through the Commonwealth Educational Seminars ([www.commonwealtheducation.com](http://www.commonwealtheducation.com)). There is an additional $25 fee for those professionals seeking CE clock hours in social work, counseling, MFT, and psychology. Checks are made out to Starbright Training Institute (or cash paid at training, no credit cards).

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Course Instructor Contact Information

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