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President's Message

Kim Vander Dussen, PsyD, RPT-S

Dear Fellow Play Therapists,

The other day, a young boy I have been working with for a while, rushed over to me before exiting our suite, to silently squeeze my leg in a hug before quietly leaving again. His mother smiled at me and let me know that we'd see them next week. It had been an emotional session for him, and as a result, for me in a lesser way as well. I was struck again by the resilience of children and their ability to communicate so much of their inner life without uttering a word. In writing this I am again humbled by the knowledge that you all understand this experience and how it motivates us to continue in the work that we do. I'm especially conscious of this while I know that play therapists in parts of the state feel like their work is threatened. In Los Angeles County all agencies are being mandated to implement a handful of approaches that have been identified as "Evidenced Based" and play therapists are struggling to understand how this impacts their work with children. Some of you in other parts of the state have already experienced this and are struggling to hold onto work that you feel convicted to do. APT and CALAPT are aware of this and while APT struggles to support ongoing research I know there are members of CALAPT that are doing the same.

This year as CALAPT continues to move forward we have already accomplished so much. Our San Bernardino chapter successfully conducted their 6 CE workshop and the Northern and Southern Regional Conferences were well attended and well received. We've recruited so many new members as well and I attribute this fully to CALAPT's chapter officers and board members. Thank you all for your commitment to our organization and belief in our work. This newsletter also marks ongoing changes to communicate with our membership more effectively. We are spreading out the types of articles we offer over the course of the year so that you have the time to read and review the content. We are also increasing the number of newsletters so you will have more frequent contact with us. CALAPT is moving toward online registration for our conferences and workshops so please stay tuned!

Kim Vander Dussen, PsyD, RPT-S

Associate Professor

Argosy University, Orange County

CALAPT President, 2010

Rolling the Dice: Tips for Therapeutic Board Game Design Part I

By: Eric Terry, PsyD, RPT-S

Dr. Terry has provided such a rich article regarding the development of board games, that rather than shorten it in order to meet space limitations, we have opted to break it up into two parts. In this way you will be able to fully benefit from his experience. Please stay tuned for the next edition of the newsletter which will include Part II.



“You sank my battleship!” “It was Professor Plum with the candlestick in the library.” “Go directly to jail. Do not pass Go. Do not collect \$200.” Battleship. Clue. Monopoly. All classic games that we have played a million times since childhood. These games started as small sparks of an idea that grew and were nurtured until they manifested into the games we know and love. Therapeutic board games, though more complex in terms of their goals and purpose, originate in the same way. In this article, I would like to highlight some of the factors to consider when designing a therapeutic board game.

The process starts, as most things do, with an idea. The best ideas come from areas in which you have some interest and some experience. You may be working with a single client or a client population and wonder why there is not an intervention to better address a certain issue. For example, the idea for my first game, *Peacetown: A Conflict Resolution Board Game*, came after I had been teaching conflict resolution skills to kindergarten to third grade students at an elementary school. I felt as if there might be a better way to teach the concepts to children. Your ideas could come from realizing there is a lack of interventions to address a certain disorder or from discovering a new and fresh way to approach a certain concept. As I mentioned earlier, you want to make sure the idea you are working on is something you are interested and invested in. Creating a board game is a long process and if you are not interested and excited about what you are doing, it can get tedious and your resolve may waver.

Once you have an idea and a topic or area of focus, your next step should be to look at the games that are already on the market. Browse the web sites and catalogs of publishers like WPS, Childswork/Childsplay, and other publishers of therapeutic board games to see what types of games they are publishing. The web sites and catalogs are usually divided up by the types of disorders the games are designed to work with. Is your chosen topic or area of focus one that is already saturated with games? If your topic or area of focus is one where there are very few if any games, then you may be on to something. If your topic or area of focus is one where there are several games already being published, do not give up hope yet. Is your idea for the game something different from the other games you see advertised? Then, proceed. If your topic area is saturated with games and your idea is no different than what you already see being sold, your idea is less likely to be picked up by a publisher. However, if you are designing the game for use in your office, then proceed.

Beyond just looking to see what games are on the market, it is also a good idea to play some of them. Many of you may already have some of these games at your offices or have access to them. There are several reasons why you want to play the existing board games. First of all, you want to make sure you do not plagiarize anyone else’s blood, sweat, and tears. Next, you want to see what works and what does not in terms of game play. What does the game not have that you feel would make it better? For example, I noticed while playing several therapeutic board games that the directions seemed to be very unclear. So, I made sure to make the directions for my board games as clear as possible. You can also look to non-therapeutic games for ideas of what works and what does not in terms of game play. There are several principles that are universal in games and using those concepts is not plagiarism.

After you have your idea, your topic or area of focus, and you have taken a survey of the games in that area, it is time to start developing foundations for your game. You need to decide what the purpose of your game is. What concepts are you trying to teach? What goals are you trying to accomplish? Whatever your purpose or goals are, you have to have it firmly established early in the development process. That feeds your ideas for the look of the game, the game play, etc. You are going to do whatever you can visually, metaphorically, and literally to make sure that purpose and those goals get across to the people playing your game.

Once you have a purpose for your game, you need to have an overarching theme or setting. What is the setting for your game? Where will the players be when they are learning the concepts you are trying to teach them? For example, *Peacetown* is a conflict resolution board game. So, for the setting, I placed it in a town and said that the game followed two elementary school aged students on a typical day in their life around the town. The board is double-sided and the idea is that the conflict resolution skills on the first board are basic and the conflict resolution skills on the second board are a little more complex. This was illustrated visually by having all the artwork on the first board look at the outside of the neighborhood, while the artwork on the second board ventured into the interiors of the buildings. My current game, *Family Quest: A Family Therapy Board Game*, is a family therapy game. It utilizes the metaphor of a jungle environment and an expedition on the game board to illustrate the difficulties involved in keeping a family together and engaged with one another. Your theme will flow from the purpose for your game.

At this point, you have reached the longest, most exciting, and most frustrating step of game development: brainstorming and fleshing out the game. This is where you do a lot of thinking, spitballing, and accepting and rejecting of ideas regarding the game. In this step, the game is developed and you slowly breathe life into it, making it a fully realized entity. This is where you have to determine what you want the game to look like, what the rules will be, what you will need to play the game, etc. There are many things to consider. I would advise you to start with figuring out what the board will look like. This should funnel directly from your game's theme. For example, *Clue* is a mystery game that takes place in a mansion, so the board looks like a mansion and the game path looks like the floor tiles inside a mansion. *Candyland* takes place in a land where there are many people and creatures made up of and named after candy. Therefore, the board is inhabited by people and creatures named after candy and the game path is very colorful. Figure out what kind of art you want on your board and what the game path is going to look like. Are there unique game play elements about your game? Will they impact the game path? Next, start creating the instructions for your game. How many players can play? What is the age range? What type of game pieces do you need? Will your game have questions? If so, this is when you will write them and figure out how many you need. Will your game use a spinner or dice? Will your players be earning points or tokens? What do the points or tokens do? How will the game end? These are just a few of the questions to consider. Once again, the purpose for your game will dictate game play and the rules you create.

To be continued in the next edition of CALAPT Today.

Eric Terry, PsyD, RPT-S is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Registered Play Therapist and Supervisor. He has been licensed since 2001 and an RPT-S since 2004. Dr. Terry has been in private practice in Placentia since 2005 and specializes in working with children and adolescents, but also works with adults. At his practice, Dr. Terry performs ADHD, Asperger's and Bariatric assessments in addition to treating a range of disorders. Dr. Terry published a therapeutic board game, Peacetown: A Conflict Resolution Board Game, through Western Psychological Services in 2001 (www.creativetherapystore.com). His second game, Family Quest, is self published and is available through his website. For more information on Dr. Terry, you can visit his web site at www.ericterrypsyd.com.

Chapter Leadership and Updates

Central Coast Chapter Leadership and Update

(The Central Coast Chapter includes the areas of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara)

President

Colleen Sebastian, LMFT
(805) 305-0631
coanse@earthlink.net

Secretary

Cheri Love
lovinslo@yahoo.com

President-Elect

Dana Francis, MA, PPS, MFT-I
dfdf@charter.net

Immediate Past President

Michelle Gaulden
michellegaulden@yahoo.com

The Central Coast Chapter is continuing to expand and we are busy planning exciting trainings for the upcoming year. Our members asked for sandtray training and we are delivering! Our 6 CE Chapter workshop is scheduled for **August 7th**, 2010, and Gisela Schubach De Domenico PhD, LMFT, RPT-S, will be presenting an exciting play therapy workshop on her Sandtray-Worldplay Therapy. This will be a unique opportunity to experience Gisela locally and we are very excited that she agreed to come! We also have chapter meetings with 1.5 CE trainings slated for **May 1st** and **October 16th**, 2010. Presenters and titles are still being worked out. We are looking ahead to 2011, as well, for training ideas and presenters. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any ideas or questions you may have!

For additional information about the Central Coast Chapter, please contact the Chapter President, Colleen Sebastian, at (805) 305-0631 or coanse@earthlink.net.

Central Valley Chapter Leadership and Update

(The Central Valley Chapter includes the areas of San Joaquin County and Modesto)

President

Raman Dhaliwal, MFT Intern
rdhaliwal@svcfs.org

Secretary

Michelle Coble, MFT Intern
mcoble@svcfs.org

President-Elect

Cathy Krider, MFT Intern
ckrider62@hotmail.com

Immediate Past President

Lee Jones, MFT
leejonesmft@sbcglobal.net

I am the president of the Central Valley Chapter of CALAPT, Raman Dhaliwal, MFT Intern and I was pleased to begin our year with our first meeting which was held at Sierra Vista Child and Family Services' ADHD Clinic. Our new officers include Vice President Cathy Krider and Secretary Michelle Coble. This first meeting included a 1.5 CE workshop "Soap Sculpturing in Play Therapy" with myself and Lee Jones (past president of the Central Valley Chapter of CALAPT) as presenters. The meeting took place on Friday March 5 from 12:00- 2:00pm. The second meeting will be Friday, **May 7th**. We are looking forward to having the large membership and participation carry on from last year to 2010. Last year's 8 workshops will be difficult to beat, although with the enthusiasm we have experienced in our Chapter, I believe we will be able to present members and participants with new and interesting interventions and materials for play therapy and promote further growth in our Chapter. One of the goals that continued from 2009 is increasing the participation of interested individuals such as the therapists, teachers, and students in Sacramento area.

For additional information about the Central Valley Chapter please contact Chapter President Raman Dhaliwal, MFT-I at rdhaliwal@svcfs.org.

Los Angeles Chapter Leadership and Update

(The Los Angeles Chapter includes the areas of Los Angeles, Ventura, & the San Fernando Valley)

President

Aseye Allah, ASW, MSW
arkaa@yahoo.com

Secretary

Vacant

President-Elect

Laia Vincens Fuste, MSW
laiavicensfuste@hotmail.com

The Los Angeles Chapter is eager and excited to begin providing trainings, meetings, and our full day workshop to those interested in learning more about play therapy within and around the Los Angeles area. We have just held our first meeting and 1.5 CE workshop on April 10, 2010. This training focused on The Healing Stages of Sandtray and was led by Annica Nilsson LCSW, RPT-S. Please also look for future Chapter meetings with 1.5 CE trainings in June and November as well as a 6 hour CE workshop on **November 20th**. We continue to search for members of the Los Angeles Chapter and would love to provide interested parties with more information.

For additional information about the Los Angeles Chapter, please contact the Chapter President, Aseye Allah at (949)294-7886 or arkaa3@yahoo.com.

Orange County Chapter Leadership and Update

(The Orange County Chapter includes all geographic regions of Orange County)

President

Valerie Wilson-Lindberg, LCSW, RPT
vlindberg@earthlink.net

Secretary

Reena Patel, MA
reenacspatel@gmail.com

President-Elect

Nubia B. Echavarria, PsyD
nubia_b_e@yahoo.com

Immediate Past President

Annica Nilsson, MSW, LCSW, RPT-S
(714) 875 2310
swedannica@aol.com

We started the new year with Valerie Wilson-Lindberg, LCSW, RPT as our Chapter President, Nubia Echavarria, PsyD stepping in like a trooper as our President Elect and Reena Patel, MA graciously continuing on as our chapter secretary. We look forward to an exciting year with a variety of workshops on the calendar: Three free 1.5 hour presentations which will take place at Argosy University in the City of Orange. These include: Valerie Wilson-Lindberg, LCSW, RPT with: "Experiential Play Therapy: Nurturing Traumatized Children" held on February 20th, Maxine Bowden, MA: "Play Therapy with Children at Risk of School Failure" on **May 8th**, and Rachel Taylor, LMFT, RPT-S: "Strength Based Play Therapy" on Saturday, **July 24th**. We are also pleased to be able to host a full-day workshop on Saturday **June 12th**, with a distinguished speaker, Ken Schwartzenberger, LCSW, RPT-S presenting The Therapeutic Powers of Play. We hope you will plan to come and play with us this year!

For additional information about the Orange County Chapter, please contact Chapter President, Valerie Wilson-Lindberg, LCSW, RPT at vlindberg@earthlink.net.

Riverside Chapter Leadership and Update

(The Riverside Chapter includes all geographic areas of Riverside County)

President

Mayada Marzouk, MA
mayadamarzouk@hotmail.com

Secretary

Isabel Akerlundh, MACP, MFTI

President-Elect

Shasta Weingard, BA
Shasta.Michelle.Weingard@gmail.com

Immediate Past President

Claudia Moon Perez, MS, LMFT, CEAP
perezmoonperez@sbcglobal.net

Are you ready to play? The Riverside Chapter will be holding our meetings the third Wednesday of May and September. Our first meeting was held on the 17th of March. Please come join Chapter President Mayada Marzouk, President-Elect Shasta Weingard, and Secretary Isabel Akerlundh for the meetings at the Riverside Police Department Community Room located at 10540 Magnolia Avenue Suite B Riverside, CA 92505. As usual, expect to learn new therapeutic interventions and have some fun. In addition, we have tentatively scheduled our annual 6-hour CE training for Friday **November 5th**. Please contact me at riversideplaytherapy@live.com for more information.

The Riverside Chapter serves all areas of Riverside County including cities such as Riverside, Corona, Temecula, Banning, and Blythe. We invite and welcome all professionals interested in using play therapy. Feel free to bring coworkers, colleagues, and students to our Chapter meetings. Now is a great time to get involved with the Riverside Chapter and network with other professionals who provide play therapy to their clients!

For additional information on the Riverside Chapter, please contact Chapter President, Mayada Marzouk, MA at mayadamarzouk@hotmail.com.

San Bernardino Chapter Leadership and Update

(The San Bernardino Chapter includes all geographic areas of San Bernardino County)

President

Yvonne Quesada,
bonnieq21@hotmail.com

Secretary

Amy Smith, MS

President-Elect

Christy Livingston, MS

Immediate Past President

Marisa Rivera, MS, MFT
marob4895@charter.net

The San Bernardino Chapter of CALAPT had a very busy and productive year in 2009. We had wonderful presentations on using play with bullying, sand tray, relational aggression, art therapy for elementary and middle school students and with adolescent girls self-esteem groups. Congratulations to our new officers for this year: Yvonne Quesada, MSW is the Chapter President, Christy Livingston, MS is the President-Elect and Amy Smith, MS is Secretary.

The San Bernardino Chapter has started 2010 off with a wonderful full-day workshop with Maxine McCleery Bowden, LMFT on Playfully Supporting Children at Risk of School Failure. Maxine shared her extensive experience with children and provided the attendees with many useful and fun interventions to use. Exciting 1.5 trainings are coming up on using play with traumatized children, medically fragile children and much more.

For additional information on the San Bernardino Chapter, please contact Chapter President, Yvonne Quesada at (626) 484-4196 or bonnieq21@hotmail.com.

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter Leadership and Update

(The San Francisco Chapter includes all geographic areas of San Francisco Bay)

President

Karen Pernet LCSW, RPT-S
(510) 923-0520
kepernet@yahoo.com

Secretary

Roberta Gannon, MFT
rlgannon@pacbell.net

President Elect

Jennifer Wentz, MA, LMFT
(925) 682-1055
jenniferwentz@hotmail.com

Immediate Past President

Ren'e Lewellyn, MA, MFT
renelewmft@comcast.net

The Chapter is off to a good start this year with our new officers: Karen Pernet LCSW, RPT-S Chapter President, Jennifer Wentz MFT President Elect, Roberta Gannon MFT as Secretary, and Immediate Past President Rene Lewellyn, MFT. This year we will continue to offer 1.5 CE trainings at our bi-monthly Chapter Meetings. The topic of the May meeting will be drama and play therapy. Presentations for our July and September meetings are in the process of being finalized. Attendance at our meetings has continued to increase and we are adding new members. At our January meeting we signed up 8 new members and hope to repeat this at our March meeting. We are in the process of finalizing a new location to provide a larger and more comfortable space. Information will be posted on the CALAPT website. A very exciting 6 hour CE Workshop is planned for **June 4**. Sueann Kenney-Noziska LISW, RPT-S well known presenter and author as well as former CALAPT President will be giving the training "Childhood Interrupted: Abuse-Informed Play Therapy Approaches for Sexually Abused Children & Adolescents." We know that Sueann is an informative, energetic speaker and we expect the workshop to fill up early.

For additional information about the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter, please contact Chapter President, Karen Pernet LCSW, RPT-S at kepernet@yahoo.com.

2010 California Association for Play Therapy Board of Directors

Executive Board

President

Kim Vander Dussen, Psy.D,
RPT-S
(714) 329-6080
kvanderdussen@argosy.edu

President-Elect

Annette Markowitz, MFT
(818) 307-8950
annetteim@hotmail.com

Immediate Past-President

Sarah Yeung, MSW
sarahanneyeung@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Kristy Schadt, MFT, RPT-S
kristyschadtmft@sbcglobal.net

Secretary

Debra Solseng, LMFT, RPT-S
(949) 701-5930
dhsolseng@cox.net

Members-at-Large

MAL A/Registrar

Jennifer Wentz, MA, LMFT
(925) 682-1055
jenniferwentz@hotmail.com

MAL B/S CA CE Oversight

Eva Miller, MSW
eva_miller22@hotmail.com

MAL C/S CA

Conference Coordinator

Anna Loza, MSW, LCSW
(909) 732-2011
aannaa_gram@yahoo.com

MAL D/N CA CE Oversight

Myrysha Rosa, MSW
mrosa@usc.edu

MAL E/N CA

Conference Coordinator

TBA



RPT Interview

Valerie Wilson-Lindberg, MSW, LCSW, RPT

Interviewed by Eva Miller, MSW

Valerie Wilson-Lindberg is a Registered Play Therapist and a LCSW. She is currently in private practice and specializes in Experiential Play Therapy based on the model developed by Drs. Byron and Carol Norton. She has specific expertise in work with children, adolescents, and adults in trauma recovery. She also uses Jungian Sandplay. Valerie is a strong believer that play is the child's language and is the best way to treat children as it is developmentally appropriate and honors children, providing them with a safe means to deal with difficult issues. She is currently president of the Orange County Chapter of CALAPT.

Valerie has wide work experience with diverse clients including having worked for the Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services and Long Beach Child Guidance Center. She began her training in play therapy in 1991, working with severely emotionally disturbed children in therapeutic foster care. She admires the work and has learned from Ken Schwitzenberger, LCSW, RPT-S, Dr. Gary Landreth, and Dr. Rie Rogers Mitchell.

She is a leader and a teacher herself having been on the faculty of California State University, Long Beach for the last 3 years. She has presented several times on play therapy and Sandplay therapy at the APT Annual Conference in Colorado in 2004 and most recently at the 2008 Southern California Regional Conference for CALAPT. Like all fine instructors she loves to teach but she admits her greatest teacher is her 7 year old daughter Kayleen who keeps her up to date on the best play therapy techniques.

About the Author: Eva Miller, MSW works for West End Family Counseling in Ontario, California, a community mental health agency. She runs the SART program which provides a mental health services for children aged zero to five who are having behavioral problems.

CALAPT Leadership Opportunities

Interested in networking, expanding your resume and attending FREE play therapy trainings? If so, then CALAPT leadership may be for you!

Benefits of service as a CALAPT officer include:

- Free attendance at all CALAPT Chapter Workshops throughout the state
- Free continuing education credits specific to play therapy for the BBS, APA, and APT
- Leadership experience to add to your resume
- Opportunities to network & strengthen your professional career while serving the play therapy community

Leadership opportunities are available at the local chapter level as well as the executive board level. Contact President-Elect Annette Markowitz at (818) 307-8950 or annetteim@hotmail.com for more information.

CALAPT Calendar of Upcoming Events

June 2010

- **June 4th** - San Francisco Chapter 6 CE workshop: Childhood, Interrupted: Abuse-Informed Play Therapy Approaches for Sexually Abused Children & Adolescents
Presenter: Sueann Kenney-Noziska, MSW, LISW, RPT-S
- **June 12th** - Orange County Chapter 6 CE workshop: The Therapeutic Powers of Play
Presenter: Ken Schwartzberger, MSW, LCSW, RPT-S

July 2010

- **July 23rd** – Central Valley Chapter 6 CE Workshop

August 2010

- **August 7th** - Central Coast Chapter 6 CE workshop: Whole Worlds to Play With: Introducing Sandtray-Worldplay Play Therapy
Presenter: Gisela Schubach De Domenico, PhD, MFT, RPT-S

October 2010

- **October 12th - 17th** APT Annual Conference, Louisville, KY

November 2010

- **November 5th** - Riverside Chapter 6 CE workshop
- **November 20th** - Los Angeles Chapter 6 CE Workshop

For more upcoming CALAPT events visit our website at www.calplaytherapy.org

Being an APT member means you are also a CALAPT member
Take advantage of all your dual membership has to offer!
Check out the websites:
www.calplaytherapy.org
and www.a4pt.org

Do you see a need for increased representation and trainings closer to home in your area?
To start a chapter in your area or to find out about chapters in the process of forming please contact:
Kim Vander Dussen, PsyD, RPT-S
714.329.6080 or Kvanderdussen@argosy.edu

We encourage all play therapists and CALAPT members to seek formal credentialing with the Association for Play Therapy. For More Information, go to www.a4pt.org or Contact Carol Guerrero, (559) 252-2278 x 1

DISCLAIMER: The aim of the CALAPT Newsletter is to provide a forum for discussion of a wide range of articles representing various theoretical models, treatment approaches, concerns and activities in play therapy. Inclusion of a specific article does not reflect CALAPT official position or endorsement unless otherwise stated. The data and statements herein are the sole responsibility of the authors concerned.