



AutPlay® Therapy Certification Program

AutPlay® Therapy is a neurodiversity paradigm informed framework for implementing play therapy with neurodivergent children and their families. AutPlay® was created by Dr. Robert Jason Grant to better understand neurodivergence in addressing the unique needs of Neurodivergent children and adolescents (sensory differences, Autistic, ADHD, learning disorders, intellectual developmental disorder, etc.) who enter a therapeutic process with a licensed mental health professional.

AutPlay® presents a diversity framework integrated with and for theoretical counseling underpinnings in humanistic, family systems, developmental, and cognitive behavioral theories. Various seminal play therapy theories (Child Centered Play Therapy, Filial Therapy, Theraplay, Cognitive Behavioral Play Therapy, Gestalt Play Therapy, and Family Play Therapy) are also conceptualized within neurodiversity affirming practices. More specific content and protocol of AutPlay® Therapy can be reviewed on the AutPlay® Therapy website – www.autplaytherapy.com. A current list of providers who have completed the AutPlay Therapy Certification Program is maintained and displayed on the AutPlay® website as well.

Completion of AutPlay® Therapy Certification Program signifies that the therapist has met the requirements to be a Certified AutPlay Therapy Provider®. Certification in AutPlay® Therapy requires the therapist to complete the following:

OPTION 1 (24 CE hour Program):

- 1) Complete a live (two day intensive, 12 CE Hrs) in person or live webinar training. View training options for live trainings on the trainings page on the AutPlay Therapy website.
- 2) Purchase and read - Grant, R. J. (2023). *The AutPlay therapy handbook: Integrative family play therapy with neurodivergent children*, Routledge Publishing. Complete a post book reading exam (8 CE Hrs). The book can be purchased on Amazon and other online retailers. The book post exam (google form) is provided by the AutPlay Clinic upon registration for a two-day training.
- 3) Watch the recorded webinar Introduction to AutPlay Therapy. The recorded webinar can be found on the home study trainings page (4 CE Hrs).

OPTION 2 (24 CE hour Program):

- 1) Complete the home study course (self-paced 20 CE Hrs). View information about the home study course on the home study trainings pages on the AutPlay Therapy website.
- 2) Purchase and read Grant, R. J. (2023). *The AutPlay therapy handbook: Integrative family play therapy with neurodivergent children*, Routledge Publishing. The book can be purchased on Amazon and other online retailers.

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3) Watch the recorded webinar Introduction to AutPlay Therapy. The recorded webinar can be found on the home study trainings page (4 CE Hrs).

AutPlay® Certification Program includes a thorough presentation of neurodiversity concepts including neurodiversity affirming practices, special considerations when providing mental health care (play therapy) to Neurodivergent children, an overview of common Neurodivergent mental health needs, an intensive examination of the AutPlay® framework including recommended phases of play therapy, Neurodivergent spectrum of presentation strategies, target play therapy goals, affirming parent involvement and training, and play therapy limit setting procedures. Completing certified provider requirements further involves learning about integrative play therapy processes including the AutPlay® Follow Me Approach (FMA) which is designed for children with higher support needs and engagement struggles. The certification program provides for participants to engage in experiential activities, role play practice, case conceptualization, and therapy planning as they complete their requirements to become a certified provider.

Licensed Mental Health Professionals and/or those (including students) who are pursuing a licensure in mental health can complete the full certification program. Other disciplines such as educators, speech therapists, occupations therapists, etc. can complete the non-mental health certification but do not receive mental health related CE hours.

Benefits of Becoming a Certified AutPlay® Therapy Provider:

1. Gaining knowledge in a neurodiversity informed and affirming framework when implementing play therapy with Neurodivergent children and adolescents.
2. Expanded knowledge in advocating for Neurodivergent children.
3. Advancement in professional growth by demonstrating specific knowledge of neurodiversity and neurodiversity affirming practices.
4. Continual support and maintenance of professional certification and consultation/supervision services offered by approved AutPlay supervisors.
5. Certified Providers name and contact information are always displayed on the AutPlay website and a social media press release is provided for all new providers.
6. Certified providers receive special access to various AutPlay materials.

Development of the AutPlay® Therapy Certification Program:

AutPlay® Therapy began as an effort to provide understanding and support for mental health professionals (primarily child and play therapists) working with Autistic and other Neurodivergent children and their families. A special focus involved utilizing play therapy approaches which could be implemented to address the mental health needs of Neurodivergent children.

At the time of the inception of AutPlay®, most services focused on autism and other neurodivergence as a problem that needed to be “fixed” and were not mental health based nor designed for mental health professionals. As AutPlay® formed, it became apparent that mental health professionals working with the neurodivergent population would benefit from a formal certification program, not only to ensure a thorough understating of neurodivergence and affirming processes, but to provide validation as a professional with advanced training in addressing neurodivergent mental health needs.

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Before the AutPlay® Therapy Certification Program was official and ready to be offered to participants, the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) and the Association for Play Therapy (APT) was contacted to review the AutPlay® Therapy program materials and verify the program met the standards for receiving certified counselor and play therapy continuing education hours. NBCC and APT are governing bodies in the United States for the National Certified Counselor and Registered Play Therapist and Registered Play Therapist Supervisor credentials. NBCC and APT approved the content and process of the AutPlay® Therapy Certification Program for continuing education hours. www.nbcc.org and www.a4pt.org

The International Board for Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) was also contacted to review AutPlay® Therapy training materials to be approved for IBCCES continuing education hours. IBCCES is an international organization that governs autism related credentialing. IBCCES reviewed the AutPlay® training materials and process and approved the AutPlay® Therapy training as meeting the standard of IBCCES for continuing education hours related to autism. www.Ibcces.org

Becoming a Certified AutPlay® Therapy Provider gives an extra layer of accountability, reference, and professional identity that has been lacking in the mental health community regarding working with Neurodivergent children and their families. Beyond a competency expectation, certification is also designed to provide a level of confidence for the mental health professional and the ability to reference a neurodiversity affirming specialized training experience. AutPlay® Therapy continues to grow and update as more affirming evidence-based practices emerge and advances in neurodivergent mental health increases.

Continuing Education -Trainings hosted by the AutPlay Therapy Clinic/Robert Jason Grant Ed.D are approved by the below continuing education bodies. Trainings hosted by another organization/group are subject to that organization/group's CE approvals.

AutPlay Therapy Clinic has been approved by NBCC as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 6595. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credit are clearly identified. AutPlay Therapy Clinic is solely responsible for all aspects of the programs. Visit nbcc.org to learn more about NBCC.

Robert Jason Grant Ed.D is an APT Approved Provider #12-318 for continuing education. Most trainings are approved for APT continuing education, but each individual training listing should be reviewed to identify the type and amount of continuing education offered. Visit a4pt.org to learn more about APT (Association for Play Therapy).

Robert Jason Grant Ed.D is a Certified Training Partner for IBCCES (International Board for Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards) #CE159432, offering continuing education for the Certified Autism Specialist and Autism Certificate credentials. Most trainings are approved for IBCCES continuing education, but each individual training listing should be reviewed to identify the type and amount of continuing education offered.

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