

## Translating the Play for Parents Play Café April 28, 23. Presented by Helen Ritchie

### Breakout Rooms

In your groups of 2 or 3, you will have 15 minutes to practice translating the following play therapy scenarios. Remember, there can be more than one answer 😊.

#### **Example of how to start:**

***In today's session, \_\_\_\_\_ was showing me what it feels like when.....(the set-up/ offering)***

***This is possibly/probably/likely related to their experience of..... Or***

***This is connected to .....***

***Tip: Look at the nervous system sheet to see how behaviours are related to stress responses, and stick to 1-2 things you're certain about.***

If you finish before the time is up, you can discuss how you could translate the play that one of your clients has shown you.

### Scenarios:

#### 1. Dumping:

Client: 4.5 -year-old kindergarten student. Classroom teacher notices that he is very dysregulated in the afternoon and can't handle loud sounds. Parents have a pediatrician's appointment to look at sensory sensitivities.

Goals: increase ability to regulate (with support) and decrease unsettled and aggressive behaviour in class.

Observable play: As soon as he enters the playroom, he grabs bins of small Playmobil items, marbles, gems, rocks, shells, etc. and dumps them all over the floor one after the other in a very rapid manner. Many of the items roll and create a tripping hazard. The therapist is not allowed to clean them up.

The set up/offering: Overwhelm, fear, wanting to clean up to stop the overwhelm and not being allowed to and having to sit in the overwhelm (literally and emotionally!).

Translate the play:

## 2. Lions

Client: 4-year-old boy who has been kicked out of daycare for aggressive behaviour. Parents are separated and living in the same house. They haven't told him that they are separated and in the process of divorcing.

Goals: Decrease aggressive behaviours and increase ability to regulate with support. Increase understanding and processing of his experience of parental separation and divorce.

Observable Play: Lions role play: "I'm a baby lion and you're a "16 14 100 year-old lion" I was instructed to play with him as a mean lion and then suddenly had to be a nice lion, then mean and so on.

Set up/offering: lots of confusion, anxiety, aggression, and not being sure who I was at any given moment.

Translate the play:

## 3. Dollhouse furniture

Client: 4.5 -year-old girl referred due to separation anxiety and refusal to toilet train.

Goals: Decrease anxiety, increase ability to separate from parents and increase use of the toilet by the start of kindergarten.

Observable play:

Directive play after nondirective play with Mom in the playroom. Therapist asks the child to play with the dollhouse. Child tells therapist to stay away in a sudden strong voice and clings onto Mom.

Mom passes her furniture from the bin and the child sets up the dollhouse with it. She uses all furniture except the toilet. The therapist, who is eventually allowed to come closer, gently points this out and encourages her to have a look at it. She refuses to look at the wooden toilet or put it in the house.

The set up/offering: anxiety, being left out/dissmissed, fear, control, shut down.

Translate the play: