

## **APT Guidelines for Continuing Education Credit for Play Therapy**

1. APT confers play therapy credit for post graduate-level play therapy education and continuing education programs that are specifically applicable to play therapy practitioners and that improve client care, either directly or indirectly, by demonstrating evidence of EITHER a systematic use of a therapeutic model, the establishment of an interpersonal process using the therapeutic powers of play, and intent to prevent or resolve psychosocial difficulties and/or achieve optimal growth and development OR content that enhances the specific professional proficiency of mental health practitioners who are engaged in the clinical practice of play therapy, the supervision of play therapists, or the instruction of play therapy. Education and continuing education programs not specifically applicable to the practice of play therapy but generally applicable to mental health practitioners are ineligible.
2. Display clear learning objectives.
  - a) Require that program be conducted at post graduate-level play therapy content level.
  - b) The purpose of the Approved Providers of Play Therapy Continuing Education program is to offer a path for the continuous acquisition of knowledge and skills through advanced and specialized post graduate-level education in the field of play therapy in order to improve professional competence, enhance the profession, and better serve the public. Therefore, APT defines post graduate-level continuing education training as advanced, focused, and scholarly in that it:
    - (i) Builds upon a completed graduate mental health degree;
    - (ii) Emphasizes depth of content, not just breadth, appropriately targeted for the attending audience's existing play therapy skills and knowledge while maintaining a post-graduate level of content,
    - (iii) Finds important the vital shift from current understanding to the development of new learning, which is identified through measurable educational objectives specific for play therapy practice, and facilitates critical reflections on the current knowledge and the new learning;
    - (iv) Presents educational content based upon:
      - i. Empirically-supported, evidenced-based, peer-reviewed, research informed sources, materials, interventions, and practices
      - ii. Strong theoretical foundation

- iii. Legal and ethical standards of professional disciplines
- iv. Best practices in play therapy defined by APT
- c) Require that program content be play therapy specific, e.g. play therapy theory, techniques, applications, and history.
- d) Prefer that “play therapy” be displayed in the program title.
- e) Require that “play therapy” be displayed throughout the program content description.

Example Description:

“This training is designed for the new play therapist in agency, private practice, and school settings who is interested in learning more about play therapy interventions and techniques. We will cover the basic rationale, philosophy, history, and theoretical concepts specific to both directive and nondirective play therapy. Participants will be introduced to the toys and materials needed to set up a play therapy room or assemble a portable play therapy kit and we will explore cultural sensitivity. The application of play therapy to various populations, limit setting and handling the unexpected will also be discussed.”

- f) Require that “play therapy” be predominantly displayed in the majority of the program learning objectives. For single day trainings, any training program that offers more than three CE hours should have one objective for each hour of instruction (with a maximum of 6). Any training program that offers less than three CE hours should have at least three learning objectives. For training programs that offer more than one day of training (8 hours or more), the number of objectives must be appropriate to adequately cover the length and content of the training program. Please contact APT with any questions regarding the number of objectives that are required.

Example Learning Objectives:

“Participants will:

1. Discuss both directive and non-directive play therapy
  2. Identify materials needed to set up a play therapy room or assemble a portable play therapy kit
  3. Explain how to set limits and handle the unexpected in the play therapy room
  4. Apply play therapy interventions with children, families and groups”
- g) Require that the phrase “Enhances multicultural competency” be displayed, only when applicable, in the program content description and/or learning objectives.

3. Utilize program presenters who:
  - a) Required: Have earned a Master's or higher mental health degree
  - b) Required: Are knowledgeable about play therapy and familiar with the APT-endorsed [Play Therapy Best Practices \(www.a4pt.org\)](http://www.a4pt.org)
  - c) Required: Adhere to a Code of Ethics promulgated by the American Psychological Association, American Counseling Association, National Association of Social Workers, or the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists and immediately identify by which Code any one or more programs have been or will be conducted upon request. If an Approved Provider will use an unlicensed presenter, the unlicensed presenter must certify to the Approved Provider which of the foregoing Code of Ethics will be adhered to by the unlicensed presenter and such certification will be provided to APT upon request.
  - d) Preferred: Demonstrate multicultural competency when applicable.
  - e) Preferred: Have earned and maintain active Registered Play Therapist (RPT) or Supervisor (RPT-S) credentials.