



# blueskies-playtherapy

Strengthening relationships through direct work & training to empower children, families & profession

## What is Filial (Family) Therapy?



Filial Therapy is a well established family approach that emphasizes the parent/child relationship as a means to help with child and/or family difficulties. The therapist and the parent(s) work together to become true partners in strengthening family relationships through play. Play is a child's natural way of

learning about their world, expressing themselves and understanding how things work. By watching children play we can often learn more about their thoughts, feelings and struggles than by talking with them.

The therapist uses play sessions to make the parents more aware of their child's thoughts and feelings. In most types of Play Therapy the therapist conducts the play sessions with the child. In Filial, the parents conduct the play sessions with guidance from the therapist. As the sessions evolve the therapist helps the parents to apply what they have learned about their child to everyday parenting situations.

## Who is Filial Therapy for?

Filial is best suited to families with children aged between 3 and 12 years old. In two parent families, both parents are encouraged to take part in the training so they can both carry out play sessions at home with their children. When both parents are working in similar ways it helps the process work more quickly and smoothly.

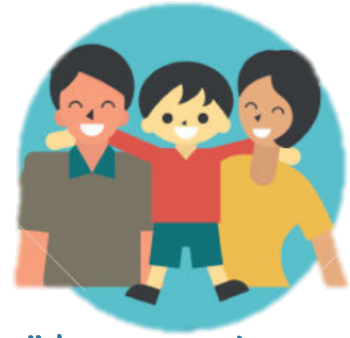


## What happens in Filial Therapy?



First, the therapist spends time with the parent(s)/carer(s) to talk about their reasons for seeking support and identify some of the things they want to achieve from the forthcoming session. The importance of confidentiality is discussed together with an explanation of what will happen in the coming weeks and, of course, an opportunity to ask questions.

Next, the therapist observes the family at play and how they interact with each other. This is followed by discussions with the adult(s) as to how typical the interactions were and if they are similar to those at home or in other settings. The therapist will then work in partnership with the parents to train them in certain play skills used in Play Therapy. These skills will be practiced in several 'mock play sessions' without the child present.



Play sessions between the parent and child begin when the parents are ready (usually after 3 or 4 mock sessions). Initially these take place in the presence of the therapist who observes and supports the family by giving feedback to the parent directly after the play



sessions. The play sessions are transferred to the home when the parents are confident enough to do so, and these are followed by further discussion and feedback with the therapist. There is an agreed phasing out of the sessions as progress is made.

Most parents find the Filial experience a rewarding one. Children enjoy the opportunity to play and share with their parents, and parents often report their lives are richer and more fun because they once again see the world "through a child's eyes."

Filial Therapy is enjoyable and is able to make a positive change to family life. If you are interested in Filial Therapy or any other services I offer please get in touch.



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This leaflet is to help you understand more about Filial (Family) Therapy - if you need any more information please contact me: [jennifer@blueskies-playtherapy.co.uk](mailto:jennifer@blueskies-playtherapy.co.uk)