



# Learn to Play Therapy – Part 1: Introduction

2 Day Workshop 28 - 29 October 2021

Karen Stagnitti + Siobhan Casey

Thur 28 - Fri 29 October 2021

9:00am - 4:30pm

Online Workshop

Presented via Zoom

## ABOUT

Learn to Play Therapy aims to develop the capacity in children to spontaneously self-initiate their own pretend play. Being able to play is essential to children because through play children learn about themselves and their world. Pretend play is complex play and research evidence has shown that children who develop more complex levels of pretend play increase in their abilities in social competence, narrative language, language, self-regulation, creativity, and problem solving. Not all children develop complex levels of pretend play. Reasons for this can be the child's diagnosis (for example, children on the autism spectrum have difficulty developing spontaneous pretend play), the child's environment, or no obvious reason. Learn to Play Therapy is an evidence-based therapy for developing more complex levels of spontaneous pretend play in a child.

The online training has 3 components:

1. Pre-workshop activities that include pre-recordings of powerpoint presentations, relevant readings and TED talks.
2. Two LIVE sessions
3. On the morning of the LIVE sessions, open sessions are scheduled for participants to ask questions re the pre-workshop activities and case studies.

### Day 1: LIVE session and open session

- Pretend play and links to language, narrative, social skills, self-regulation and self-esteem Play and the brain (pre-workshop activities)
- The development of pretend play (LIVE session)
- Assessment of pretend play using the Pretend Play Enjoyment Developmental Checklist (LIVE session)

### Day 2: LIVE session and open session

- Identifying children who would benefit from Learn to Play Therapy
- The process and principles of Learn to Play Therapy
- How to build play ability in children who find playing difficult
- 11 key play skills

The first LIVE session of this 2 day-equivalent workshop provides participants with knowledge on the development of pretend play from 12 months to 5 years and how to use this knowledge as an assessment of a child's play ability using the Pretend Play Enjoyment Developmental Checklist. The pre-workshop activities include powerpoint recordings on the links between pretend play, theory of mind, narrative language and self-regulation and self-esteem are also discussed.

On the second LIVE session of this 2 day-equivalent workshop focusses on the Learn to Play Therapy approach and participants are taken through the principles and process of this therapy, which includes 11 key play skills that are an essential part of a child's ability to play. Also in this workshop are guidelines on how to identify children who would benefit from Learn to Play Therapy.

The workshop uses a mixture of information giving, case studies, video analysis and practice of the key skills involved in the process of Learn to Play Therapy. The practice is through break out rooms on Zoom, where the presenter and co-host move from 'room' to 'room'. This workshop would be valuable to therapists, social workers, psychologists and early intervention workers who work with families with children under 8 years of age who have a developmental delay.



#### **PRESENTER'S PROFILE - EM PROF KAREN STAGNITTI**

Karen Stagnitti is Emeritus Professor in the School of Health and Social Development at Deakin University, Victoria, Australia. She is retired from full time teaching and research but continues to run workshops and write. She graduated with a Bachelor degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Queensland. For over 40 years she has mainly worked in early childhood intervention programs in community-based settings as part of a specialist paediatric multidisciplinary team. In 2003 she graduated from LaTrobe University with a Doctor of Philosophy. Her area of research is children's play. Karen has over 125 publications, including journal articles, book chapters, and books. She has developed several play assessments including: Child-Initiated Pretend Play Assessment 2, the Pretend Play Enjoyment Developmental Checklist and the Animated Movie Test. From this research, Learn to Play Therapy was developed. Throughout the year, she is invited to present her work on the play ability of children nationally and internationally.

#### **PRESENTER'S PROFILE - DR SIOBHAN CASEY**

Dr Siobhan Casey is a paediatric occupational therapist with experience in working with children, their families and teachers in a variety of settings. In 2018, Siobhan was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy from Deakin University. Her research primarily focused on understanding the developmental processes that occur for self-regulation and pretend play capacities in supporting resilience in children. Her prior research included identifying important markers and processes for change, for children with Autism participating in the Learn to Play program. Siobhan has previously worked in early intervention community settings, private practice and specialist development schools. She is currently working within a mainstream school setting, supporting the implementation of pretend play within the curriculum. Siobhan continues to research the impact of pretend play development on global developmental functioning and has further interests in researching the role of pretend play development in supporting positive health and wellbeing across the lifespan.

#### **COST**

\$695 (GST incl.)

Registration now open.

Please register online at [www.learntoplayevents.com/events](http://www.learntoplayevents.com/events)