

Let's Get Creative: 25 Brief, Interactive Strategies to Engage Children & Adolescents in Therapeutic Settings

Program Description

Research has demonstrated that one of the most important aspects of effective therapeutic work is engaging a client and building positive rapport and trust in the therapeutic relationship. In establishing and maintaining a positive relationship with children and adolescents, clinicians must find creative and innovative ways to make therapeutic work engaging and interactive. It is through this interactivity that children and adolescents are often most comfortable in expressing their thoughts and feelings in a way that feels natural and affirming for them.

In this presentation, we will explore 25 brief strategies and techniques that can be used in a variety of therapeutic settings to engage children and adolescents and address some common sources of distress such as anxiety, stress, and emotional dysregulation. The presentation itself will be interactive, and participants will be encouraged to engage in the activities and consider how these may be translated to their practice settings. The goal of this presentation is to broaden the therapeutic toolbox for practitioners and encourage thought and discussion on strategies that may be engaging and effective in supporting child and adolescent well-being.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this workshop, participants should be able to

- Explore overall framework for using interactive techniques with children and adolescents in therapeutic settings.
- Describe 10 interactive strategies to aid in engagement and assessment work with children and adolescents.
- Explain 15 interactive activities to target anxiety and emotional dysregulation in children and adolescents.
- Review multiple resources for clinicians to use in practice with children and adolescents in therapeutic settings.

Target Audience

This workshop will benefit mental health practitioners, educators, human service professionals, and community advocates interested in this topic.

Contact Hours

2.0 Contact Hours

Program Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions, and Initial Reflection Activity (15 minutes)
- Frameworks: Working with Children and Adolescents in Our Current Times (10 minutes)

- Engagement & Assessment Activities (30 minutes)
- BREAK (15 minutes)
- Addressing Stress & Anxiety (25 minutes)
- Addressing Emotional Dysregulation (25 minutes)
- Exploring Resources for Further Learning (15 minutes)

Faculty

Amy Levine, MSW, LCSW, is a Clinical Assistant Professor at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work, where she teaches courses in child welfare and mental health and serves as a faculty member in the field education program. Amy has a practice background in both public and private child welfare services as well as mental health and worked for 12 years as a child, adolescent, and family therapist. Amy is also a North Carolina Certified Clinical Supervisor, providing supervision and consultation to LCSW-A's in North Carolina. Amy's practice and research interests include trauma-informed models of care, child and adolescent mental health, and the intersection of child welfare and behavioral health services. Amy enjoys providing training on a variety of practice topics and appreciates learning from and further supporting the important work carried out by our human service professionals.