

Play Therapy for Children and Families Coping with Loss

Description

When children and adolescents enter therapy due to a significant loss, they are at a very vulnerable time in their lives. They are often anxious about the therapeutic process and reluctant or unable to talk directly about painful feelings. Therapy that is engaging and play-based can facilitate their expression of grief and loss. This two-day training will combine up-to-date theory with innovative play therapy techniques. A theoretical overview will provide a context for the assessment and treatment interventions. Creative interventions will be outlined to equip therapists to assess and treat various forms of childhood loss such as bereavement, divorce, and placement in out-of-home care. A combination of lecture, experiential exercises, and activities will provide participants with an enriching training experience. Workshop participants will come away with a better understanding of grief theory, and many new and innovative play therapy techniques.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Articulate how one's personal experience of loss can impact the clinical work.
2. Define grief, traumatic grief, and disenfranchised grief.
3. Identify the impact of loss at different developmental stages.
4. Identify common risk factors associated with children coping with bereavement and divorce.
5. Describe the key guidelines for explaining death to a child.
6. Articulate the continuum of parent-child relationships after separation and divorce.
7. Describe the three types of parental alienators.
8. Describe strategies to maintain neutrality when working with high-conflict divorce cases.
9. Identify the key areas to assess when working with a bereaved child in play therapy.
10. Describe the unique treatment issues of children coping with suicide and homicide death.
11. Apply a variety of innovative treatment activities in play therapy sessions with children and families coping with loss.
12. Implement play therapy techniques for strengthening open communication in the family regarding the loss.