



Creative Ways to Adapt Traditional Board Games for Play Therapy

Presented by Pam Dyson, MA, LPC-S, RPT-S
Texas School Counselor Conference
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12:30pm – 2:00pm



Learning Objectives


- Understand the rationale for using traditional board games in play therapy
- Learn how to adapt traditional board games to have therapeutic value
- Identify how play therapy games can be applied to various populations



Use of Techniques

- Theory is important but theory without techniques is basically philosophy.
- Techniques are valuable but without theory are reckless, and could be damaging.

(Sweeney, Baggerly, Ray, 2014)



Use of Techniques

Ask Yourself Three Questions:

- Is the technique developmentally appropriate?
- Does the technique have a theoretical basis?
- Does the use of this technique have specific therapeutic intent?

(Sweeney, Baggerly Ray, 2014)



Why Use Traditional Board Games?

- Inexpensive
- Easy to adapt
- One game can be used multiple ways
- Can use them with different populations



Types of Games

- Engagement
- Assessment
- Emotional Expression
- Coping Skills Development



How to Adapt Traditional Board Games

- Create a color code
- Write up question/situation cards
- Alter the board/pieces
- Add elements from other games



Supplies





Pick Up Sticks



(McDowell, 2002)



Ants in the Pants




(Hutchison, 2011)




Candy Land




(Yorke, 2011)




Break the Ice



(Kenney-Noziska, 2008)



Break the Ice



BLUE - Something I like
RED - Something I don't like
GREEN - Something about me or my family
YELLOW - Ask a question of another player

(Kenney-Noziska, 2008)



Trouble



(Lowenstein, 1999)



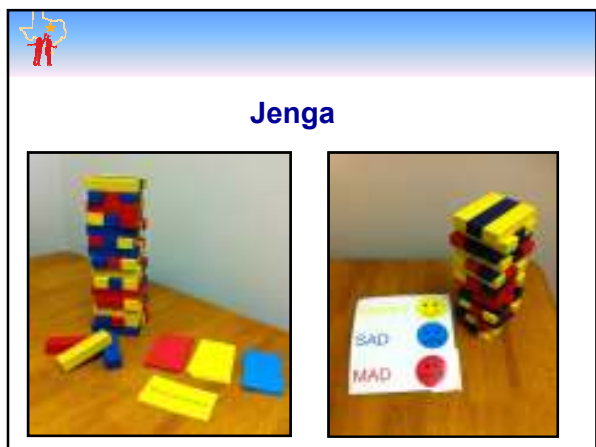
Kerplunk



(Lowenstein, 2002)



Jenga



Jenga



Checkers

(Yorke, 2011)



Connect Four



(Dodge, 2008)



Tips for Effective Therapeutic Game Play

- Resist the urge to win
- Resist the urge to let the child win
- Stay alert for opportunities to interpret and teach
- Role play new skills
- Engage in therapeutic conversation

(Yorke, 2011)



Pam Dyson, MA, LPC-S, RPT-S
Practical Solutions to Child Behavior Problems

3900 Pebble Creek Ct., Suite 102
Plano, TX 75023

pam@pamdysn.com
469-209-1590




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3900 Pebble Creek Ct., Suite 102
Plano, TX 75023
Phone: 469-209-1590
pam@dfwplaytherapy.com
www.dfwplaytherapy.com


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Suggested Readings

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