



AAPT NEWSLETTER



Helping Your Child Succeed in School

by Rod Marshall, Ed. S., LPC-S, NCC, RPT-S, BCPC

Transitions can be difficult for families. Even the healthiest families may experience stress and anxiety during times of change. This can be especially true for families when children face changes at school. If your child is beginning school or changing schools there are several things you can do to help smooth the transition out for your child and to protect your family from unneeded stress. Here are some ideas:

- Children thrive in environments of predictable structure. If you have gotten relaxed about bedtime or regular meal-times, try to reinforce those helpful

practices a few weeks (or even months) prior to the child starting back to school. In the same way, if your child has been allowed to sleep late, a few weeks prior to the beginning of school it might be helpful to wake them at or close to the actual time they will need to be awakened. Remember that all children (even teenagers) need more sleep than most adults. Try for nine or ten hours of sleep per night.

- Healthy families benefit from flexible consistency. Too much flexibility is not good for children, they don't feel safe. Too little flexibility becomes rigidity and children don't

feel understood. Be consistent and predictable, but be flexible.

- Manage your own anxiety. Most children will reflect the mood of their parents. Role model a quiet confidence and excitedness about school and your child is likely to exhibit those same desirable attributes.

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Check out what's new at AlabamaPlayTherapy.org

Alabama Association For Play Therapy (AAPT)

Summer 2008

Special Points of Interest

☺ Check out AAPT's NEW website. www.AlabamaPlayTherapy.org

☺ Mark your calendars for January 30th 2009. Sueann Kenney-Noziska: Techniques-Techniques-Techniques

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Message from the President

Kim Brindley, LPC-S, RPT-S

Greetings to all and I hope you are finding ways to cool off from the heat. For those of you who joined us recently at our Spring Conference to learn from Liana Lowenstein, we hope the information and techniques she presented have been refreshing and

helpful to you and families you work with. The Family Gift assessment/technique presented seemed to nurture hope and connection during times of grief. As Liana related, this and other techniques can be used with other therapeutic issues. I

thought this technique would even be helpful in strengthening families in general and also could be used with "work families" in developing work relations. What was your favorite technique she presented? Share this with

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To plant a garden is to believe in the future.

Winter Conference 2009

Come join us for the Winter 2009 Conference entitled Techniques-Techniques-Techniques: Play-Based Activities for Children, Adolescents, & Families Interventions presented by Sueann Kenny-Noziska, MSW, LI SW, PPT-S. Sueann is a Licensed Independent Social Worker and registered Play Therapist specializing in using play therapy in clinical practice with children, adolescents and their families. As part of her clinical work she provides outpatient services to children and adolescents who have experienced abuse and trauma. Sueann is an author guest lecturer and an internationally recognized speaker on the topic of Play Ther-

apy Participants will come away with a better understanding of a variety of techniques that can be used, and methods of application. Our presenter is an author, sought-after speaker, and practitioner with a reputation for providing practical and clinically useful play therapy interventions. She has a reputation as a dynamic workshop leader and has presented trainings across North America and abroad. She is president of Play Therapy Corner, Incorporated an organization dedicated to supporting and facilitating professional development for counseling and mental health professionals who use play therapy in their clinical practice. She serves on the Ex-

ecutive Board of Directors for the California Association for Play Therapy. Check out her website at www.playtherapycorner.com.

The workshop will be at the Cahaba Grand Conference Center in Birmingham. (located off 280 approximately 1.5 miles from The Summit shopping experience)

**"It is a happy talent to know how to play."
Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Useful Books For Sex Education by Rebecca Jacobson, Ph.D, LPC

Sex is never an easy topic to handle, but is often one that has to be addressed by Counselors. Approaching the topic of sex education with the parents of clients is often difficult at best. I have found a set of books that has proven useful in many situations and helped parents address the topic with their children. The series is available through many booksellers and is reasonably priced. The first book is designed for children ages 3 -5 and is written by Carol Greene. "*Why Boys and girls are Different*" is designed with age appropriate pictures and provides the

reader with the basic differences between males and females. The second in the series "*Where do Babies Come from?*" By Ruth Hummel is written for children ages 6 to 8. This book also has cartoon based picture that accurately provide reproductive information. The book for children 8 to 11 is titled "*How you are changing*" and was written by Jane Graver. This book begins to address the issues associated with puberty. Again the pictures provided are drawn and are age appropriate. Richard Bimler wrote the next book in the series entitled "*Sex and the New You*"

designed for children ages 11 to 14. This book not only addresses the physical aspect of sexuality but also includes social issues that abound regarding the topic of sex, such as masturbation, birth-control and STD's. The book for children ages 14 to young adult was written by Bill Ameiss and Jane Graver

"Sex" is never an easy topic but one that often has to be addressed by counselors.

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Keep In Touch By Staying Connected To The NEW AAPT Website

The new website is a huge success and we appreciate the participation we are seeing as people visit the site and explore the useful information like the links section and how to find RPT-S's in your area through the member directory.

We want to remind you about our blog called News From The Playground which



Stay connected to AAPT by checking out the website.

you must sign up for through the email list. We also need you to sign up for the snail mail list IN ADDITION to the email list. Brochures will continue to be mailed snail mail style. AAPT is working toward using ONLY our mailing list so you must be sure you are a part of that list to continue to receive all future mailouts.

Sometimes there is a concern that your email address will be misused or we will flood your inbox with mail, but this is not the case. Please check out the Privacy Policy located on the website for more information. Also, tell your friends to sign up. We'd love for you to encourage colleagues to join AAPT but anyone can sign up for the blog and snail mail so spread the word.

Summer Conference Reflections

The Spring 2008 workshop entitled Creative Play Therapy Interventions for Bereaved Children and Children of Divorce featuring Liana Lowenstein, MSW, RSW, CPT-S was a big success. Over a hundred people attended the workshop held at the Cahaba Grand Conference Center in Birmingham.

This workshop offered a step-by-step demonstration of creative interventions for use in individual, group and family play therapy. Our presenter offered specials on her publications including her newest books released in 2006. Great door prizes were given away that included therapy books, puppets and free Winter conference regis-

tration.

The facility was beautiful and provided comfortable seating and refreshments. If you haven't been to a conference yet please come and join us in January. It is a great opportunity to meet some new colleagues and get new ideas.

If you were not able to attend but would like to know more about Liana check out her website at www.lianalowenstein.com.



Many activities/techniques were presented at the Spring Workshop. Here is one example of an activity. Our conference participants really got involved in the fun! Don't miss out next time.

Focus on Members

Beverly Terry is an active member of AAPT. She works at the Russell County Child Advocacy Center in Phenix City, Alabama. She works primarily with children who have been sexually abused and uses both directive and non-directive methods of play therapy. She prefers the term "prescriptive play therapist" and uses one of her favorite books *"A Very Touching Book"* (Jan Hindman) to help children learn why secret touching is not okay.

Celeste Neil is also a member of AAPT. She worked for the Vestavia Hills School system for 30 years and served both as a Psychometrist and Counselor. She used Play Therapy to become Nationally Certified School Counselor. She has used play therapy techniques in individual, group and classroom activities. A useful classroom activity is the picture frame activity in which students can make new friends. Celeste currently does seminars at UAB

where she shares her ideas to help other counselors.



We want to know about you. Send us your information.

MOVIE REVIEW: **Martian Child**

This movie came out in 2007 with very little impact at the box office. Recently the movie caught my eye and I rented it. The plot centers around a science fiction writer who ironically writes about Mars and a little boy he adopts. John Cusack plays the writer David Gerrold and the story touches on the fact that he and his wife were going to adopt before she died unexpectedly.

Dennis is the young boy whose story is not given in great detail. They describe

how he was abandoned and mistreated so many times that in order to cope with the trauma he believes he is from Mars and will one day be taken back "home".

When David and Dennis first meet Dennis is in a box and will not come out. The movie chronicles David's attempt to reach Dennis and how meeting Dennis where he is brings him out of the box and his fantasy life. The movie is enlightening, heartwarm-



ing, sad while humor keeps the mood light. It shows how the boy and the new father grow and learn together. It also has some interesting points for parents and foster parents to help them understand how children cope with trauma and abandonment and how to reach them where they are and bring them forward in a positive way.

Sharon A. McGee, LPC-CS, LMFT, RPT

Continued Articles from pages 1 and 2

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(us?) a colleague so that it stays fresh with you. Thank you to all of you who attended this conference. It was a pleasure being with familiar colleagues and meeting new professionals to the field. We appreciate all of you who offered play therapy ideas and other information for this and future newsletters. We missed those of you who could not come and hope to see you all again soon! Playfully, Kim

Helping your Child Succeed in School
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- If you are genuinely anxious about your child's transition, discuss that with other adults and look for ways to respond in a healthy way to the things

that are making you anxious.

- If possible, take your child to the school they will be going to for a tour and a walk-through. Let them see the library, computer lab, lunchroom, playground, gymnasium and their classroom. If your child is especially anxious, contact their new teacher and ask if you can bring the child to the school prior to the first day to introduce the child to the teacher. Even new high school students might benefit from being able to "dry run" their schedule prior to the crowded, hectic first day of school.

If your child has a friend who is going to be in the same class as they are, consider carpooling the first few days, so they go into the new building with someone who is familiar to them.

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and titled "*Love, Sex and God.*"

This book includes factual information, health issues related to sex, emotional issues and moral aspects of relationships. The final book titled *How to talk Confidently with your child about Sex.* is designed for parents and written by Lenore Buth. One word of Caution: the books all include a generic Christian perspective that includes "God" and the occasional prayer to "Jesus." These may not be appropriate for all clients but will certainly help with parents/clients who are faith based.

NEXT ISSUE:

If you have a book review that you would like to share,
please email your review to:

r.jacobson@alabamaplaytherapy.org and title your email: AAPT BOOK

For questions or more information about anything in this newsletter please contact Rebecca Jacobson at r.jacobson@alabamaplaytherapy.org

Alabama Association For
Play Therapy (AAPT)
www.AlabamaPlayTherapy.org



Our Mission:

To advance the psychosocial development and mental health of the citizens of Alabama through play and play therapy. We achieve this through the following objectives:

Promoting the understanding and value of play and play therapy.

Encouraging the effective practice of play therapy through training, research, and support.

Recognizing, incorporating and preserving diversity in play therapy.

Developing and maintaining a strong professional organization to accomplish these objectives.