



# What is Interplay Therapy?

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Interplay is a non-directive approach that combines humanistic principles with attachment theory and interpersonal neurobiology (how the mind is shaped by relationship).

In Interplay therapy parents and care givers become central to the child's therapeutic process. Interplay supports children and parents to explore and reorganise experiences that may have contributed to their wellbeing.

By way of interplay, both child and parent can develop self insight and insight into each other. There can be a strengthening of the parent child relationship, and movement towards a calmer and more connected parent child relationship (Play Therapy Australia).

## Why is it important to spend time working on the parent child relationship?

Research consistently confirms that one of the key factors to building resiliency to trauma is a relationship with a caring adult (Jennifer Baggerly, 2005).

Further to this, our sense of ourselves, or our self esteem, is greatly shaped in relationship and in how we perceive ourselves to be experienced in relationship by others.

There are many important reasons to give space to strengthening parent child relationship, and it is worth keeping in mind the protective role that parent child relationship can play in minimising a child's experience of psychological distress and psychopathology into adulthood.

"It is the dance of attachment that creates synchronicity, safety, shared experiences and deep connection, all supporting the development of the brain and nervous system." - Donna Berry

"Interpersonal relationships are the key to maintaining healthy nervous system functioning and wellbeing" - Sian Chambers-Vallance

"Healing happens in relationship" - Donna Berry

Call us today about Interplay Therapy

**0414 480 934**

**Do I bring anything to these sessions or need to complete any tasks between sessions?**

No. Simply attend regularly with your child, weekly or fortnightly. It can be difficult to sit with the uncertainty and the unknown around the Interplay process.

What perhaps is asked of you is that you take a leap of faith in trusting a therapeutic process that is unfamiliar and can even appear

**What do I need to do in the session with my child?**

In session there are no instructions around play and you are very much encouraged to play with your child in the play room as you would play together at home.

**Why are we focusing on play and the relationship rather than my child's problem behaviours?**

"All behaviour is driven by a need for safety or connection" - Sian Chambers-Vallance.

It is the process of spending time in relationship, the time spent (initially) in the unknown, that creates space for learning and understanding of the child's emotional experience and needs.

It is with this increasing understanding that we can together begin to make sense of where the child's needs may not be met and where unmet needs link to behavioural difficulties.

**Why play together? Why don't we just talk with my child in session about how they're feeling and behaving?**

In Play Therapy toys are provided to children to help them express what they have difficulty saying in words.

Play Therapy is based upon the fact that play is the child's natural medium of self-expression. It is an opportunity which is given to the child to 'play out' their feelings and problems, just as in certain types of adult therapy an individual 'talks' out their difficulties (Virginia Axline).

The child, from a developmental perspective, is not able to use words to accurately and thoroughly express their emotional experience.

**Why is Interplay non-directive?**

Children and adults, when given a chance to safely express themselves in a calm non-judgmental therapeutic space and relationship, will naturally lead us into those areas and parts of their lives that are most meaningful to them.

Where the therapist is directive, opportunities can be lost to uncover what is important to the child, what is difficult for the child and what they may be needing to express and work through.

