



# THE HAWAII PLAY TIMES

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE HAWAII ASSOCIATION FOR PLAY THERAPY

March 2007

## **MESSAGE FROM HAPT'S PRESIDENT:**

### **Greetings HAPT Members!**

When it's February on the mainland, folks weary of winter are sooo looking forward to seeing Spring once again. When it's February in Hawai'i, HAPT members begin to grin from ear to ear. February means it's time for HAPT's Annual Conference! (AKA a time to "collect" CEs while meeting and greeting friends new and old alike).

### **Conference 2007**



On February 9-10, HAPT sponsored "Evidence-Based Play Therapy" with Charles E. Schaefer, Ph.D., RPT-S, co-founder of the Association for Play Therapy. Thanks to Dr. Schaefer, we now have a variety of resource and empirical reference materials that can support our treatment decisions.

It takes a tremendous amount of creativity and determination to get a conference up and running. Conference Chairs Gail Silva and Simone Maciejewski took on the challenge. Dozens of HAPT volunteers, family and friends added their talents. Just a few include Cheryl Andaya, Katie Chun, Bonnie Coutsourakis, Wendy DeVault, Nami-Anne Dolan, Cheryl Ho, Michelle Kaya, Scott O'Neal, Teresa Shigemasa, Anita Trubitt and Pat Yuen. Behind the scenes, still more volunteers contributed their time and energy. Our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you. Once again you proved that the best thing about HAPT is our people. No doubt about it!

### **Volunteering = Playing**

We have been hearing rumors that you ... yes you! ... would like to become a HAPT volunteer. Never fear, we'll find a way for you to join the fun. You'll enjoy getting to know others who share your enthusiasm for Play Therapy. Helping hands are always appreciated when it comes to pulling together the conference and workshops. Or you may choose to be on the ground floor of the fund raising committee. Perhaps you would like to give an In-Service on Play Therapy? Several of our members are doing just that. They report a lively interest in Play Therapy. They will gladly share their expertise so that you too can help spread the word.

As we head into Spring, I leave you with this thought: Did you know that "way back when" Aristotle and Plato reflected on the fundamental importance of play in our lives? Tis true!

Aloha,

*Monica Evans, President*

# ***A REVIEW OF HAPT'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE: "Evidence-Based Play Therapy"***

with Dr. Charles E. Schaefer  
February 9-10, 2007  
Ala Moana Hotel  
*Reflection by Rebecca Rinehart, MSCP,  
LMHC, MFT-Intern*



Dr. Charles E. Schaefer presented "Evidence – Based Play Therapy" to an eager crowd of nearly 200. In addition to being a leading child psychologist in the area of "Prescriptive Play Therapy", Dr. Schaefer is the co-founder and Director Emeritus of the Association for Play Therapy. Prescriptive Play Therapy is a form of play therapy that takes into account the child's specific needs and pairs it with play, books, toys and work that are geared for the child's age and diagnosis.



*HAPT had approximately 200 mental health counselors, therapists, and psychologists in attendance at this year's conference.*

Dr. Schaefer presented a vast research list which included a number of resources that can be used to enhance our work. However, he warned, "**Let the research inform our practice, and not dictate it.**" Many conference participants noted that the information given was very helpful in feeling comfortable in utilizing play therapy in their work. One participant stated that the information was "...ammunition for convincing DOE personnel that play therapy is an evidence-based treatment." Something we already know. Another member noted that the presentation was a bit dry with all the facts; however, it was a "good overall validation on the effectiveness of using play therapy."

Many participants used the time to network with other professionals, and found this to be the major benefit of the conference experience. Most visited the number of fantastic vendors who offered a wide range of play therapy enhancing items. When asked, one participant noted that the major benefit gained from this conference was that it "helps me with some stumbling blocks (that) I am having with some of the children I am working with."



## ***FRIENDS OF PLAY THERAPY Upcoming Luncheon***

HAPT will be having another "Friends of Play Therapy" get together on May 5, 2007. The luncheon (\$11) will be following our semi-annual membership meeting and workshop. We will have an area reserved at the Fook Yuen Seafood Restaurant at the Mc. Cully Shopping Center. This will give play therapists and other mental health professionals a chance to network, share resources, and converse about the value of play therapy.

One thing that seems true about Play Therapists is that they are fun and playful people. We hope you'll join us. Please share your ideas with us regarding how we might facilitate more of these informal gatherings for our members. If you have any questions regarding the upcoming luncheon, please contact our Member-at-Large via email at [ewabgirl@yahoo.com](mailto:ewabgirl@yahoo.com)

The Hawaii Play Times  
March 2007



## **“Use of Play Themes and Relationship Patterns to Understand Young Children’s Play”**

Helen E. Benedict, Ph.D., RPT-S

23rd International Association for Play Therapy Conference

October 14, 2006 Toronto, Canada

Review by Monica Evans

Themes are a way to see what the child needs. When one clusters children by experience, their themes tend to cluster in certain ways. Looking at the themes of a child's play can be used for assessment purposes. (1) The themes will tell the issues and themes a child is working on. They illustrate what the child is thinking and concerned about. (2) Themes illustrate how children construe relationships. Are the people in their lives protective and helpful or scary?

Some children cannot really play if they have been massively traumatized. At first their play themes will be “sleep” (Family and Nurturance Theme), “sorting” and “cleaning” (Control and Safety Themes). Sleep and cleaning play are rare. A description of those particular themes follows. (Note that Dr. Benedict has identified 40 themes that can be observed in children’s play).

A) Sleep play: whenever a child goes to sleep or has a character go to sleep.

Possible meanings to child: 1) Child or character is feeling overwhelmed and needs to retreat. 2) Child has concerns about the separation inherent in sleeping. 3) Child was abused at bedtime or in the night and is replaying the abuse.

Dr. Benedict notes that this type of play does not include all sleep play. For example, it does not include a child “going to sleep” and quickly “waking up.”

B) Sorting play: whenever the child lines things up or sorts them into categories such as lining all the good dinosaurs up in one row and all bad ones in another or putting the animals in family groups. This play doesn’t really go anywhere.

Possible meanings to child: 1) The child’s world feels chaotic and the child is trying to establish a sense of order. 2) The child is concerned with sorting out good from bad, either in reference to people in his/her world or in general as part of the moral development appropriate for the child’s age.

C): Cleaning play: The child plays about cleaning something that is dirty or nasty. The child typically plays about cleaning (e.g. washing dishes) or spontaneously cleans up the playroom during the mid-part of a session (i.e., it can include rearranging the playroom either to get it just right or to rectify changes made by other children who used the room).

Possible meanings to child: 1) This may indicate a child who manages anxiety by keeping everything clean and perfect. 2) The child may be fearful of parental disapproval if s/he doesn’t keep everything clean and neat. 3) The child may be trying to “undo” or make OK angry, aggressive, or messy play.

By fostering the relationship between child and play therapist, the child will eventually get beyond this type of play and really play.

If you have an opportunity to sit in on one of Dr. Benedict's workshops, please be in touch. I would love to compare notes with you. I found her presentation fascinating.

\*Please take note regarding the above information about themes: All rights reserved. 2002 Dr. Helen E. Benedict, Dept. of Psychology & Neuroscience, Baylor University, PO Box 97334, Waco, TX 76798 (254) 710-2811. Do not reproduce without written permission. Email: Helen\_Benedict@baylor.edu.

## ***"What Children Can Tell Us Through Their Play"***

A presentation to the FAMILY LAW SECTION of the HAWAII BAR

By Anita Trubitt



I was invited to address the Family Law Section at their monthly meeting on March 14. They specifically asked for PLAY THERAPY as a topic! Some 50 attorneys and 2 judges attended. The challenge was to condense my 3-4 hour presentation into a single hour. The advantage is that in such an abbreviated time, nobody appeared to fall asleep!

We looked at examples of KFD's, the activity with 2 dollhouses, family as animals in the sand and the Family Build A House. With each, I gave a brief summary of the details of the case. In spite of the recent denigration of play therapy by the AFCC, our local legal and judicial community expressed their interest in, and support of this modality in high-conflict cases.

In the presentation, I also referred to a research project of Kyle Pruett and Marsha Kline Pruett (1999) whose purpose it was to garner children's perceptions of their parents' divorce. Rather than focus on parental reports of children's experience, Pruett was interested in the perceptions of the children themselves (ages 6 and younger) so the interviewers used toys and engaged them in semi-structured play activities. "The majority of play sequences grouped themselves into 3

themes: (1) back and forth between houses, (2) lawyer play and courtroom drama, and (3) safety and security at home." As the children's perceptions were shared with their parents, the parents were helped to better understand the children's troubled responses, and to choose to negotiate a parenting plan rather than to litigate.

Descriptions of children's comments are quoted in the article and I couldn't resist reading some of them aloud to this assemblage of attorneys: "Lawyers were sometimes depicted as pirates, vampires or wolves who scared children, and stole from parents. Lawyers take a lot of money from people. Police would come to jail them (in houses made of blocks) and after a reprimand from the judge, they might get their briefcase back."

Finally, I want to remind those members who find yourselves in a case that may end up in family court, I am available either to supervise or consult with you to help you avoid the landmines that are inherent in this arena.

### *Reference:*

Kyle Pruett M.D. and Marsha Kline Pruett, Ph.D. "Only God Decides": Young Children's Perceptions of Divorce and the Legal System." *Journal of American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. 38:12, Dec. 1999, pp. 1544-1550.

# FEATURED PLAY THERAPIST



*Elizabeth "Liz" Kong*  
"My Transformation through Play"

I work at Kahala Elementary School as a School Counselor and have lived in Hawaii since 1990. I received my Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology from Santa Clara University and I am licensed in School Counseling in Hawaii and California. Prior to coming to Hawaii, I worked with various populations in both mental health and vocational rehabilitation counseling settings. In the future I plan to continue to pursue additional training in play therapy and continue to work with children.

My journey into the world of play therapy began when I attended my first HAPT conference by Garry Landreth, "Making Contact with Children through Play Therapy" in February 2002. Unbeknownst to me, I had no idea that the speaker was the premier spokesperson on the subject so I attended and listened intently, however, I did not grasp how significant play therapy really was during that brief encounter at the conference. So I went home and looked on my bookshelf and had one book on the subject, "Therapies for Children" by Charles Shaefer written in 1977. I said to myself, "I sure don't know much about this at all" and put it on the back burner and returned the book to the shelf as my life went on.

In 2003, Kahala Elementary School began the Primary School Adjustment Project (PSAP) based on child led play. As I began to build our PSAP program, I became more inclined toward the idea of play and incorporating it into my sessions (as worksheets just weren't cutting it) as the school counselor.

One thing I remember that Garry Landreth said was, "You can't give away that which you do not possess" so I said to myself, "I better get with it and check it out." Therefore, I attended my next conference in 2004 by Heidi Kaduson on "Cognitive Behavioral Play therapy."

It was then that it began to click with me since I am more of an analytical type person. So during the 2004-05 school year, I began to collect donated toys, items from parents, and utilized school monies to transform my office (which had 11 file cabinets in it) into a "playroom". By then, it was the end of the school year so I decided to take a course by Carla Sharp to get my feet wet during the summer. By the end of the summer, I was hooked! So I began to intentionally soak up all I could about play therapy and topped it all off by going to the Play Therapy Center at University of North Texas in Denton this year for one week! In the meantime I crammed in every hour I could seeing children at school to begin counting hours towards the RPT application process. So after about 5 years, I am finally able to say that I am just beginning! *The world of Play Therapy is as vast as the ocean and exhilarating as a roller coaster ride.* It is a trip that has changed my life and most of all the children who are my greatest inspiration. As one child put it to me "it is the miracle hour."

*Liz is in the final stage of receiving her Registered Play Therapist (RPT) credential through APT. Congratulations, Liz!*

# SPREADING THE WORD OF PLAY THERAPY



HAPT members **Dr. Simone Maciejewski, Psy.D.** and **Dr. Gail Silva, Psy.D.** provided (3) 2-hour workshops for approximately 90 Argosy University of Honolulu students on February 2 & 3, and March 9, 2007. The students were from three of Argosy's programs: Psy.D., MFT, and Master's in School Psychology. The workshops were an informative and experiential introduction to play therapy and emphasized the importance of providing developmentally appropriate assessment and treatment techniques to children and their families.

The students participated in small group exercises that included creating stories using puppets, clay animals, dramatic play props, and floor play. They also created family genograms using miniature toys, and built a house using wooden blocks and various toys. The students were provided research articles on the effectiveness of play therapy, as well as information about APT, HAPT events, and local trainings by Carla Sharp. Dr. Silva can be contacted at 561-0667 if other groups are interested in the introductory workshop.

## PREVIEW OF THE MAY 2007

### HAPT WORKSHOP

By Michelle Kaya, Program Co-Chair

Are you working with a child who is experiencing a loss? Or anticipate that you will be working with this special population and want to know more about play therapy interventions that can help a child through the grieving process? HAPT is eager about our *May 5, 2007* (Saturday) workshop presenter, **Vikki Catellacci, MA, LMFT**. She will be presenting on "**Play Therapy and Childhood Bereavement**."

Vikki is an Art, Play, and Sandplay Therapist working out in Hilo. She has been in private practice for the past 28 years, and also works for other agencies/organizations. She has a wealth of knowledge and experience that she will be sharing. In addition to theories, she will provide interventions that she has found successful with this population. We look forward to seeing you there!

## YAHOO DISCUSSION GROUP

### Reminder: HAPT Discussion Group through Yahoo Groups!

Recently all current HAPT members were sent an email invitation to join the new HAPT Discussion Group. Some of you have already replied to the email and joined the Group, so our Group is up and running! The HAPT Group operates somewhat like an email listserve - emails sent to the group address are automatically forwarded on to all group members. In this way, HAPT members will be able to share all sorts of valuable information with each other including resources and offers that support our common goal to promote play therapy and mental health services to children, teens, and adults! If you have any questions regarding joining the HAPT Group, how to respond to the email invitation you received, or any other questions related to the Group, just send an email to [webhead@hawaiiplaytherapy.net](mailto:webhead@hawaiiplaytherapy.net). And remember, the Group email address is: [HawaiiAPT@yahoogroups.com](mailto:HawaiiAPT@yahoogroups.com)!

# UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

## **"PLAY THERAPY AND CHILDHOOD BEREAVEMENT"**

with Vikki Catellacci, MA, LMFT

May 5, 2007 (Saturday) from 9:30am-12:45pm at Tokai University

Earn 3.0 CE credits of play therapy training

Please visit our website at [www.hawaiiplaytherapy.net](http://www.hawaiiplaytherapy.net) for more information and to register!

\*Free for HAPT members/ \$40 for non-members

## **"PLAY THERAPY WITH SPECIAL POPULATIONS:**

***Using Play Therapy with the Bereaved, Traumatized and Sexually Abused Child"***

with Carla Sharp, APRN, RPT-S

From Saturdays April 21 to June 16 (no class 5/5/07)

Visit [www.carlsharp.com](http://www.carlsharp.com) for more information.

## **"PLAY THERAPY AND PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION THERAPY"**

with Kathryn Chun, PhD & Steven Choy, PhD

September 15, 2007 (Saturday) from 9:30am-12:45pm at Tokai University

Earn 3.0 CE credits of play therapy training

\*Free for HAPT members/ \$40 for non-members



## **LOOKING FOR PLAY THERAPY SUPERVISION?**



Members who are interested in receiving their credentials in play therapy (i.e., Registered Play Therapist), and/or those seeking counsel regarding those sometimes sticky complex cases, here's your opportunity! Below is an updated list of your friendly neighborhood **Registered Play Therapist Supervisors** who are extending their offers:

- ✚ **Rachelle Hansen LCSW, Psy.D, RPT-S** - Private Practice, Counseling Center in Wahiawa, Oahu. Contact number is 621-1820. Expertise is in foster children and their issues within the family and community system.
  
- ✚ **Carla Sharp, APRN, RPT-S, STA/ISST** offers individual supervision by appointment and has held group supervision once a month for 13 years. Currently, group supervision is open to anyone and meets on the first Saturday of each month from 9am to 12pm at her office at 315 Uluniu Street, Kailua, #207. Attendees bring play therapy material and/or videos of their session for support and feedback. She has also created a Play Therapy Training Package which allows one to purchase 100 hours of training and 35 hours of supervision at a discounted rate. You can email her for more information at [carla@carlsharp.com](mailto:carla@carlsharp.com).
  
- ✚ **Teresa Shigemasa LMHC, RPT-S** - Behavioral Health Specialist at Sunset Beach Elementary School on the North Shore. Please contact through email: [tshigema21@yahoo.com](mailto:tshigema21@yahoo.com) Expertise is in the use of Play Therapy to address a host of

diagnostic issues within the educational model. Willing to travel to a more central location for interested members.

- ✦ **Margaret Bubon Smith, MA, MFT, RPT-S** - Currently the Director of Healthy Start at Child and Family Service on Kauai. Experience with foster care, child abuse, and preschool age children. She can be contacted at [mgtbubon@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:mgtbubon@hawaiiantel.net) or via phone: 1-(808) 332-5200.
- ✦ **Anita Trubitt, LCSW, RPT-S** - Private Practice with specialty in divorce/paternity cases where custody and visitation are issues. Supervision or consultation available. Contact through email: [trubitt@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:trubitt@hawaii.rr.com) or by phone: 261-2524.
- ✦ **Laura Williams LCSW, RPT-S** - Works for CFS in Waimea on the Big Island of Hawaii. Contact: 808-895-0989. Expertise is in attachment and children with autism.

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### *Want To Be a Board Member?*

The Nomination Committee is actively seeking volunteers who are dedicated, hardworking, and playful to run for office for the 2006-2007 *Board of Directors* for HAPT. The term will start September 2007 and end September 2008 (with the exception of the President's position which is a 3 year commitment). If you are interested or want to recommend someone, please contact Pat Yuen at [patriciakayeyuen@aol.com](mailto:patriciakayeyuen@aol.com) or Michelle Kaya at [ewabgirl@yahoo.com](mailto:ewabgirl@yahoo.com)

### **Do you like Fundraising?**

HAPT is looking for members to be on the Fundraising Committee. If you're interested, please contact Teresa Shigemasa at: [President-elect@hawaiiplaytherapy.net](mailto:President-elect@hawaiiplaytherapy.net)

### ***Supporting Our Neighbor Island Members...***

HAPT is searching for Oahu members who are willing and able to pick up our neighbor island HAPT members at the airport on workshop/conference days.

Please contact Michelle Kaya at [ewabgirl@yahoo.com](mailto:ewabgirl@yahoo.com)

### **Office Space for Rent:**

Beautiful office (12' X 13') to sublet full-time with two great officemates. Move-in-ready near the Ala Moana Shopping Center. Spacious waiting room. Approximately \$750 per month. Long-term lease may be possible. If interested, call Michele Oya Tremayne, Psy.D. @ 533-1234.



### ***NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOMED:***

As always, we welcome contributions to the newsletter: review of play therapy literature; tips or techniques you have found helpful; resources; letters to the editor, etc. Please contact the Member-at-Large at [Ewabgirl@yahoo.com](mailto:Ewabgirl@yahoo.com) . Photos were donated by our very own Lyn Lee. I'd like to THANK Lyn for taking great actions shots at our February conference.

### ***REMINDERS:***

If you received this edition of the newsletter by regular mail and prefer to receive it by email, please send your name and email address to [Ewabgirl@yahoo.com](mailto:Ewabgirl@yahoo.com) . To ensure that you receive all HAPT news in a timely manner, please inform us of any name or address changes. Mahalo! ☺

To those of you who received this newsletter via email and do not wish to receive future email from HAPT, please type "Remove Me" in the subject line and return the email.

### **CONTACTING HAPT:**

Please visit us on our website at [www.hawaiiplaytherapy.net](http://www.hawaiiplaytherapy.net). We can also be reached by writing to P.O. Box 176, Pearl City, HI 96782, or emailing members of the HAPT Board of Directors.

### **HAPT 2006-2007 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



(Left to Right: Bonnie, Teresa, Wendy, Nami Ann, Michelle, and Monica)

Monica Evans, President, ([president@hawaiiplaytherapy.net](mailto:president@hawaiiplaytherapy.net))

Teresa Shigemasa, President-Elect, ([president-elect@hawaiiplaytherapy.net](mailto:president-elect@hawaiiplaytherapy.net))

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