

# How May My Family Be Involved in Play Therapy?

Families play an important role in children's healing processes. The interaction between children's problems and their families is always complex. Sometimes children develop problems as a way of signaling that there is something wrong in the family. Other times the entire family becomes distressed because the child's problems are so disruptive. In all cases, children and families heal faster when they work together.

The play therapist will make some decisions about how and when to involve some or all members of the family in the play therapy. At a minimum, the therapist will want to communicate regularly with the child's caretakers to develop a plan for resolving problems as they are identified and to monitor the progress of the treatment. Other options might include involving a) the parents or caretakers directly in the treatment in what is called filial play therapy and b) the whole family in family play therapy. Whatever the level the family members choose to be involved, they are an essential part of the child's healing.

