



## The British Association of Play Therapists

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### *Core Competencies of a Play Therapist – A Summary*

## **COMPETENT PRACTICE**

The effective deployment of skills and knowledge in Play Therapy are of the up-most importance to clients, families, the public and the profession. Play Therapists must ensure that their practice is based on clear and coherent competence. The core competencies of Play Therapists are defined as a set of professional and personal qualities that are a pre-requisite of good practice. A Play Therapist's core competencies are:

### **Professional Qualities**

#### **Assess Need**

To assess the emotional, psychological and social needs of clients

#### **Plan and Contract Play Therapy**

To clearly formulate meaningful and appropriate therapeutic contracts, including therapeutic aims, goals, boundaries and rules.

#### **Intervene and Provide**

To intervene and provide Play Therapy to achieve therapeutic change

#### **Initiate and plan ending**

To provide planned and coherent opportunities to enable work to end with clients in a therapeutic manner

#### **Ability to utilise agents of change**

To implement and use agents of change to effect therapeutic change and meet defined aims and goals.

#### **Maintain rules and boundaries**

To maintain clear professional, personal and therapeutic boundaries

#### **Maintain and uphold Confidentiality and Privacy**

To maintain the confidentiality and privacy required by clients and significant others; meeting both legal and ethical standards and therapeutic aims and goals.

#### **Work effectively with different client groups**

To be able to practise effective Play Therapy with diverse client groups

#### **Communication**

To communicate effectively, through non-verbal and verbal expression

**Facilitate Communication**

To facilitate verbal and non-verbal communication with clients and significant others

**Listen**

To listen actively to the verbal and non-verbal communications of clients and significant others

**Engage and facilitate therapeutic relationship**

To engage and facilitate the therapeutic relationships with clients and significant others

**Utilise Supervision**

To utilise supervision in an appropriate and effective manner

**Utilise personal therapy and support**

To utilise personal therapy and support in an appropriate and effective manner

**Work effectively in different settings**

To contribute effectively to the work of organisations

**Specific Knowledge and Understanding**

To have clear and coherent understanding and knowledge of Play Therapy, childhood development, child protection, child mental health and other relevant areas

**Knowledge and understanding of therapeutic change and agents of change**

To have understanding and knowledge of agents of change and change process within the Play Therapy process

**Knowledge and understanding of other therapeutic modalities**

To have understanding and knowledge of other therapeutic modalities

**Knowledge and understanding of laws relating to Play Therapy**

To uphold and maintain legal standards for working with clients and significant others in Play Therapy

**Knowledge and understanding of Ethical practice relating to Play Therapy**

To uphold and maintain ethical standards for working with clients and significant others in Play Therapy

**Personal Qualities****Humility**

To assess, review and consider own competencies, strengths and weaknesses as a Play Therapist

**Self Responsibility**

To operate and practise efficiently within own level of competencies

**Empathy**

To empathise with the emotional and psychological expressions, experiences and needs of clients and significant others

**Sincerity**

A commitment to being honest and genuine to self and others

**Integrity**

Acting in a whole and sound manner towards self and others

**Respect**

Acknowledging and showing esteem to people's understanding, experiences and abilities

**Courage**

The ability to disregard fear and act upon own convictions and beliefs

**Wisdom**

The ability to apply knowledge and experience critically

**Compassion**

To be sympathetic, caring and concerned towards others

**In-depth Personal Reflection**

To reflect upon the emotional, social and psychological world of clients, significant others and the Self

**Develop Professionally**

To continue professional development in a responsible and effective manner

**Develop Personally**

To continue personal development in a responsible and effective manner