

"THE GREAT OUTDOORS"



INFORMATION PACK

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Pack Contributors:

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With special thanks for contributions from Alison Chown re-

With special thanks for contributions from Alison Chown re: Outdoor Play Therapy and Mental Health.

Please note, no clients are in any photos. Photos come from a free photo platform available to the public or from Therapist's own private collections.

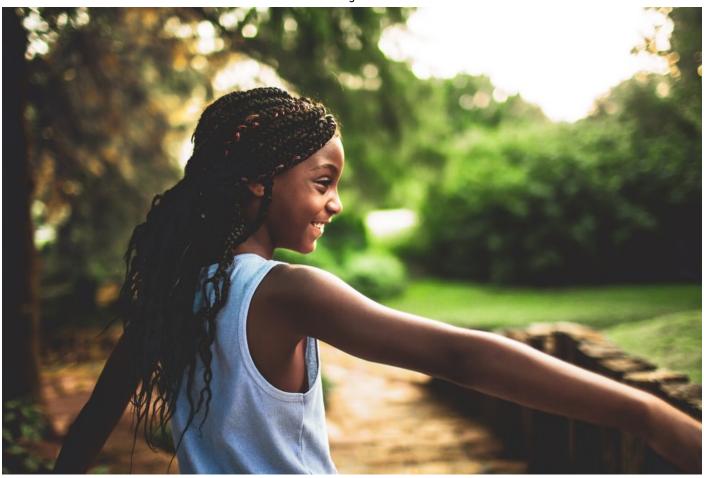






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Welcome!

We have spent most of the year locked away in our homes, due to the pandemic restrictions. During this time, we have become increasingly aware of how important it is for us to experience The Great Outdoors. Being outside, even for short periods of time can have positive effects on both our physical and mental health. This past year has also been a really serious one. We have lost so many of our liberties, support networks and have gained an incredible amount of stress. We really need to make time to be social, playful and creative, as much as we can. This is where the inspiration for our Great Outdoor theme came from. We want to encourage people to get outdoors more, to spend with other people (where possible) and to think about lots of different playful activities that they can try.

This pack contains an overview of about what Play Therapy is. It specifically highlights BAPT's high standard of clinically excellent training, our brand-new Trademark Title and lets you know how you can find one of our Therapists. This pack also provides you with some ideas that will hopefully inspire you to try a few new activities outdoors. As an organisation, we will be providing lots of information and ideas via our social media channels. We will be sharing original pieces of work by our members in addition to highlighting things we admire that have been created by other people. We very much would like the public to join in with us; we would love to hear your stories, read your comments and see your photographs! Please do tag us into your creative posts and use our hashtags #BPTW21 #BritishAssociationofPlayTherapists.

We hope you enjoy this pack and find it useful. We look forward to seeing how you celebrate British Play Therapy Week 2021!

Lynne Borrowdale, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors, British Association of Play Therapists



What Is Play Therapy?

Play is children's primary form of communication. Children tell us about their inner world through play long before they are able to link words to their experiences through speech. Through play, children can experiment with, process and master different skills and experiences. They form a sense of who they are whilst learning to understand that other people can be different. Relationship skills such as being able to trust, respect, empathise, share and co-operate with people can be developed through play.

Play Therapy, therefore, is a form of counselling for children that builds on this developmentally appropriate form of communication through play. It enables children to explore difficult experiences in a safe environment. The trust, acceptance, boundaries, modelling and reflectiveness of a Play Therapist alongside a child playing can enable them to:

- Feel more confident in expressing their thoughts and feelings
- Develop their emotional vocabulary by accessing the language the Play Therapist relates to their experiences
- Develop more socially appropriate behaviour
- Improve their self-image and self-esteem
- Improve their ability to attach and have more positive relationships
- Improve concentration and organisation
- Become more confident and creative in their play.

How can Play Therapy Help?

Play Therapy can be effective to support people of all ages. A Play Therapist will complete an assessment to decide if Play Therapy is right for someone. Most commonly, Play Therapy is used with children so we will refer to child/children in this document for simplicity. Play Therapy has been proven to be effective in addressing a range of difficulties, including those related to:

- Adoption and Fostering
- Attachment and trauma
- Abuse
- Anxiety
- Bereavement
- Bullying
- Emotional and behavioural regulation difficulties
- Family breakdown
- Friendship difficulties
- Illness
- Low self-esteem
- Nightmares
- Physical regulation difficulties, i.e., sleeping, eating and toileting
- Social withdrawal

Timing of Play Therapy

There are times when it is unhelpful to start Play Therapy. Play Therapy can give children the opportunity to explore their deepest and most traumatic feelings and experiences. As such, it is not appropriate to expose them to this if they are not in a situation whereby people around them can keep their physical body and their powerful emotions safe. It is also important to note that Play Therapy can also result in children's behaviour being more intense away from the therapy sessions and can also result in them regressing to earlier developmental stages. It is crucial that the people around the child have stability in their own resources to be sensitive and support the child in what could be a very challenging time.

Examples of when it is not appropriate to start Play Therapy include:

- When the child remains at risk of harm
- When the child's carers lack stability in their own presentation and lack an effective support network around them
- When the child's environment is in a period of transition, i.e., moving school, house, care givers.

Practical Arrangements

Consistency is key in the development of a trusting therapeutic relationship and a safe, containing Play Therapy space where the child can explore their difficulties. There will be practical agreements made to support this:

- The appointments will be made in advance, ideally for the same time and day of the week for each appointment
- The same room and same play materials will ideally be made available to the child for each appointment
- The same Play Therapist will deliver the therapy
- Where possible, the same person will escort the child to and from the therapy session.

Sharing Information

Generally, the specific details of the therapy sessions will remain confidential to the child. Parents and professionals will not be given week by week feedback and it is important that the child is not pressured into talking about what they have been doing in the sessions. This promotes the child's feelings of trust with the therapist and the safety of the therapy space.

There is one clear reason why specific details would be disclosed to other parties immediately - where there is a concern about a risk to the child or others. This safeguarding exception will be made clear to the child, parents and any relevant professional before Play Therapy commences.

The other occasion when information will be shared is during pre-agreed review meetings and any formal reports. On these occasions the general themes and progress of therapy will be discussed. Again, everyone will know about this beforehand, including the child.

Finding a Therapist

If you feel that a child you know may benefit from Play Therapy, or you are interested in building connections with Play Therapists in your local area, please visit: https://www.bapt.info/find-therapist



About BAPT Play Therapy Training

The British Association of Play Therapists (BAPT) was originally founded, under a different name, by a group of well-respected practitioners in 1992. These practitioners introduced and developed Play Therapy within Britain. BAPT are accredited by The Professional Standards Authority. This means that anyone looking for a Play Therapist will have the added protection of being able to research via a register that has vigorous checks and approval processes. Training as a BAPT Play Therapist takes 2-3 years dependent on whether the applicant is studying part time or full time.

BAPT training is at university post graduate level. This means that BAPT therapists will have almost always have a core profession gained by previous professional study at university level. Examples of core professions include social work, psychology, nursing, teaching and occupational therapy. Having an original core profession in addition to BAPT Play Therapy means that there is often an extra layer of professional accountability as they are eligible for memberships of other governing bodies, such as the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) or Social Work England (SWE).

To be accepted onto a BAPT post graduate Play Therapy training course, applicants must have at least 5 years' experience with working with children and families with complex presentations and emotional distress; must demonstrate maturity and have relevant life experience; have good physical and mental health and; have a clear Disclosure and Barring Services Check. Applicants must also agree to undertake their own personal therapy during their training in order to develop their self-awareness. This will support their future insight and emotional resilience as a Play Therapist.

Our Courses

We run three clinical courses here in the U.K that would lead to a Masters Degree qualification in Play Therapy. Our courses are run at:

- Roehampton University, London
- Queen Margaret's University, Glasgow
- · University of South Wales, Cardiff

Roehampton University and Queen Margaret's University also run a one-day 'Introduction To Play Therapy' course. Roehampton University also offers a more indepth summer school introductory course.

What Does BAPT Play Therapy Training Entail?

BAPT Play Therapy training is vigorous, with an intense focus on both academic learning and the development of practical clinical skills. The content of our courses include:

- Significant hours of child observation, after which psychological theory and professional reflection must be applied
- Psychological tuition relating to human emotional growth and development, various schools of psychological thought, attachment and trauma and specific theories relating to play
- Significant hours of play therapy practice within 'triads' of fellow students (a triad containing three people: a practice play therapist, a practice client and an observer).
- Significant hours of play therapy clinical sessions which are recorded with a voice recorder and video in order to provide verbatim written evidence for analysis and supervision
- Enhancement of reflective practice skills to incorporate Play therapy alongside core profession
- Research skills
- Mandatory personal therapy

Once qualified, a BAPT Registered Play Therapist® must commit to:

- Regular clinical supervision
- Continued professional development
- Adherence to the Ethical Principles and Code of Good Practice
- Professional Indemnity Insurance if practising privately
- Continued regular and clear Disclosure and Barring Checks
- Continued Personal Self-Development

Is There Any Other Way To Become a BAPT Registered Play Therapist®?

As with any clinically excellent profession, there is no short cut to achieving BAPT Registered Play Therapist® status. It is possible, for Play Therapists trained at University Level with other organisations, to apply to transfer across to BAPT, via the completion of a Portfolio. We understand that Play Therapists from other governing bodies will have valuable skills and experience; our Portfolio Route is not disregarding what they are capable of.

Our Portfolio Route is a way of recognising that different organisations have different training requirements for their Therapists, which means their ongoing Professional Practice can be built on slightly different foundations and can be missing some areas that are really important to BAPT. The Portfolio Route enables us to assess those gaps and help individuals to consider how they can work towards meeting the targets in those areas. This ensures that everyone who has the title BAPT Registered Play Therapist® have all met the same foundational standards, which is at the core of any form of quality assurance.

Want To Learn More?

If you would like further information about BAPT Play Therapy, BAPT Play Therapy Training, The Portfolio Route or would like to check the BAPT register, please visit www.bapt.info or use this link to be redirected to each of BAPT's social media pages: https://linktr.ee/BritishPlayTherapy.



Our Trademarked Title

BAPT is a member led organisation. This means our members are at the heart of what we do; we listen and we act. One of our members greatest concerns was the unprotected nature of the title 'Play Therapist'. Although it is a very special and specific term to us, unfortunately it can be used by anyone, regardless of whether their training has been three days or three years. This causes confusion for the public, is damaging to our clinical profession and harmful to children and families. As an organisation, BAPT wanted to ensure a way of legally protecting our members and the public. We wanted to ensure our professional identity is clearly defined. Unfortunately, this is no longer possible for any profession via government legislation (which is how job titles are usually protected in health and social care), so we got creative and found a different way forward. We are therefore pleased to introduce to you, the first of our legally trademarked titles: BAPT Registered Play Therapist®

BAPT has gone through the legal trademark process to safeguard the title of: BAPT Registered Play Therapist®. When you see this trademarked title, you can be assured that the practitioner has undertaken years of post-graduate university clinical training, as discussed in previous pages. You can also be assured that practitioners using the title BAPT Registered Play Therapist® have undergone their own personal therapy as part of their training. This is so important as it ensures our members are as safe and self-aware as possible when they enter the playroom with children. BAPT Registered Play Therapists® are held to the highest standards of supervision and continuing professional development. The BAPT Register itself is accredited by the Professional Standards Authority, another indicator of BAPT's commitment to quality. However, our journey is not yet complete. Protecting our supervisors and trainers is also important to us and our members; more titles will be announced in the near future.



Variations of Play Therapy

It is not uncommon for our BAPT Registered Play Therapist® to offer variations of Play Therapy. This comes from their ongoing interest and commitment to continuing their professional development and finding new ways to make Play Therapy accessible to a range of children and families. It is important for you to know that whilst BAPT is really proud of the ingenuity of our Therapists in developing their skill set, as an organisation we can only accredit and monitor core Play Therapy, as that is what we currently provide training for ourselves.

Here are some of the core variations that you may hear, and may particularly be visible to you during British Play Therapy Week:

Filial Therapy

Filial Therapy is an intervention whereby a Play Therapist trains and supervises parents/carers to enable them to have special therapeutic play time sessions with their children at home. There is a robust evidence base for both the short-term and long-term effectiveness of Filial Therapy. The benefits of Filial Therapy and the presenting problems in children that it can successfully address are comparable to those of Play Therapy. Generally speaking, Filial Therapy can be effective for children between the ages of 3-12 years, though adaptations can be made for older children. Filial Therapy usually takes about 18-24 weeks, though can take slightly longer for bigger families or families where there are some complex matters to address.

Animal Assisted Play Therapy® (AAPT)

AAPT® is an approach which integrates the involvement of animals into Play Therapy. Therapists undertake some vigorous training to ensure that they, their clients and the animals can all engage in safe, fun, respectful play interventions. The feature that most distinguishes AAPT® from other forms of animal assisted therapy is the systematic inclusion and encouragement of play and playfulness as the primary means of expressing feelings, developing relationships, and resolving psychosocial problems (VanFleet, 2008; VanFleet & Faa-Thompson, 2017). Animals involved in AAPT® are often horses, dogs or cats, also goats or pigs, and smaller mammals such as hamsters.

Outdoor Play Therapy

Play Therapists who work outdoors practice in a range of settings from woods and forests to parks, schools, gardens and beaches. Outdoor Play Therapists believe it's important to reconnect young people to the natural world they are part of and that if positive feelings about being in nature are developed now, it is likely that they will develop a life-long relationship with nature and understand that as part of it, we need to coexist harmoniously and protect the planet from further exploitation.

The physical boundaries of the space will be clear and may be marked by ropes or coloured ribbons or by landmarks such as hedges, trees, fences or other appropriate land boundary markers. Outdoor Play Therapists do use a lot of the same resources that would be available to children indoors but also have the opportunity to interact with the natural elements of the space. Although Outdoor Play Therapists are ready with resources to hand and some activities in mind, the play is child led with the therapist reflecting on what they see.



The Great Outdoors And Mental Health

It is suggested that in any one year, 1 in 4 people will experience mental health issues. This is without accounting for the impact of the global pandemic. With mental health services struggling to cope, 'green care' or spending time in nature is seen as increasingly important to our mental health and well-being. There is compelling research evidence to show that exposure to nature can:

- Reduce stress and anxiety and repair mental fatigue
- Lower high blood pressure and enhance immune system function
- Improve respiratory tract and cardiovascular illness
- Increase self-esteem and improve our ability to focus

Often people think that they have to take a special trip to 'The Great Outdoors' but really, it can anywhere. It can be in your garden, on a small patio, on a leafy street, in a park, on a beach, in a wood or forest or out in the wilder countryside. You can be on your own or with others, joining a group to walk, garden, grow food, swim, cycle or even just sitting; all can help to reduce feelings of disconnection and increase sociability.

It has long been recognised that if we don't nurture our connection to the outdoors, that it can take a toll on our physical and mental wellbeing. As well as 'doing' things outside, finding opportunities to just 'be'; to sit in stillness and retune our minds to all that nature offers can really help maintain our overall wellbeing. Taking time out of our busy work and life schedules is often hard, but once we experience the restorative power of just being in nature, it can become strangely addictive and something we find we need and want to turn to regularly.



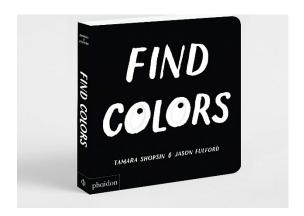
Creative Outdoor Activities

Sometimes it can be hard to think about how you can make your daily walk more exciting for your family or how time in school can incorporate more nature-based activities. Additionally, finances have been challenged during the pandemic so it can be hard to continually invest in new toys and resources to try to encourage more playfulness and creativity.

The following pages contain some simple but effective activities that can introduce some playful curiosity into time outside with children. Each activity is recommended by a BAPT Registered Play Therapist®, and can include items that can be purchased full price or second hand, depending on your budget. If there is no budget, then do not fear, we have provided some ideas to recreate the activities using resources you may already have in your homes or can find in The Great Outdoors.

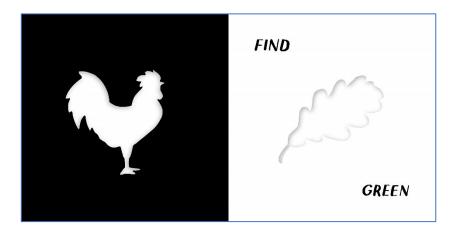
We are really excited to see anything you make or do relating to these activities, so do make sure you share your pictures and stories with us by interacting with our social media channels!

- www.instagram.com/britishplaytherapy
- wwww.facebook.com/bapt1992
- www.linkedin.com/company/british-association-of-play-therapists-bapt
- www.pinterest.co.uk/baptpinterest
- www.twitter.com/baptplaytherapy
- www.youtube.com/c/BritishAssociationofPlayTherapistsBAPT



1. Find Colours by Tamara Shopsin and Jason Fulford

This is a great book! Each page has a cut out shape and the idea is that children look at their world to find something that can fill their page with colour.

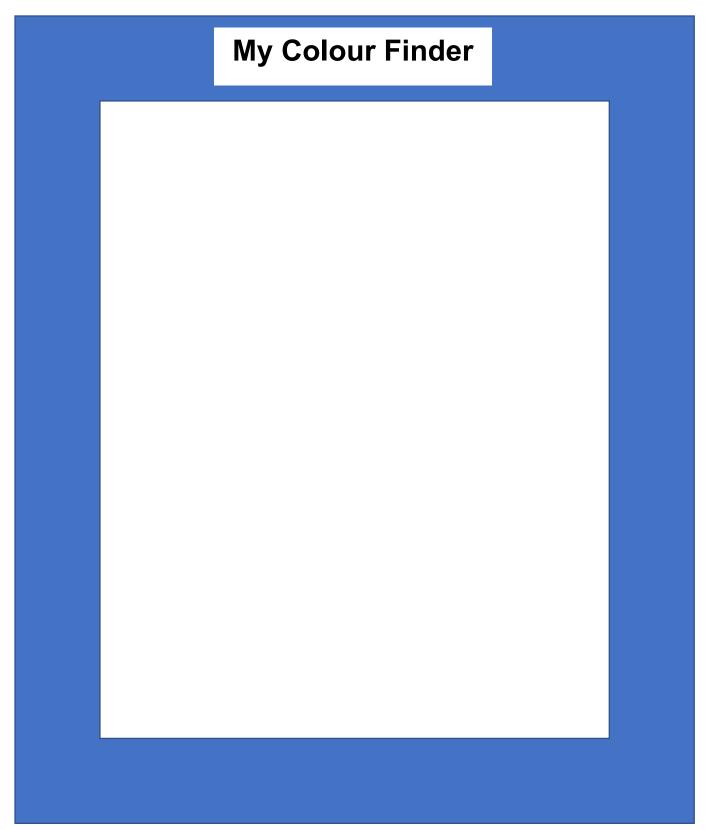


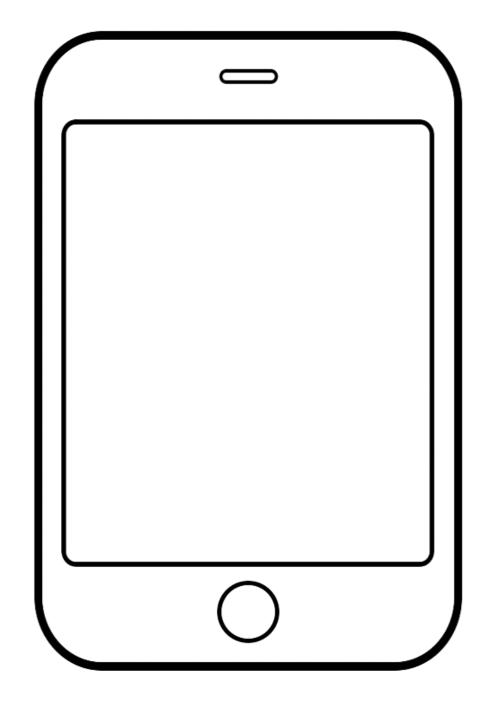
You don't need to live by a beach or a forest; there are many colours and textures within a city walk too! This is a great way to engage curious minds, can facilitate a lot of playful conversations and help children to have new experiences within both new and familiar environments. This is a definitely a way to brighten up the daily walk! Here are some pictures of the book in action in a suburban garden!



Zero Budget Idea!

You could make a simple rectangular box frame or mobile phone template by reusing a piece of cardboard. You can either spontaneously instruct children about the colours you want to find or have some simple paper slips with colours written/painted on. The children can then 'put' the colours into the frame or mobile phone screen. We have provided you with some simple templates to help you with this.





Find	Find	Find
Find	Find	Find
Find	Find	Find
Find	Find	Find



2. Go Find It Cards by The Sensory Trust

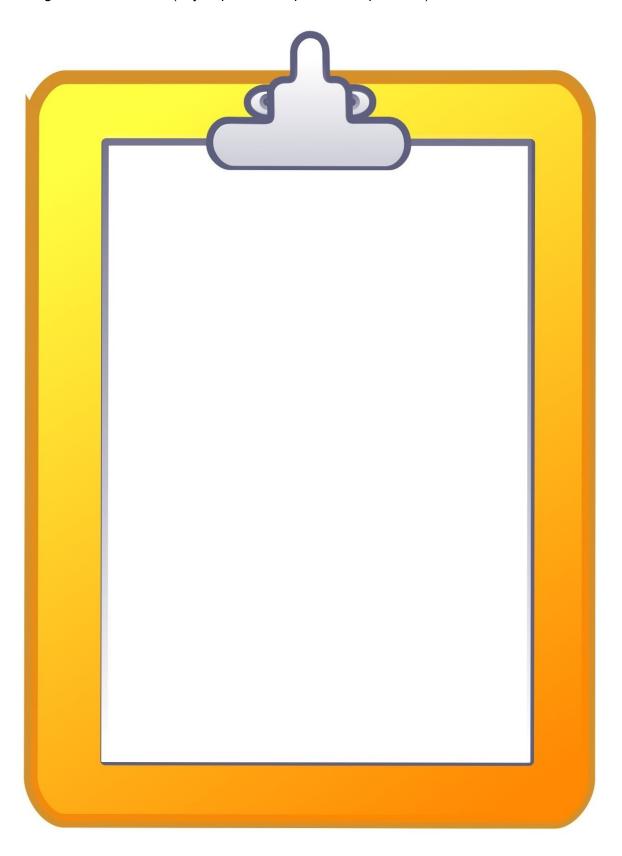
Like the previous recommendation, this is another scavenger hunt type activity. However, whereas the previous resource focuses on visual information, these cards focus on a range of different sensory information. This means that children will be encouraged to not just 'find' but interact with their environment by touching, smelling and listening. You can absolutely use the view finder box templates if you like but the focus of these cards is really about the experience of 'recording' their experience with their minds and bodies. They are also a great tool for increasing children's vocabulary through practical experiences.





Zero Budget Idea!

You could reuse some cardboard to make a clipboard and write down a list of all the things you want children to find during their time outside (or just print this clipboard template out).





3. Make A Talking Stick

Talking sticks are great tools when working with children in a group. Talking sticks have been used through the ages to signify whose turn it is to talk when people gather in a circle. You will need some sticks about the length of a ruler, coloured string, wool, foam shapes, feathers, beads – basically any collage items that can easily be found in online/low-cost shops.

Use the threads to wrap around the stick in bands of colour, wrapping over the ends of leaves and feathers (or threading feathers and beads together) as you go to secure them to the stick so each stick is different. These Talking Sticks can then be used to pass around a circle when you are together talking so that everyone has the chance to either speak, or to 'pass' during group discussions.

Zero Budget Ideas!

Don't buy craft items – find them for free.

- Why not go for a scavenger hunt and collect some free, natural items to decorate your stick with. I.E
 a beach hunt may find some seaweed, strands of dried grass, feathers and shells that could be used
 to decorate the talking stick.
- Why not explore the safe to use contents of your recycling box: magazine paper could be ripped into
 colourful strands, cardboard boxes could be cut into a variety of shapes and perhaps some small
 bottle tops could be repurposed. Using recycled products saves The Great Outdoors!



4. Story Shelter

Take some small puppets with you (finger puppets are ideal) when you visit an outdoor space with children. Tell the children a story about how the puppets got to be in the space, and how they are going to be stuck there all night. Ask them to build a shelter for the puppets, using objects they can find in the outdoors space. When the shelter is finished, ask the children to tell the story of how the puppets found their new shelter and their plans for returning home tomorrow.

Zero Budget Ideas!

If you do not have any puppets, you could make one using items that you already have in the house, such as an old sock, a paper plate or a wooden spoon. – Pinterest is a great place to find lots of simple to follow, creative ideas for making this kind of homemade toy.

Equally, you could take inspiration from the Talking Stick on the previous page; adapting the decoration of the stick to look more like a character and adding some arms, legs and facial features.



Recommended Resources

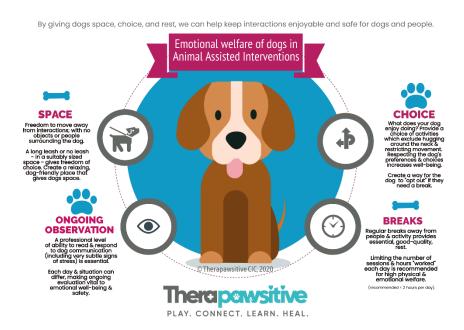
Here are some great websites and books (a lot of books available in Kindle format too!) which come recommended by our BAPT Registered Play Therapists®:

- BOOK: I Love My World By Chris Holland
- BOOK: The Joy Journal By Laura Brand
- BOOK: Wild Things by Jo Schofield and Fiona Danks
- BOOK: Wild Days by Richard Irvine
- BOOK: Outside In by Deborah Underwood
- BOOK: A Practical Guide To Play Therapy In The Outdoors: Working In Nature by Alison Chown.
- BOOK: Vitamin N: The Essential Guide To A Nature Rich Life by Richard Louv.
- WEBSITE: The Collaboration of Outdoor Play Therapists <u>www.cooptuk.com</u>

AAPT®

- WEBSITE: Animal Assisted Play Therapy®: www.iiaapt.org. UK news/dates www.aapbaseuk.com.
- GUIDANCE Animal Assisted Interventions International have issued standards of practice. https://aai-int.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/AAII-Standards-of-Practice.pdf
- The Dogs Trust has released guidelines for dogs in schools: https://www.dogstrust.org.uk
- GUIDANCE Best Practice Standards in Animal Assisted Interventions: how the LEAD risk assessment can help: https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/10/6/974
- BOOK "Animal Assisted Play Therapy" (2017) by Dr Rise VanFleet and Tracie Faa-Thompson available by emailing: aaptbaseuk@mail.com
- BOOK: Friendly Frank by Sarah Gordon.

- BOOK: Doggie Language a dog lovers guide to understanding your best friend by Lili Chin.
- BOOK: The Invisible Leash: A Story Celebrating Love after the Loss of a Pet by Patrice Karst.
- POSTERS: Lili Chin has some great Free posters about being with dogs: https://www.doggiedrawings.net/freeposters
- POSTERS: Therapawsitive have made some excellent infographics for schools, group and individual settings, including the two shown below.







Posters

We would love you to be as involved as possible with our special awareness raising week! Here are some posters that you can freely print off and display to advertise British Play Therapy Week. In addition to this, if you are an organisation that employs or supervises one of our amazing Play Therapists, we have some special posters so you can show your pride about this!

On behalf of BAPT and all of our members, thank you in advance for the fun and awareness raising you will get involved with during #BPTW21. We cannot wait to spend time with you and see what you get up to!

















PROUD TO EMPLOY



PROUD TO SUPERVISE

