

# Parent protocol for child sessions

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## Initial meeting:

I will meet with you and your partner (if possible), without your child present, to discuss your concerns for your child; what you have already done about your concerns, what has worked, and what has not. I will also be taking a history of your child in view of their pregnancy, birth, and health since then. I will also be asking about their type of play and current behaviours, including social and sport.

## Next visit: bringing your child with you

- 1) I will invite you both into my office where I will show you through my rooms- this includes my 'adult' rooms and 'child' room. We will then go into my adult room to sit down where I will organize payment, provide you with your receipt, and check the next session date and time with you. This gives your child time to look around, and involve themselves in the conversation if they want to.
- 2) After we have done the above, I will ask you to take a seat out in the waiting room where you will be while your child stays with me.
- 3) I will invite your child to escort you to the door and allow them to close the door behind you. This shows them that they can open the door and that they are not locked inside.
- 4) Depending on the child and the situation, I will usually speak with them in the adult room for 1 to 2 sessions. From then, we will be in the child room where I provide the Non-Directive Play therapy (which I will explain to you at our first meeting)

## At each session

- 1) **Be on time.** It is important in terms of teaching boundaries to your child. My sessions start and end on time. Each child session is for 35-40 minutes depending on their age.
- 2) I will greet you and your child and I will invite your child into my room (either the adult or child room). Please do not allow them to walk into my adult or child room until invited in.
- 5) **Only talk about incidental things with me- ie pleasantries/weather etc but nothing about your child, either before or after a session.** If you have need to tell me anything, then please either text or email me. Conversations take time that is for the use of your child. When a parent engages me in conversation the child often believes the conversation is about themselves. This is not helpful in regards to my creating a safe and confidential space for them (a child needs to feel safe in order to build trust with me). The child will usually react in some manner as to attract our attention- and often in an unsafe way.
- 6) **Do not prompt the child in what to discuss/talk about with me.** This places undue pressure on the child. In my 'play' non-directive sessions I do not ask any questions of the child as it interrupts their natural problem solving process.
- 7) At the appointment end I will open the door.
- 8) **Please be ready to take your child** as it is very important they leave the room immediately, and do not re-enter it. If they invite you to look at something, then ask my permission to come in.
- 9) **Do not make any comments about the room.** It is very likely the play room will look untidy/messy at the end of a session. This is quite normal. This is also *my job to clean up- not your child's*. They are to feel entirely free in this space.
- 10) I use a process of rules in my sessions. I make the rules as needed. *If a child 'chooses' to break a rule 3 times, then the session is ended immediately.* For this reason I require you to remain close by so that I can call you and have you return immediately. This breaking of rules is between your child and me. Do not discuss it with them (unless they bring it up). Do not enforce any discipline on my behalf. It is quite common for a child to

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'test' this procedure- and usually occurs within the first 10 sessions. It does not usually happen a second time.

- 11)** Please make sure your child has gone to the toilet before attending a session. Toilets are near the entrance to my rooms. If the child attends the toilet during the session, no additional time is given.
- 12)** In seeing your child, depending on their age, a session may last 30-40 minutes. This allows me time to 'clean' up after working with your child. In view of this, I offer you a ten minute follow up phone call within a short period of time (ie next day/or two). This provides you with an opportunity to give me feedback or update me on anything required.

To do the above, I will write on a slip of paper, a choice of two times for you to call me- it is your responsibility to make the call at one of the allocated times (you will need to text me which time best suits you)

*Please note that I cannot tell you anything your child has said or played with- to do this would break their confidentiality. However, over my time with them, and in review sessions with yourself, I can discuss themes with you, as well as provide information on their development- for example with social skills.*

If calling me on my mobile is a problem for you, I am prepared to call you back as soon as you have made the initial contact with me.

I, as parent/guardian of .....have read and understood the above.

Signed.....Date: .....