

### **What to Tell Your Child Prior to Their First Play Therapy Session:**

“We are concerned because you have been feeling/acting \_\_\_\_\_ at home/school lately (simply describe the issue your child is having), and we would like to help. We thought you would like to have some special play times with a play therapist named \_\_\_\_\_ (Meltem or Yumi), who works with children when they have difficult times like this. She has a playroom with a lot of toys that you can play with in a lot of different ways. Your special play times will usually happen at the same time each week. Sometimes, your play therapist will also talk to us about how you are doing.”

There is an iTunes app, “Play Therapy Book,” which is a personalized interactive book about play therapy. Visit iTunes or this link: <https://itunes.apple.com/.../play-therapy.../id706527888...>

You can also have your child watch the YouTube video “Introduction to Play Therapy for Children“ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmKxvTtSWoc>

### **After the Sessions:**

When your child’s session is over, just let him or her know that you are happy to see them and do not ask them to tell you about their session; let them tell you about their time if they choose to. Also, do not ask them if they had fun. Although your child may have had fun in the play therapy room, this is therapy, not a typical playtime, and your child is doing some serious work. Asking if they had fun creates the expectation that it SHOULD be fun and they could feel like they did it “wrong” if they did not have fun. We want your child to learn that whatever happens in the play therapy room is okay. It IS important to validate your child’s feelings, especially if it seems like they are feeling something that is uncomfortable like sad, scared or angry. They may not be able to tell you why, but knowing you recognize and value their feelings could be all they need at the moment and it will help them feel valued as well.