

PLAY THERAPY – CERTIFICATE

Program director

Kimberly Freeman

Play therapy is a recognized, theory-based approach for working with children and adolescents presenting with behavioral health issues. This approach utilizes toys and other expressive activities as forms of communication and as intervention methods for problem-solving and promoting well-being.

The fully online Play Therapy Program certificate is designed to meet the educational requirements of the Association of Play Therapy to become a registered play therapist (RPT) and is designed for behavioral health professionals with—or in the process of obtaining—a licensable graduate degree from an accredited college.¹

Program learning outcomes

By the end of this program, the graduate should be able to:

- Relate the history of play therapy to applications in the assessment and treatment of children and youth;
- Describe theories that inform play therapy with children and adolescents, including those guiding assessment, diagnosis, and specialized interventions;
- Use play therapy methods and techniques with children and adolescents, including those applicable in specialized interventions.

The Play Therapy Program certificate is housed under the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies in the School of Behavioral Health. Programs under the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies are considered areas of study that are applicable to all of the behavioral health professions. As such, these programs bring together the collective academic and clinical expertise of all of the departments in the School of Behavioral Health.

¹ Completion of the Play Therapy Certificate coursework at Loma Linda University does not include certification as a Registered Play Therapist. Individuals must apply to the Association for Play Therapy (United States) or the applicable certifying association in their country, and complete all additional requirements.

Admissions

Applicants must meet the admission requirements as follow:

1. A fully completed LLU application form.
2. A graduate with a licensable mental health degree from an accredited university. Official transcripts are evidence of degrees and courses completed. Individuals already licensed as mental health professionals must be in good standing with the relevant licensing board.
3. Consideration for admission will be given to individuals in the process of completing licensable mental health graduate degrees from accredited universities. Applicants must be in good academic standing and have permission from their current programs to enroll.
4. Submit three letters of recommendation from an academic source, professional peer, or a work supervisor.

Program requirements

A grade of B or better indicates a student has mastered knowledge, skills, and professional practice performance competencies outlined by the program. In order to progress successfully through the program and complete the certificate, students must meet the G.P.A. and course repeat expectations set by the School of Behavioral Health in the general regulations (<http://llucatalog.llu.edu/behavioral-health/>) section of this CATALOG.

Required foundation courses

PLTH 513	Introduction to Play Therapy	3
PLTH 516	Child-Centered Play Therapy	3
PLTH 546	Child-Parent Relationship Therapy-CPRT (Filial Therapy)	3
PLTH 550	Trauma Focused Play Therapy	3
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Total Units **13**

¹ Students select the religion course to be taken in consultation with their advisor.

Normal time to complete the program

Four (4) academic quarters – based on less than half-time enrollment

Courses

PLTH 513. Introduction to Play Therapy. 3 Units.

Explores the history and theoretical underpinnings of play therapy. Gives attention to the explanatory nature of theories as informing methods and techniques used in assessment and the healing processes. Emphasis on professional ethics and legal guidelines. Introduces child centered play, cognitive-behavioral play, and Gestalt play therapies. Prerequisite: Completion of theory courses required in respective degree area; permission of instructor.

PLTH 515. Play Therapy III: Assessment and Diagnosis. 2 Units.

Foundational play therapy course that provides content on structured and informal assessment processes and techniques. Social and symbolic play provides balance of content and process of differential diagnosis from a neurocognitive basis of development, including variations in the developmental sequence caused by developmental disorders.

PLTH 516. Child-Centered Play Therapy. 3 Units.

A foundation play therapy course that provides a systematic treatment approach to child-generated play. Combines didactic presentations and experiential activities that detail the four major elements of CCPT technique: structuring, reflective listening, fantasy play, and limit setting. Gives attention to history and theory of CCPT, the benefits of the model, assessment, and combining CCPT with other models of child therapy.

PLTH 517. Sandplay: A Therapeutic Process. 3 Units.

Foundational play therapy course providing didactics on the theoretical basis, content, and process of sandplay. Active learning experiences provide students with opportunities to observe and engage in sandplay with children.

PLTH 546. Child-Parent Relationship Therapy-CPRT (Filial Therapy). 3 Units.

Provides students with an understanding of evidence-based play therapy interventions that support filial (parent-child) communication and relationships as children experiencing social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties are treated. Builds upon a previous foundation of play therapy coursework.

PLTH 547. Play Therapy Approaches for Treating Developmental and Behavioral Disorders. 2 Units.

Explores developmental play therapy theory, methods, and techniques that provide children with experiences essential to physical and social-emotional growth and secure attachment in child-parent relationships. Emphasizes sensory integration, self-regulation, and adaptations for children with developmental delays. Explores adjunctive resources. Prerequisite: Completion of foundational play therapy courses.

PLTH 548. Child Psychosocial Play Therapy. 2 Units.

Provides advanced strategies and methods used to help children and families address environmental and life/stress adjustment issues. Includes child and family support that enhances wellness through self-regulation toward improved. Prerequisite: Completion of foundational play therapy courses.

PLTH 549. Therapeutic Play for Children Affected by Illness and Injury. 3 Units.

Teaches the developmental aspects of play therapy, in collaboration with the developmental stages of the child/teen and family in the context of a health-care setting. Provides student with an experiential understanding of play therapy, recreation therapy, education, and practice. Cross-listing: PLTH 549.

PLTH 550. Trauma Focused Play Therapy. 3 Units.

Covers play therapy techniques, therapies, and models which help children prevent or resolve psychosocial challenges following trauma, and achieve optimal growth and development. Introduces principles of intervention and ethical/legal guidelines for the assessment and treatment of traumatized children.

PLTH 650. Play Therapy with Adolescents and Adults. 3 Units.

Emphasizes advanced play therapy with adolescents and adults. Includes transitional objects using a nondirective stance; games of rapport, courtesy, and good habits; metaphorical thinking; grounded play therapy; poetry and drama; cognitive-behavioral interventions for anger, bullies, victims, and bystanders; and filial therapy with adolescents. Prerequisite: Completion of foundational play therapy courses.

PLTH 700. Practicum in Play Therapy. 2 Units.

Provides supervised practice in play therapy assessment, diagnosis, and intervention techniques with children and their parents. Applies toward 45 hours of practicum experience. May be completed in up to five quarters. Prerequisite: Completion of foundational play therapy courses.