

Therapy Resource Guide

Types of Mental Health Professionals:

Psychologists

Psychologists have earned a doctoral level degree in psychology (i.e. Ph.D. or Psy.D.). In addition to providing therapy, psychologists administer, score, and interpret psychological tests. These tests can help rule out and diagnose mental health illnesses and learning disabilities.

Counselors

Licensed Mental Health Counselors (LMHCs) combine traditional psychotherapy with a practical, problem-solving approach. They offer a full range of services, including (but not limited to) assessment and diagnosis, treatment planning, solution-focused therapy, alcohol and substance abuse treatment, and crisis management.

Licensed Clinical Social Workers

Like psychologists and counselors, Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs) can diagnose, assess and make clinical evaluations, conduct research, and provide direct therapy in private practice. LCSWs often use a strength-based approach, which emphasizes a client's resourcefulness and resilience in the face of adversity. They also take into account the societal and environmental factors impacting clients, in addition to their emotional and psychological well-being.

Psychiatrists

Psychiatrists are medical doctors, and are the only mental health professionals who prescribe medication. They may or may not be trained to provide therapy in addition to writing prescriptions. In other words, you may rarely actually see a psychiatrist after an initial consultation. Some people rely on combining an MD's medical treatment with another professional's talk-focused therapy.



Therapy Resource Guide

Most Commonly Used Therapies with Kids:

Play Therapy

Best for kids under 12. During the sessions, it may appear that they're "just" playing games, but therapists are trained to look for clues about how the child communicates, solves problems, and interacts socially.

Art Therapy

Art therapy can be perfect for kids with limited vocabularies or who find it challenging or threatening to express themselves verbally in a clinical setting. Creating art in and of itself can be used as a coping strategy to relieve stress, and the therapist helps kids interpret their art to discuss any underlying issues and reflect on the thoughts and feelings the art represents.

Behavioral Therapy

Behavioral Therapy focuses on how certain unwanted behavior may be inadvertently reinforced. The goal of treatment is to increase the child's positive-reinforcing behavior. Behavior modification plans are often utilized to help reward the child for desired behavior.

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is based on the idea that how you think determines how you feel and behave. Using the cognitive model, the therapist helps the child identify irrational thought patterns and replace them with new, healthy alternatives.

Family Therapy

The focus of Family Therapy is on relationship patterns and communication styles among family members. The entire family is considered the "client," rather than one child being singled out as the "identified patient."

