

CHILDREN WITH SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Nancy Boyd Webb, DSW, LICSW, RPT-S

Abstract:

This presentation illustrates the role of play therapy in helping children with health conditions achieve the best quality of life possible within the reality of their specific circumstances. In-depth case discussions of two children diagnosed with HIV and cancer demonstrate the use of art and narrative methods in order to help youth develop a sense of their own positive identity while also dealing with the bereavement associated with the losses and constraints of their illness. The play therapy methods to strengthen and empower these youth are applicable to work with children with diverse types of chronic medical conditions.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. To name at least 3 losses that may be associated with acute or chronic illness**
- 2. To state how the use of art/drawings in play therapy can facilitate the bereavement process**

Timed Outline:

2:30 – 2:45

Intro/Learning Objectives

Review of Multiple Losses of Children w/Med Conditions

2:45 – 3:00

Phases of Illness

Developmental Issues in Children's Understanding

3:00 – 3:10

How Play Therapy Can Help Relieve Children's Anxiety

Medical Play Therapy Equipment

3:10 - 3:25

Two Case Illustrations: Maria [Dx: HIV+; Tim: Cancer]

3:25-3:30

Summary/Conclusions

Reading List: Play Therapy to Help Children with Medical Conditions

- Auslander, W., & Freedenthal, S. (2006). Social work and chronic disease. Diabetes, heart disease, and HIV/AIDS. In S. Gehlert, & T.A. Browne (Eds.). *Handbook of health social work* (pp. 532-567). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Barakat, L.P., Alderfer, M.A., & Kazak, A.E. (2006). Posttraumatic growth in adolescent survivors of cancer and their mothers and fathers. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology* 31:4, 413-419.
- Clay, D.L. (2004). *Helping schoolchildren with chronic health conditions. A practical guide*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Congress, E.P. (2004). Cultural and ethical issues in working with culturally diverse patients and their families. The use of the culturagram to promote culturally competent practice in health care settings. *Social Work in Health Care*, 30 (3/4), 249-262.
- Goodman, R. (2007). Living beyond the crisis of childhood cancer, In N.B. Webb (Ed.) *Play therapy with children in crisis. Individual, group, and family treatment* (pp.197-227). New York: Guilford Press.
- Lavin, C. (2002). Disenfranchised grief and individuals with developmental disabilities. In K.J. Doka, Ed., *Disenfranchised grief. New directions, challenges, and strategies for practice* (pp. 307-322). Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- Martin, E.S. (2008). Medical art and play therapy with accident survivors. In K.A. Malchiodi, (Ed.). *Creative interventions with traumatized children*, pp.112-131. New York; Guilford Press.
- Phelps, L. (1998). *Health-related disorders in children and adolescents. A guidebook for understanding and educating*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Wallander, J.L., Thompson, R.J., Alriksson-Schmidt, A. 2003). Psychosocial adjustment of children with chronic physical conditions. In M.C. Roberts (Ed). *Handbook of pediatric psychology*, 3rd ed. (pp. 141-15). New York: Guilford Press.
- Webb, N.B. (2010). *Helping bereaved children, A handbook for practitioners*, 3rd ed. New York: Guilford Press.
- Webb, N.B. (Ed.). (2009). *Helping children and adolescents with chronic and serious*

Webb: Children w/ Med Conditions

medical conditions. A strengths-based approach. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley.

Webb, N.B. (Ed.) (2007) *Play therapy with children in crisis. Individual, group, and family treatment* 3rd ed. New York: Guilford Press.