

Sand Play Therapy



Knowledge
Through
Entertainment

FILM

-  **Ellie's Little Corona Lessons**
-  **What Body is This? Body Shaming**

KEY OBJECTIVES

- 1 To help children work on their social skills through sand play by engaging, building connections.**
- 2 Serving as a tool to help regulate their emotions.**

INTRODUCTION

Nature provides opportunity for discovery, creativity, problem solving and STEM education. Sort of a natural lab. In nature children have an opportunity to do hands-on, informal exploration and discovery. The sand play therapy brings nature inside with an opportunity for children to engage and connect with their emotions.

Playing in the sand can offer children opportunities for fun and learning. It can also help children develop social skills like problem solving, sharing, and communicating.

Sandplay therapy makes use of a sand tray and toy figures as communication tools to create scenes of miniature worlds that reflect a person's inner thoughts, struggles, and concerns.

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted and limited the opportunities children, in urban areas, have outside their home to physically socialize with their friends, families and other people. Most children are stuck home with technology. This activity children can express themselves in a non-verbal way and learn social skills.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Why did you choose that toy?
- Choose objects/toys that make you feel calm. Why?

TOPICS

Environmental studies
natural sciences **social sciences**
mental health **health**

KEYWORDS

Sand **science** **environment**
emotions **Earth**

LEVEL

Primary School

RESOURCE TYPE

Experiment

INTENDED AUDIENCE SIZE

Small onsite audience **virtual audience**

MODE OF DELIVERY

Small group (4-5)
venue with possible filming/streaming

TIME FOR ACTIVITY

30 min.

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- What made you choose this stone?
- Does the toy/object/stone have your favorite color?

MATERIALS/PREPARATION

- A wooden or plastic tray (~49.5 x 72 x 7.5 cm)
- Sand x 3 bags (250/500g/1kg).
- Fill one third (1/3) of the tray with sand.
- A variety of toy figures, anything from farm/wild animals, insects and dinosaurs to people and cars.
- A set of semi-precious rocks or crystals.
- Anything else e.g. seeds or small pieces of beautiful wood.

TASKS/PROCEDURE

- 1 After each sandplay activity is complete, the facilitator and child can discuss the toys or objects that were chosen and how they were arranged, and any meanings.
 - 2 Hide and Find – working on connection and engagement
 - Take an object that means something to you or that you find attractive and hide it, the other person then looks for it and the child then tells them why they choose that object, what it means to them or why they like it.
- **Relaxed/Calm – regulation**
Choose objects that you think make you feel calm and relaxed and pack them out on the sand in the tray. The child explains each object, e.g. why it makes them feel calm.
 - **Turn Taking Tray – working on social skills**
Each person takes a turn to choose an object and places it in the sand on one half of the tray, this

happens about 4 times per person and then both look at the end result and explain it.

- **Unstructured play – fun, informal exploration**
Let the child play independently and use their imagination. Then both look at the end result and explain it.

FOSTERING DISCUSSIONS

- 1 What do you like about playing outside?
- 2 What attracts your attention the most, animals, plants, sand, mountains or beautiful rocks?
- 3 What are your favorite places in nature that you have been to before?

SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

Follow COVID-19 protocol

AUTHORS AND SOURCES

Designed and submitted by Helke Mocke and Kombada Mhopeni

The activity is inspired by a video on Sandtray Work with Autistic Children -