

Puppet Therapy for Children

by

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For many years, puppets have been used in educating children on basic education and manners. These have also been employed in entertaining children (and even adults) through puppet shows and dynamic storytelling.

For many people, puppets are merely dolls with voices, which are used to reflect real life situations. But with the continuous developments in medicine, especially in psychotherapy,

puppets are now being used during treatment and recovery in many cases that involve young patients.

Purpose of puppet therapy

*** Puppets act out situations that children fear**

If a child fears coming to a doctor or dentist, attending school, meeting other people, handling pets, or undergoing surgery, a puppet may be used to play out the expected events during the situation. This will help the child understand that there is no reason to fear such situations.

*** Children may use puppets to communicate their thoughts and traumas**

When a psychotherapist would like to learn more about the child under his or her care, he or she may use puppets and ask the child to create a story using them. Such stories usually reflect the child's thoughts and fears.

*** The puppets become tools for programming the children's thoughts and behavior**

Using puppets to tell a story programs the kid's minds on the ideal responses for a specific situation.

Benefits of puppet therapy for children

*** Children are more receptive to puppet therapy than with more formal questioning**

While guided questioning is used for adult patients, this method usually does not work with kids. Kids are more comfortable if the therapy session is fun.

*** Puppets allow children to become more open to their surroundings and to the underlying message of the therapist**

Telling a child how to respond or how not to respond to a stimulus might not work as well as using a puppet to mimic the situation and to act out the ideal response.

Applications of puppet therapy

*** Puppet therapy is used for children with behavioral problems**

To correct behavioral problems, the puppets become the therapist's tool for helping the child understand disruptive behavior. The puppet is also used to communicate or teach proper behavior without being confrontational.

*** It is also used for children who experienced traumatic situations**

Children can openly recreate the traumatic situation without having to undergo the pain.

*** Puppet therapy is also employed during or after surgery**

*** Children who fear surgery can watch the puppets' response during a medical procedure.**

With the developments in child psychology and psychotherapy, puppets are no longer just educational tools. They also become tools for healing and recovery.

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