



# NYAPT NEWS

Co-Editors: Christine Foreacre & David A. Crenshaw

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## President's Letter

I hope that this newsletter finds everyone happy, healthy and enjoying the autumn season!

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### From the Annual APT Conference:

If you were able to attend the annual APT conference in Kentucky I hope that you enjoyed the workshops, networking and sightseeing. Thank you to those of you who were able to attend the NYAPT get together. Your input and ideas are very much appreciated! Thank you too to everyone who purchased a ticket for the NYAPT theme basket "Relaxation and Self Care for the Play Therapist". The recipient of our basket was very excited; she indicated that ours was the basket that she had hoped to win:



The raffle was a lot of fun and it raised \$2,826.00 to be used for play therapy research. This raffle has become a tradition, so be on the lookout for information on next year's raffle in California.

Congratulations to Rachel Davis, LCSW, Stephen Demanchick, PhD., LMHC, RPT and Noreen Gill, LCSW, RPT on their graduation from the APT Leadership Academy! As indicated on the APT website: "APT sponsors its Leadership Academy to orient play therapists about leadership attributes, the Policy Governance® Model, and how APT conducts its daily business". The Leadership Academy offers a variety of online forum assignments and activities. The 2011 class is presently full, but please consider enrolling in the 2012 class. The process is very interactive and educational.



### Upcoming Annual NYAPT Conference:

Be sure to save the dates of Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, 2011 for the next annual NYAPT play therapy conference. This conference will be held at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel, in Poughkeepsie, NY. This year's conference will offer a keynote presentation each morning and a variety of workshops to choose from each afternoon. We will again be offering online credit card registration this year. Be on the lookout for more details very soon!

### NYAPT Website:

The NYAPT website is in the process of being updated. The updates will include a variety of features that will make the site more interactive. We had hoped that these updates would be in place by the publication of this newsletter. Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, the revisions are not quite completed. Please keep checking the website at [www.NewYorkAPT.org](http://www.NewYorkAPT.org), we hope to have the updates in place very soon.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me.

Enjoy! Mary Anne

## **New NYAPT Members**

Congratulations to the following people who became members of NYAPT in the last three months (August-October, 2010): Josue Cardona, Jessica Connors, Marrie Freeman, Diane Kensey, Catherine McMahon. Welcome!

## **News of Members**

**Lois Carey** is in the process of the final proof reading of her "sort of" memoir - [A Salty Lake of Tears](#). She calls it "sort of" because it is a combination of various forms of writing - fairy tale, actual memoir, fantasy and a play. It is being published by FisherKingPress and will be in book form as well as Kindle, etc. It should be available by early 2011.

**Athena A. Drewes** has been presenting on play therapy around the world this past summer. She was an invited visiting professor for ten days in Rome, Italy giving five days of training for the Italian Association for Play Therapy. Next she was in Australia as guest lecturer presenting in opposite parts of the country, in Sydney and Perth, for the Asian Pacific Association for Play Therapy. Who knows where in the world she will go next!!!

Also, the first edition of "School-Based Play Therapy" has just come out translated in Korean. It is also available in Chinese and English. Athena has also been invited to write two 30-page chapters for the upcoming book "Adaptations of Trauma-Focused CBT for Children and Adolescents" edited by Judith Cohen, Tony Mannarino and Esther Deblinger. The two chapters she will write, with a former Astor doctoral intern, Angie Cavett, are: "Play applications of TF-CBT skills components for young children" and "Play applications of trauma-specific TF-CBT components for young children". The book will be published in 2011 by Guilford Press.

**Laurie Zelinger** reports recent radio interviews: in August with her son about their book [Please explain anxiety to me: Simple biology and solutions for children and parents](#); in September about her book [The O My in tonsillectomy and adnoidectomy - how to prepare your child for surgery](#) (second edition); in October about writing and marketing children's books and a live interview also in October about "Is Halloween too scary for some children?" In November she did an interview with a journalist from *The London Times* about "My Boy Princess" and boys who like to dress up and play in girl's clothes.

## **ACAIT Professional Insurance**

Professional malpractice insurance is available at very competitive rates to APT member psychologists, counselors, therapists and social workers via the ACA Insurance Trust program. Inquiries should be directed to: Paul Nelson, 800-347-6647 x 342 or [pnelson.acait@counseling.org](mailto:pnelson.acait@counseling.org).



## **Grin and Share It**

**A humor column based on true experience**

**by Dr. Laurie Zelinger**

[www.drzelinger.com](http://www.drzelinger.com)

After attending a funeral where the religious leader described the fate of all humankind with the saying, “but dust to dust”, Gabriel’s mother asked me how to handle his question, “Mom, what’s butt dust?”

Doivid was playing out the scene of his grandfather’s death, and told me he died of a terrible disease. He got cancel.

When my three- year- old son was in a local private pre-school, the teacher asked the class what they wanted to be when they grow up. The children were heard calling out all of their aspirations, “police man, doctor, teacher, astronaut, movie star, rock star”. My son called out, “When I grow up I want to be Japanese!”

Jennifer was very pleased that she was learning to print most of the letters of her name. She knew it had a lot of letters in it, but was glad that it didn’t have the very long one, “elamenopee”.

When walking past a playground in the preschool center, I saw a teacher aide admonishing a young boy with the words, “We don’t hit!” to which the boy responded, “Oh yes we do!” and he slapped her before he ran off.

## **. I Have My Masters....Now What?**

**The journey toward becoming a licensed professional**

**By Gabrielle Dworkin, MEd**

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I want to help children with their problems. That is why I went into the helping profession of child psychology. It was a long road and the journey is not yet over. This article will give a background about my graduate school experience and where it has led me today. I hope that it helps current graduate students as well as those in my position of being post-masters, and not yet licensed. I also hope it reaches the licensed professionals who can offer some feedback and advice via my email address, or better yet, in the next newsletter, to share with others.

I became interested in general psychology during my community college years and pursued it throughout my Bachelors. I then began my Masters at a University in New England where I was on the Clinical Track and studied diligently for two years. The internship placement was going ok and then I was told that “they” didn’t think I was cut out to be a therapist and my internship was dropped and not replaced. As I watched my class graduate, I was determined to get my degree. I transferred to a College in another New England state where I also did two years of diligent graduate school work, now on a Clinical Mental Health Counseling track. I was also able to minor in Child Life Specialist studies which I had been interested in since community college. All seemed well until internship decision came around. Now, I had to do two- one for Psychology and one for Child Life at a hospital. Again, I was told that I may not be cut out for this field and I constantly question why. You need to work on your confidence and not crying when getting criticism, I was told. The Psych placement was in an inner city alternative elementary school with 3<sup>rd</sup> grade boys. This was to “toughen” me up. The Child Life was at a large Children’s Hospital and I was designated to the Teen Floor, having requested the Child Floor. Needless to say, both supervisors told me that I had a lot to work on and maybe this wasn’t a good choice. Hmm maybe I should just become an actress after all.

Fast forward, I did graduate with my Masters in 2007, which prepared me to be licensed and certified. So I sit for the National Examination for Clinical Mental Health Counseling and pass the first time (Yeah!) and now it is time to look for a job. I continued to attend Play Therapy workshops, conferences, began to take Post Masters classes, and receive supervision to work toward becoming a Registered Play Therapist.

My job searching led me to a special education preschool in the Catskills where they were looking for a Play Therapist where I have been for three years now. I work along with other therapists from Speech, Occupational and Physical, but I am the only “psych” person. My paycheck says I am a Social Worker (I have never taken a SW class in all my college years), the IEPs say I am a Counselor, and I am introduced as a Play Therapist. I was still receiving supervision, unaware that I was not supposed to be paying for it and my job was. It didn’t work out and now I have no supervision, which I found out you do not need if you are a Certified School Counselor. So Licensure as a Mental Health Counselor would be put on hold. Luckily, I met the requirements for being a School Counselor, without ever taking a specific class in this.

Depending on which organization you subscribe to and what title you are going for (APA, ACA, APT, NASW) you will need to meet the specific education, experience, continuing education and supervision requirements, as well as State specificity. Add on top of that trying to get interstate reciprocity, this requires a lot of paperwork.

So where do I go from here while I am job hunting? I type in keywords on major search engines such as *Therapist, Child, Psychology, Counselor*. Those that match the criteria either require a Bachelors, are with a population I do not want to work with, are geographically undesirable, have a smaller salary, or- the big one- requires a License. Even though I met the requirements for School Counselor in NY, NJ is telling me I need to take graduate classes and have an internship to obtain reciprocity. Private practices I have applied to tell me they are thrilled that I have all this “play experience” but will not hire me because I do not have family experience. I say how can I get this experience if no one will take me under their wing to learn? Others say I do not have a relationship with the insurance companies so they can’t bill. I am knowledgeable, but feel no one is interested! This is very frustrating. There is a large agency where I have applied to almost every job that is open, and have not heard back about any of them. I recently read an article on this very subject. An HR director stated that she had an employee who applied to all the internal postings that came up. When there was a job that was a good fit, the director passed over her. She said it appeared she was desperate and would rather have someone with self-worth. I see it as, in my situation, that I am willing to work for this agency, in any capacity, because they are well-respected, I could learn a lot, advance my career and they have many psychological professions on staff.

In conclusion, the question remains- what jobs are available to someone with a Masters, 3 years post masters experience, and no License? Responses are welcome!

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:**

NYAPT is in need of a student representative. We would like to thank Jamie Reed for her willingness to have held this position on an interim basis until her graduation this past August. Congratulations and thank you Jamie for your interest and enthusiasm!

In the position of Student Representative the student represents the interests of, and encourages the involvement of, other student affiliates. If you are interested in learning more about this position please contact Mary Anne Assini at [maassini2000@yahoo.com](mailto:maassini2000@yahoo.com)

## **12<sup>th</sup> Annual NYAPT Conference-----Save the Date!!!**

Be sure to save the dates of Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, 2011 for the next annual NYAPT play therapy conference. This conference will be held at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel, in Poughkeepsie, NY. This conference will offer two great keynote presentations:

***Children with Medical Conditions in the Hospital and in the Community  
How Play Therapy Helps Deal with Stress and Anxiety***

**By: Nancy Boyd Webb, DSW, LICSW, RPT-S, Deborah Vilas, MS,CCLS, LMSW**

### **About The Training:**

Acute or chronic health problems that emerge in infancy or later in childhood may seriously derail a child's development and create daunting problems. This presentation illustrates the role of play therapy in helping chronically or acutely disabled youths achieve a positive identity and hopeful outlook, despite the stresses and anxiety associated with hospitalization and ongoing treatment. The theoretical framework for this clinical work involves an understanding of stress and coping, utilizing a strengths perspective to help children/youth focus on their abilities and possibilities, rather than on the limitations of their health condition.

Because children/youth place so much emphasis on their physical abilities, they may become very upset and depressed when they realize that their physical health is compromised. Often peers stigmatize these children, thereby increasing their sense of being different and isolated. Play therapists must focus on both the present and the future to help youth with medical conditions learn to accept themselves and plan realistically.

This presentation uses examples of hospitalized children and those living in the community and illustrates how play therapy can help chronically or acutely disabled youths through a combination of art, narrative, and other play therapy methods to resolve trauma, loss and identity issues.

### **About The Presenters:**

**Nancy Boyd-Webb, DSW, LICSW, RPT-S is a Distinguished Professor Emerita of Social Work at Fordham's University Graduate School of Social Service, and [former] James. R. Dumpson Chair of Child Welfare Studies. She is also**

Founder and Past Director, Post-Master's Certificate Program in Child and Adolescent Therapy (1985 - 2008). Dr. Boyd-Webb has 35 years part time clinical and supervisory practice with children and families. She is a Registered Play Therapy Supervisor and is Board Certified in Bereavement Trauma. Dr. Boyd-Webb has lectured and trained extensively throughout the United States and internationally and has published extensively.

Deborah Vilas, MS,CCLS, LMSW is a Faculty Advisor and Instructor at Bankstreet College of Education's Graduate School, Department of Special Education/Bilingual Education and Child Life. She is also a Child Life Specialist Consultant in private practice providing medical procedural preparation and counseling for children & families. Ms. Vilas has provided numerous workshops and trainings on medical play therapy and has published several articles.

### ***Hitchhiker's Guide to Planet Earth: Play Therapy Tools for Kids Who Don't Fit In***

By: Brenda L Bierdeman, PsyD, CPT-P

#### **About The Training:**

Children with neurological disorders such as ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Tourette's Syndrome, Learning Disabilities, and PDD often feel as though they are living on the wrong planet. They don't intuitively understand societal norms. They experience the world as harsh—too bright, too loud, too rough, too stimulating—or not stimulating enough. Many have difficulty with even basic self-care tasks and self-regulation. As a result, they have difficulty with peers, which can lead to behavior problems, withdrawal, and even anxiety and depression.

This workshop will provide the participant with multi-sensory play therapy techniques that can be used to teach these sensitive children social skills, understanding non-verbal cues, modulation of eye to eye gaze and personal space. Play therapy strategies will be learned to help these kids manage their anger and reduce anxiety, stand up to bullies and calm themselves down. Participants will also learn how to more accurately interpret acting out and self-stimulating behaviors, how to differentiate negative behaviors from self-regulation and cueing, and how to modify play therapy techniques and play therapy areas to make them more multi-sensory.

#### **About The Presenter:**

Dr. Brenda L Bierdeman is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist in Upstate New York where she has been diagnosing and treating children and families for over 25 years. She holds advanced degrees from Illinois School of Professional Psychology and Asbury Theological Seminary. Dr. Bierdeman is a member of the American Psychological Association, Association for Play Therapy, and is a Certified Professor of Play Therapy by the International Board of Examiners of Certified Play Therapists. Dr. Bierdeman has presented workshops and retreats across the US and internationally.

## **NYAPT ELECTIONS:**

It will soon be election time again. Please consider becoming a part of the nominations committee. This committee is responsible for selecting candidates from the membership for election to the NYAPT board. If interested please contact Athena Drewes, Psy.D., RPT-S, nominations committee chair by December 10, 2010 at [adrewes@hvc.rr.com](mailto:adrewes@hvc.rr.com)

## **New Therapy Approach**

*by Laurie Zelinger*

I tried something new (for me) this week. I had a 9 year old boy who came for his first session and built a zoo in the sand tray, using 35 animals. After we examined it from different angles and he described which animal he feels like when he gets angry, calm or "in the middle", I then asked, "What time of day is this taking place?" When he responded, "The morning," I then shut the office light, took out a mini flashlight which we hung up as the moon and then asked how it would be different if it were night time. He responded that only 6 of the animals would be awake (everybody else would be sleeping) in order to "protect all the baby animals from predators". That opened a discussion about how he had been bullied in school for two years.

## **Grist for the Mill of the Play Therapist**

**David A. Crenshaw, Ph.D., ABPP, RPT-S**



**Review of a journal article by Wanda Boyer (2010): “Getting to Know O’Connor: Experiencing the Ecosystemic Play Therapy Model with Urban First Nations People” published in *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 18 (2), 202-207.**

First of all it is nice that play therapy articles and research is getting published in an ever expanding range of journals. This particular paper is aimed at describing Kevin O’Connor’s Ecosystemic Play Therapy (EPT) approach to a wider audience of mental health practitioners. Boyer traces the history of the “ecosystemic” approach to the German zoologist who in 1873 used the term for the study of the individual as a product of interaction between heredity and environment. Others who have contributed to the development of the concept are Anne Anastasi and more recently Bronfenbrenner who has great influence on James Garbarino’s work looking at social toxicity and Belsky who along with Bronfenbrenner looked at a wide range of developmental influences in the ecosystem including biology, psychological, cultural, and even economic factors.

The EPT system looks at the child in play therapy through the widest systemic lens available. It goes beyond the inclusion of the parents and siblings in the process that many schools of play therapy embrace and the data supports as efficacious. It includes even the historical moment of time in which the therapy takes place, mostly overlooked in most schools of therapy but identified as a critical variable in mediating culture by the noted child developmentalist Jerome Kagan.

This paper will be a review article for those already familiar with EPT but an excellent introduction for those unfamiliar with Kevin O’Connor’s approach. It has strong appeal for those of us trained in family systems theory and therapy because it looks at the larger systems of school, child welfare authorities, courts, probation officers, as well as families in understanding the larger context impinging on the child’s functioning.