



# A (Tote) Bag of Tricks for Engaging and Working With Children

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# Agenda

- Introductions, agenda and interests
- *Family Connections* and community-based work
- Developmental and environmental considerations
- The kids' bag – tools and techniques
  - Play therapy
  - Art therapy
- Challenges and opportunities
- Other?



# Getting to Know You



- Brief introductions
- Goal(s) and rationale for today

# Family Connections

- ❖ Mission: Promoting the safety and well-being of children and families through family and community services, professional education and training, and research and evaluation.



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# Program Description

- Guiding philosophies
- Service
- Education
- Research



[www.family.umaryland.edu](http://www.family.umaryland.edu)

# Play As Children's Work



# Environmental Considerations

- Advantages
  - Child's reality and relationship building
  - Information gathering and assessment
  - Modeling and teaching
- Disadvantages
  - Lack of control
  - Limited resources
  - No immediate consultation



# Special Considerations



- Nature of the setting
- Role definition and child's perception
- Child's other therapeutic relationships
- Chronological vs. developmental age
- Capacity for symbolic play

# Item Selection

- Accessible and affordable
- Safe
- Not messy
- Encourage expression of feelings
- Facilitate imaginative play
- Culturally sensitive



# The Kids' Bag – Art Techniques

Self portrait

Draw your family

Color my world

“All About Me” book

Inside-outside mask

- Feelings quadrant
- Draw your nightmare
- “Garbage” bag
- Safe place drawing



# The Kids' Bag – Play Techniques

- Structured games
- Play with animals
- Use of puppets
- Play with cars



# Questions and Discussion



Children's scissors, glue stick  
Play Doh or clay (anticipate messiness)  
Games (Checkers, Candyland)  
Animal puppets and/or stuffed animals  
Small plastic animals (dinosaurs, mothers and babies)  
Family figures and/or puppets (ethnically diverse)  
Matchbox cars and trucks (cop car, ambulance, fire)  
Play telephones (two)  
Doll and play baby bottle  
Plastic hammer  
Bubbles  
Small nerf ball  
Magic wand  
Sunglasses  
Story books  
Stickers  
Treasure box

Sources for most materials: Dollar Store, thrift shops, WalMart

Sources for puppets/family figures: [www.selfhelpwarehouse.com](http://www.selfhelpwarehouse.com), [www.roseplaytherapy.com](http://www.roseplaytherapy.com)

### *Selected Readings*

The Healing Power of Play: Working With Abused Children. Guilford Press, 1991.

Di G. and Schaefer (Ed.). 101 Favorite Play Therapy Techniques. Jason Aronson, 2002.