

# Learn to Play



## Referral Information for General Practitioners, Early Childhood Educators & Support Coordinators

**Play is fundamental for healthy brain development and for building skills such as:**

- problem solving
- cognition
- empathy
- social interaction
- emotion regulation
- language

Learn to Play therapy is firmly based on the development of pretend play skills and is highly researched, with a strong evidence base of improved global developmental outcomes for children. It is ideal for children who have a developmental age between 18 months and 10 years, and:

- are neurodivergent (ASD, ADHD, dyspraxia etc)
- or have difficulties playing with peers or siblings
- or have learning or language difficulties
- or may be anxious or awkward in social settings
- or would benefit from building their confidence and self esteem.



**Coffs Harbour**  
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## The Importance of Pretend Play



Learn to Play is a unique intervention that builds children's pretend play abilities.

The contribution of pretend play to children's development is profound.

Also known as imaginative or make-believe play, pretend play produces tangible and documented benefits for the cognitive, social and emotional development of children, as well as the development of their gross and fine motor skills.

Complex pretend play skills contribute to the development of theory of mind, language and narrative, creativity and flexibility, representational thought, sequential thinking and social capacity to understand language and interpret non-verbal cues.

The ability to develop complex pretend play skills is vital to children's development, and is the reason pretend play underpins Learn to Play therapy.



## About Learn to Play

**Learn to Play is an individualised, one on one play therapy approach over 10 sessions\*.**

A comprehensive psycho-social intake is undertaken with the parents/carers, and a formal assessment of a child's play skills conducted.



This provides valuable information on the child's developmental stage in relation to play, identifies and interprets any skill deficits, and enables comparison of the play score with the child's peer group.

Sessions are then provided, specifically tailored to the child, that scaffold the development of their play skills. Goals will vary, and may include focus and concentration and focus, self-initiative, emotion regulation, spontaneity in play and improving problem-solving and flexibility.

\* Additional sessions are usually required where there is neurodivergence or significant developmental delay.

## Referring to Learn to Play

**Angie Laussel offers Learn to Play from The Counselling Space.**

It is available privately, under a child's NDIS Plan or a Mental Health Care Plan.

Learn to Play is also a valuable adjunct to the parenting programs and early intervention initiatives run by family services agencies, and local case managers and childhood educators are welcome to talk with us about contracting the program for specific families.



## About Angie

Angie is a Mental Health Accredited Social Worker and Child and Family Therapist who has been working with children and grown-ups for more than 25 years. She applies the wisdom of neuroscience and psychological therapies through the medium of evidence based Play Therapy so that counselling is fun!

**Contact The Counselling Space on:**  
**ph 0488 432165 fax 02 8322 8076**  
**email: [admin@thecounsellingspace.com.au](mailto:admin@thecounsellingspace.com.au)**  
**for more information.**



**The Counselling Space**  
**Inclusive, Welcoming**  
**and Neuroaffirming**