



Innovations in Counseling: Working with Minority Populations- Part 7
Session 6: Integrating Culture Into Child-Centered Play Therapy

Webinar Follow-up Question and Answer Session with Lauren Chase

Question from Ashley Bonvillain

What is the cultural impact of using limit setting with minority children?

Answer from Presenter

I think there is a strong cultural impact of using limit-setting. I would first think about how the culture views children and a lot of cultures see children as less than their adult counterparts and just need to obey. These cultures might struggle with limit setting because they feel it is not needed for the child.

Question from Kevin Gebken

Can you speak to the presence of any "authority figure" type toys (teacher, police officer, parent, religious figures, elders, etc.)?

Answer from Presenter

I think that having authority figures types in the playroom are important. I think that this would go under "real-life" toys. I think it is important have these authority figures be of a diverse range of cultures to reflect the child's cultural background.

Question from Kevin Gebken

While I understand that it is important to have culturally inclusive toys for the child (sex, color..) but could you discuss the need to have other different cultural toys available as well for the child to play with? For them work through navigating other cultures, people of different colors, different sexes, etc.

Answer from Presenter

It is important for the playroom to be consistent. The toys the child uses in the first sessions should be the same as in the fifth session. It is important to start with culturally diverse toys (not just the child's culture but others as well) and keep these toys consistently present for the child's time with you over the months.



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Question from Kevin Gebken

Can you speak to the do's or don'ts of "introducing" new figures into the play? So saying something like, "Today I'd like you to meet _____. They are _____."

Answer from Presenter

In child-centered play therapy, consistency is key. We want the child to see the same toys in the same place in the playroom each time. It is important to incorporate figures into the playroom at the beginning of the child's time with us for consistency's sake ideally.

Question from Eva Lucht

Can you share any personal play therapy experiences when culture was a challenge to you?

Answer from Presenter

I think it is challenging a lot of time because I am White and from the majority culture. Client's families worry I will not be able to understand them. I strive to allow the client's family to be the expert of their culture and come in with an open and learning mindset allowing them to teach me about their culture.

Question from Paola Rojas

How do you handle when these stigmas are brought up by the parents? (i.e. derogatory statements towards the therapist or thinking about therapy as being for "crazy" people)

Answer from Presenter

Empathy is the key. Really reflecting the parent's feeling of being misunderstood or ostracized by others. Listening to the parents and reflecting how they feel so that they feel heard and understood is SO important.

Question from Khaliliah Smith

What does the research show as the cause for such high mortality with AA women during childbirth?

Answer from Presenter

Progress is not necessarily measured by verbal responses though. Children can open up through their play non-verbally. They can remain silent and still open up to you through their play, non-verbally.



Question from Nisha Talwar

Could you please elaborate about therapist in and out of office?

Answer from Presenter

When I talk about the therapist's behavior in and out of the office, I mean how are you engaging in your personal life? Are you engaging with culturally different others? Are you striving to learn about other cultural traditions? Are you incorporating diversity into your everyday life? Having culturally diverse toys in your office and seeing culturally diverse clients is not enough. Are you engaging in cultural events in your city? Are you engaging with culturally different others in your everyday life?

Question from Nisha Talwar

I kind of struggle about how to ask questions especially if its a nondirective session.

Answer from Presenter

I strive to not ask questions of children in session. I would keep questions for intakes only.

Question from Marlene Travis

Can you reshare what your professor said about toys? It was something like these toys are selected not _____. The meaning implied the counselor was intentional about the specific toys that are being used. My audio cut out during that sentence area.

Answer from Presenter

Toys are selected not collected. We need to be intentional about the toys we choose to bring into the playroom. We want to have a reason for every toy we bring in there. Everything has a purpose to allow the most creativity and freedom for the child.

Question from Tamekia Young

How do you define "culturally different others"?

Answer from Presenter

I would say someone who is not of your culture or a culture that you are familiar with.



Question from Tamekia Young

Do you mean other than the clinician's culture or mainstream?

Answer from Presenter

I would say different than the clinician's culture.

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