

Graduate Certificate in Play and Art Therapy

Application Form March 2026 Intake

ABOUT THE COURSE

Play and Art Therapy are counselling methods that use toys, games, art materials and activities in purposeful ways to manage psychological and social difficulties. Play Therapy is the most developmentally appropriate and evidenced form of therapeutic intervention for children. Delivered by highly trained and experienced clinicians and teachers who also work in the field, the course is suitable for mental health graduates who work in the field of psychology, social work, counselling, occupational therapy or mental health nursing. The course will provide skills using play and other creative therapies as methods of treatment for multiple child mental health conditions in counselling and group work settings. Graduates will be able to demonstrate an understanding of Play and Art Therapy theories and principles whilst having the ability to apply therapeutic skills within a cultural, social and ethical framework. Graduates will have an appreciation of developmental stages of children and family systems and be sensitive to broader issues in assessment and design and delivery of therapeutic services. Completion of this course can provide a gateway into further higher degree studies in Play Therapy. From foundational skills in child centered play therapy to the integrative approaches of art, music, drama and sandtray therapies, the course builds on existing mental health qualifications to equip graduates for child and adolescent counselling roles.

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

Upon course completion, graduates can be eligible for professional registration with a number of Australian Play Therapy Associations, meeting the competent requirements for Associate / Provisional / Student Play Therapist Membership, meaning that they can work to become a professional Play Therapist. **This course meets the full training component for Play Therapy Membership with the Australian Play Therapists Association (APTA). This means after you complete this course (AND complete your clinical practice and supervision hours and secure insurance) you can be an APTA Registered Play Therapist.**

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is offered part-time and online over 12 months. This enables students who are balancing work, life and family commitments the flexibility to complete their studies. The Graduate Certificate of Play and Art Therapy Online is comprised of core and elective units of study, unit assessments, an art therapy process group and group supervision. Upon completion of this qualification, students may be eligible to apply for enrolment in higher degrees in Play Therapy.

APPLICATION CRITERIA

Applicants must have successfully completed a recognised Bachelor degree or equivalent in the fields of psychology, social work, counselling, occupational therapy or mental health nursing or a Masters degree in art therapy, music therapy or dance/movement therapy and hold (or be working toward) registration with your Mental Health Registering Body. A clear Police Check and/or Working with Children Clearance Notice is required by students before they can enrol.

GRADUATE PLAY AND ART THERAPY TRAINING WITH SYDNEY CENTRE FOR CREATIVE CHANGE OFFERS:

- Advanced specialist training in a range of Play and Art Therapy modalities with skilled, experienced trainers,
- Sound theoretical and evidence-based foundations in play and art therapies, skills-based training, experiential learning and self-reflective processes that provide enriching opportunities for professional and personal development,
- Learning about effective ways to engage and contract with, support and involve parents and carers in Play Therapy,
- Development of therapeutic skills and practices to work with children from 2 -22 years old with a range of presentations and diagnoses,
- A highly intensive, safe and supportive learning environment in a small group of no more than 12 students,
- Completion of a highly professional program of study to enhance employment prospects in the fields of child and adolescent counselling and Play Therapy,
- Clinical supervision with leaders in the field of Play and Art Therapy,
- Play and Art Therapy training that offers a sequential pathway for those in Australia to become a Clinical Member and Registered Play Therapist with peak Play Therapy associations in Australia,
- Elective Training with approved training providers for ongoing professional development with PACFA and ACA, peak bodies for counsellors and psychotherapists in Australia,
- The opportunity to network with and get support from highly trained Play and Art Therapists and specialists in this field.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COURSE APPLICATION

Course applicants must have:

1. A recognised mental health qualification at the following level:

- Psychology – minimum Bachelors level with current or completing registration or
- Social Work - minimum Bachelors level with current or completing registration, or
- Counselling - minimum Bachelors of Counselling or post graduate qualification in counselling, or
- Creative Art Therapies, Music Therapy, Art Therapy or Dance Therapy at Masters level, or
- Occupational Therapy - minimum Bachelors level with current or completing registration, or
- Mental Health Nursing - minimum Bachelors level with current or completing registration.

2. A current Working with Children Check

3. Have, or be eligible for, registration, licensing or student / trainee membership with the relevant counselling, social work or other mental health registering body, board, association or federation in Australia, or other country e.g. APS, Australian Social Workers Association, a member of one of the PACFA member associations (www.pacfa.org.au), on the Psychotherapists and Counsellors Federation of Australia Register (PACFA), Australian Counselling Association (www.theaca.net.au)
4. A capacity to be self reflective and committed to personal growth and self-development.

COURSE OVERVIEW AND TRAINING DATES March 2025 Intake

The course consists of 200 hours of training to be completed. The online training in this Certificate Course will include both Core and Elective Training Units and Webinars. There are 5 x 3 day Core Intensives and 50 hours of Elective Units you can select according to your interests and availabilities. Included in this course is 40 hours online learning including: pre-recorded webinars, academic readings and exercises, graded assessments and maintenance of reflective learning portfolio throughout the course that you can individually pace. Additionally, this course entitles you to 10 hours of group supervision and 10 hours of an Art Therapy Group.

TOTAL COURSE HOURS IS 200

Including	90 hours Intensive Core Units Live Online
	48 hours Elective Course Units Live Online
	26 hours reflective journal
	16 hours Webinars (on-demand) and written reflections
	10 hours Group Supervision Live Online
	10 hour Art Therapy Group Live Online

INTENSIVE COURSE UNITS

UNIT 1 Foundations of counselling children and young people

Ethical, legal, social and developmental principles in working with children and young people.
Child-Centered Play Therapy Part A

Dates: 2 – 4 March, 2026

Times: 9am – 4pm AEDT

UNIT 2 Introduction to Play Therapy *

Child-Centered Play Therapy B/ Pluralistic Play Therapy Approaches: Introduction to Play Therapy Models – CBT, Gestalt, Adlerian, Jungian, Play Therapy Dimensions Model

Dates: 6 – 8 April, 2026

Times: 9am – 4pm AEST

**Successful completion of assessment of skills required for Certificate continuation. A certificate of attendance will be offered to those exiting at this point.*

UNIT 3 Introduction to Art Therapy

Art based therapies exploring a range of art therapy media and methods for counselling children and young people individually and in groups.

Dates: 4 – 6 May, 2026

Times: 9am – 4pm AEST

UNIT 4 Symbols, Sand trays and Stories

Working with symbols, sand trays, stories and therapeutic card sets for older children and adolescents with a range of presenting issues, exploring a range of therapeutic methods.

Dates: 1 – 3 June, 2026

Times: 9am – 4pm AEST

UNIT 5 Introduction to Music, Movement and Drama Therapy

Creative movement, music, purposeful games, activities and drama for therapeutic group and individual work with children and young people.

Dates: 6 – 8 July, 2026

Times: 9am – 4pm AEST

ELECTIVE COURSE UNITS TBC

Ninety Minute Units

- Building Children's Attachment, Empathy and Resilience
- Therapeutic Play for Attachment Issues in Children aged 4-10
- Windows through Grief: Helping Children Manage Loss
- Creative Zoom Whiteboard: Making Online Therapy Engaging and Interactive for Children, Adults and Family Groups
- Not Another Icebreaker: Engaging Activities for Starting Groups
- The Sailboat of Life: Creative Art Process for Children, Young People and Adults

Three Point/Hour Units

- Playful Therapy: Narrative Based Activities for Assessment and Intervention
- Tree of Life: Creative Art Process
- Finding Your Hero: Narrative Storytelling Strategies for Counselling
- Supporting Grieving Children
- Welcome to Dramatherapy
- Infant Mental Health and Messy Play
- Managing Child Aggression in Therapy
- Movement Interventions for Child Counselling
- Integrating Apps and Tech Based Games in Child Counselling
- Understanding Themes in Play Therapy
- Engaging Boys and Young Men with Gestalt Play Therapy

- Supporting Children Through Family Change
- Preparing Parents for Child Counselling

Six Point/Hour Units

- Creative Interventions for Children with Anxiety
- Creative Interventions for Children with Trauma

Play Therapy Clinical Supervision

Course participants who successfully complete all 5 Intensives and pass related assessments can engage in 10 hours of group supervision with a play therapy approved supervisor provided they are working in a clinical role with children/young people.

Online Art Therapy Group

Weekly two-hour group for 5 weeks from Thursday 7th May – 4th June, 2026, 6.30-8.30pm AEST.

COURSE PROCESSES, ASSIGNMENTS AND READING REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

- Attendance at and active participation in all scheduled training events,
- Completion of all assessments,
- Maintenance of a reflective learning journal,
- Reading books and articles,
- Reflective written processes, practical activities and exercises,
- Participation in group sessions.

COURSE TRAINERS

Principle Trainer – Jacki Short

Jacki is a Registered Play Therapist and Supervisor and a Registered Counselling Psychologist. She is an active member of the Australasian and Pacific Play Therapy Association and the Australian Psychological Society. She is one of the leading trainers in Play Therapy in Australia and developed the Graduate Certificate in Play and Art Therapy to provide fellow mental health clinicians with a broad range of play therapy skills for working with children and young people. Jacki has more than 30 years' experience in counselling and group work with children and young people in schools, hospitals, welfare organisations and private practice. She has extensive training, a passion for and commitment to high quality training and support for others in Play Therapy.

COURSE FEES

Non-refundable Administrative Fee \$150

Full fee for this course is \$8000 inc GST.

Payment plans:

2 x \$4000 payments (no additional fees)

12 month plan \$690 month (includes additional admin fee)

18 month plan \$470 month (includes additional admin fee)

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

An application for the Graduate Certificate of Art and Play Therapy must be submitted to info@sydneycentreforcreativechange.com.au. Following receipt of completed application form, applicants who meet criteria for course inclusion will be invited to attend an online intake interview and sent an invoice for the administrative fee. Referees will then be contacted and all applicants will be notified of their course status.

FEEDBACK FROM COURSE GRADUATES

Highly recommend this course

The course has encouraged me to think outside the box and challenged me to be more creative in my work with children and young people. I feel inspired and refreshed with new ideas. I have learnt so many useful and meaningful ways to work therapeutically with children and young people. I find myself growing as a person and professionally. I highly recommend this course to new and experienced clinicians who are passionate to work with children and teens.

Trang Nguyen, Mental Health Social Worker

Made me a more playful and adventurous counsellor

The course is structured extremely well, beginning with a focus on non-directive child led play therapy which really seemed to ground the qualities needed to support kids therapeutically. Then with each following module there seemed to be more scope (and more challenge) to engage personally in the expressive forms I was learning. The end result is that I have learnt the theory and skills needed to support the kids I work with as well as personal experience that has made me a more playful and adventurous counsellor (and human).

Donna Spillman, Counsellor

Motivated and inspired

Of all the training I have done, the knowledge and skills you gave me have been sustained the best. I feel I have not only learnt so much but felt, lived and taken on board this whole new philosophy of working with children and adolescents. I've been motivated and inspired to follow what makes my heart sing, not just work. Thank you, for allowing me to realise I'm in the right field of practice and that I can give this work my own flair, flavour and colour. I'm finding myself really thinking about the work I'm doing with children now and enjoy being on this journey with them. You create VERY special moments in time for people and I think every one of us walked out of the course with so much more than we ever thought we'd receive. Thank you.

Social Worker

This is really worth the investment, a valuable experience and you will not regret it!

This course has truly unlocked my passions and abilities and inspired me to bring creativity and experiential activities to my therapeutic work. All of the learning was incredibly valuable to my work and also to my personal development and growth. I feel as though I have been unlocked in working creatively with children, I am no longer afraid of trying a new technique and just allowing the session to flow, trusting the process. The learning has really taught me to be more child centred and client led which is very freeing.

If you are thinking of doing this course, go for it! This course is amazing and will enrich your therapeutic work so much. You will come out of it with a greater understanding of children and will

be able to truly meet their needs in the counselling environment. You will also be able to reconnect with your own inner child and open up your creativity, learning about yourself along the way! This is really worth the investment, a valuable experience and you will not regret it! **Renee O'Connor, Counsellor**

Have never enjoyed a course as much

I'd have to say, the course and its content grabbed me from Day 1! I enjoyed the fact that we got into the role plays by Day 2 and had lots of opportunities to practice. Great learning for me! The case studies helped to put play therapy into "real life" after the role plays, loved them too. I felt apprehensive about the 3 days of art therapy because I see myself has having few artistic skills. In fact, they were the most emotional and powerful days of the course for me. I've never done art therapy and my anxiety around my artistic talents simply melted away. The experiential aspect was amazing and the only way to learn! I have never enjoyed a course as much as I've enjoyed yours. I would do it again in a heartbeat! My head was buzzing for days after each workshop, but in a good way! Thank you ! Thanks for your generosity of information, your gentle way of containing the emotional moments, the caring, calming and trusting environment you created and your infectious passion for play therapy.

Counsellor, Anglicare

Amazing

The days were well planned and executed. Information shared and learnt was amazing, all worth putting into practice. The applications to my work from this training make me feel proud of the person and psychologist I am becoming.

Psychologist, Private Practice





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Application Form

1.Name:

2.Address:

3.Telephone numbers:

4.Email address:

5.Current qualification/s and/or courses completing:

6. Please attach your current CV including certified copies of qualifications and awards.

7. Current occupation:

8. Please state your details of membership, registration or licensing that you have with a relevant mental health association, board or body.

9. Please outline your prior experience with children.

11. Please attach a certified copy of your Working with Children Check approval

12. Referee Report – A professional referee report needs to be completed and submitted as part of your application. This can be from a manager, supervisor or team leader or another who has known you in a senior clinical capacity at work in the last five years. If you have recently completed your studies, this report can be completed by a lecturer or placement supervisor who has known you personally in the last four years and is happy to be contacted by phone to discuss your application.

Application Checklist

- ☐ Typed application
- ☐ Current CV
- ☐ Certified copies of qualifications and awards
- ☐ Certified copy of Working with Children Check
- ☐ Professional Referee Report

Payment Information

Upon submission of your application, you will receive an invoice for the \$150 non-refundable deposit to secure your interview for a place in the course. Registration will not be processed until payment information is received. Payment plan available upon request at interview.

Cancellation Policy

All payments are non-refundable but may be transferable in some circumstances. Sydney Centre for Creative Change reserves the right to cancel the course if minimum numbers for registration are not met. Full monies paid in this instance will be reimbursed.

By signing below, I indicate that I understand and accept these terms and conditions.

Signature of Applicantor tick box ☐ Date

Please email your application with scanned documents to:
Jacki Short
info@sydneycentreforcreativechange.com.au

Professional Referee Report

Applicant's Details (Applicant to complete)

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Referee's Details (Referee to complete)

Name:

Job Title/Professional Role:

Name of Workplace:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Report Questions

1. In what capacity have you known the course applicant?
2. For what period of time have you known them?
(Please specify years, eg. 2010 – 2026)
3. Please indicate how suitable a candidate the applicant would be in working in a counselling capacity with children and young people?

☐ Unsuitable

☐ Moderately Suitable

☐ Highly Suitable

Comments:

4. Please indicate how suitable a candidate the applicant would be in a small group, skills-based, experiential learning environment?

☐ Unsuitable

☐ Moderately Suitable

☐ Highly Suitable

Comments:

5. Do you have any concerns or reservations about this applicant?
6. Would you consider the application to be self reflective and open to feedback?
7. Please include any other comments you would like to make about the applicant.

Thank you for completing the professional referee form.

Please email this completed form to:

Jacki Short
Principal Psychologist
Sydney Centre for Creative Change
info@sydneycentreforcreativechange.com.au

