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# **AERCS THERAPY FOR CHILDREN**



**Toronto | Orangeville**



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# INTRODUCTION

Parents are busy people. They're raising children, preparing healthy meals, and car-pooling their kids around town to play sports. Yet their most important job is as a role model. Parents and caregivers play a key role in how children perceive the world, react to certain situations, and how they feel about themselves and their own self-worth.

Healthy children have a positive quality of life and function well at home, in school, and in their communities. To be mentally healthy during childhood includes reaching developmental and emotional milestones and learning social skills and how to cope with tough challenges.

When children exhibit new and unsettling behavior, or newly negative ways in which they handle their emotions, and when their actions cause distress and impact others, mental health professionals are a critical resource.

AERCS embraces the philosophy that people are products of complex systems, rather than individuals who act in isolation. Therefore, behavior is influenced by a variety of elements that exist together in relation to each other. The factors include family, friends, social settings, religious structure, economic class and home environment.

AERCS mission is to create and connect spaces of learning and growth for both the child and the families involved in the process.

At AERCS we know that Parents and Caregivers have an undeniable influence on their children. We work together with Parents/Caregivers with their child's values, choices, behaviors, and overall health.

AERCS therapeutic environment is a safe space for children to feel valued, respected, heard, and understood. Through our therapy we help Children and Tweens to have tools to use when they feel anxious and overwhelmed or when they have big worries to move past.

Our individual therapy, group therapy, training programs and workshops are strengths-based and empowerment-focused regimes. If relevant, we can bring a trauma-informed, relational, anti-oppressive and cultural humility focused approach to all our workshops or presentations. Participants will be provided with all the necessary art/activity materials and will be invited to create and be guided through an insightful experience.



# THE AERCS TEAM



Our programs have been created by our clinical director and founder of AERCS, Gloria Segovia, MSW RSW, SSW, RP, BA, in collaboration with her team:

**Alison Clironomos-Di Matteo**

Registered Early Childhood Educator  
Wellness Coach and Certified Play Therapist

**Julie Anderson, RP, MEd, BA, Bed.**

Member of the CRPO, CCPA  
Retired curriculum consultant of the YRDSB

# PLAY THERAPY

Play therapy is treatment that uses play as a means of helping children communicate, express their feelings, and process their experiences. Play is a natural form of communication for children, and play therapy uses this medium to help kids explore and resolve difficult emotional and behavioural situations.

During sessions, the therapy provides a safe and supportive environment for the child to engage in play. The therapist may use a variety of play materials, games, and sensory toys to facilitate the child's expression of emotions and experiences.

Play therapists may also employ such techniques as observation, reflection, and interpretation to help kids process their feelings and better understand the outcome. Therapist may work with the child individually or in small groups, depending on the child's needs and preferences.



Play therapy in rural communities can involve John Deere tractor toys in black, volcanic sand filled boxes.



Everyday objects can be toys in Play Therapy modalities.

Play therapy can be used to address a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties, including anxiety, depression, trauma, grief, and behavioral problems. Play therapy is often used with children because it is developmentally appropriate and engaging, and it allows the children to express themselves in a way that feels comfortable and natural to them.

Overall, play therapy is a valuable tool for helping children build emotional awareness, develop coping skills, and improve their overall well-being.



## **Which Therapeutic Modalities are used in Play Therapy?**

Play therapy can involve a range of modalities or techniques, depending on the needs and preferences of the child and the therapist's approach. Some common modalities used in play therapy include:

### **1. Non-Directive Play**

Non-directive play therapy is child-led, meaning the child chooses the materials and activities they most enjoy during the session. The therapist provides a safe and supportive environment for the child to explore and express themselves.

### **2. Directive Play**

Directive play therapy involves the therapist guiding the child in specific play activities, such as using puppets to act out a story or playing a board game. This can be helpful for children who have difficulty initiating play or expressing themselves.

### **3. Sensory Therapy**

Sensory therapy involves using sensory objects, such as a tray of sand and a variety of miniature objects, figurines, or natural materials, to create a scene or story. The child can manipulate the objects in the sand to express their thoughts and feelings.

### **4. Art Therapy**

Art therapy involves using art materials, such as paint, markers, or clay, to express emotions and experiences. The therapist may provide prompts or themes for the child to explore through their art.

### **5. Movement Therapy**

Movement therapy involves using movement and physical activity, such as dance or yoga, to help children express and process their emotions.

### **6. Drama Therapy**

Drama therapy involves using drama and role-play to help children explore and express emotions and experiences.

**The goal of play therapy is to create a safe and supportive environment for the child to express themselves and process their experiences. Play therapy can be a flexible and creative approach that allows the therapist to adapt to the needs and preferences of each child.**

## **Why is Play Therapy Important for Children?**

Play therapy is an important tool for children because it allows them to express themselves and process their emotions and experiences in a way that feels natural and comfortable to them. Children often struggle to articulate their feelings and may not have the vocabulary to express themselves verbally. Play therapy provides a non-threatening and developmentally appropriate way for children to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

### **What are some reasons Play Therapy is important for children?**

#### **1. Promotes Emotional Expression**

Play therapy provides children with a safe and supportive space to express themselves emotionally. Through play, children can express a wide range of emotions, including anger, sadness, fear, and joy.

#### **2. Develops Coping Skills**

Play therapy can help children develop coping skills and resilience by providing them with an opportunity to practice problem-solving, emotional regulation, and social skills.

#### **3. Builds Self-Esteem**

Play therapy can help children develop a sense of mastery and accomplishment, which can improve their self-esteem and confidence.

#### **4. Increases Emotional Intelligence**

Play therapy can help children develop emotional intelligence, which involves the ability to identify, understand, and manage emotions. By exploring emotions through play, children can develop a greater awareness of their own emotions and the emotions of others.

#### **5. Addresses Trauma and Stress**

Play therapy can be especially helpful for children who have experienced trauma or stressful experiences. Through play, children can process their experiences and develop a sense of safety and control.



## Who Provides Play Therapy for Children?

AERCS Therapists are Masters level Registered Social Workers and Registered Psychotherapists. At AERCS, our Registered Early Childhood Educators and Certified Play Therapists join in and collaborate during our play therapy sessions for children.

Our skilled therapists have extensive experience in the education sector which includes working for school boards, as teachers, school social workers, RECE's and program development specialists. We operate with a trauma-informed, anti-oppressive, culturally sensitive lens.



Play therapy can challenge kids to explore outdoor spaces as they search inside themselves.

**Fees: Each Play Therapy session, conducted by an MSW, RSW, RP, or CPT, costs \$190 for a 50-minute duration.**

# AERCS SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM

## What is the Social Skills Training Program for Children?

Social skills training for children are a set of techniques and strategies that aim to teach kids how to interact with others in a positive and effective way. These skills include verbal and nonverbal communication, problem-solving, decision-making, empathy, self-control, and conflict resolution.

### Techniques used in social skills training for children include:

- 1. Modeling:** Children learn by watching and imitating others. Modeling involves showing children how to interact with others in a positive way by demonstrating appropriate behaviors.
- 2. Role-playing:** This technique allows children to practice social skills in a safe and supportive environment. Children are given scenarios to act out, and are coached on how to respond appropriately.
- 3. Social stories:** Social stories are short narratives that help children understand social situations and appropriate behaviors. They can be used to teach children how to handle specific situations, such as making friends or dealing with bullying.
- 4. Group activities:** Group activities can help children develop social skills by providing opportunities for them to interact with others in a structured environment.
- 5. Positive reinforcement:** Positive reinforcement involves rewarding children for positive social behaviors, such as sharing or being kind to others. This can help reinforce these behaviors and encourage children to continue practicing them.

Overall, social skills training is an important way to help kids develop the skills they need to form positive relationships and navigate social situations in a healthy and effective way.



## Why is social skills training important?

**Social skills training is important for children because it:**

- 1. Builds positive relationships:** Social skills training helps children develop the skills they need to form positive relationships with peers, teachers, and other adults. Children who struggle with social skills may have difficulty making friends, communicating effectively, and building trust with others.
- 2. Reduces conflict:** Children who have strong social skills are better equipped to resolve conflicts and negotiate disagreements in a peaceful and respectful manner. This can help reduce bullying and other forms of aggressive behavior.
- 3. Improves academic performance:** Children who struggle with social skills may also struggle academically. When children feel isolated or disconnected from their peers, they may be less engaged in learning and less likely to participate in classroom activities.
- 4. Enhances emotional regulation:** Social skills training can also help children learn to regulate their emotions and cope with stress and anxiety. By learning effective communication skills, problem-solving techniques, and stress-management strategies, children can develop greater resilience and adaptability.
- 5. Prepares for adulthood:** Social skills are critical for success in adulthood. By developing strong social skills early on, children are better prepared to navigate more complex social situations, build positive relationships, and succeed in both personal and professional contexts.

**Overall, social skills training is an important aspect of a child's development, as it can help them build positive relationships, reduce conflict, improve academic performance, enhance emotional regulation, and prepare for success in adulthood.**

## Who provides Social Skills Training to Children?

### AERCS Therapists:

The team of Masters level Registered Social Workers and Registered Psychotherapists at AERCS provide individual or group therapy to children who struggle with social skills. Our Certified Play Therapist and Registered Early Childhood Educator is available to collaborate during the session.

These highly skilled therapists have vast experiences in the education sector. These experiences include working for school boards, as teachers, school social workers, RECE's and program development specialists. They operate with a trauma informed, anti-oppressive, culturally sensitive lens.

### Social Skills Training Program Overview:

#### COST

\$300 per session  
or  
\$2400 program

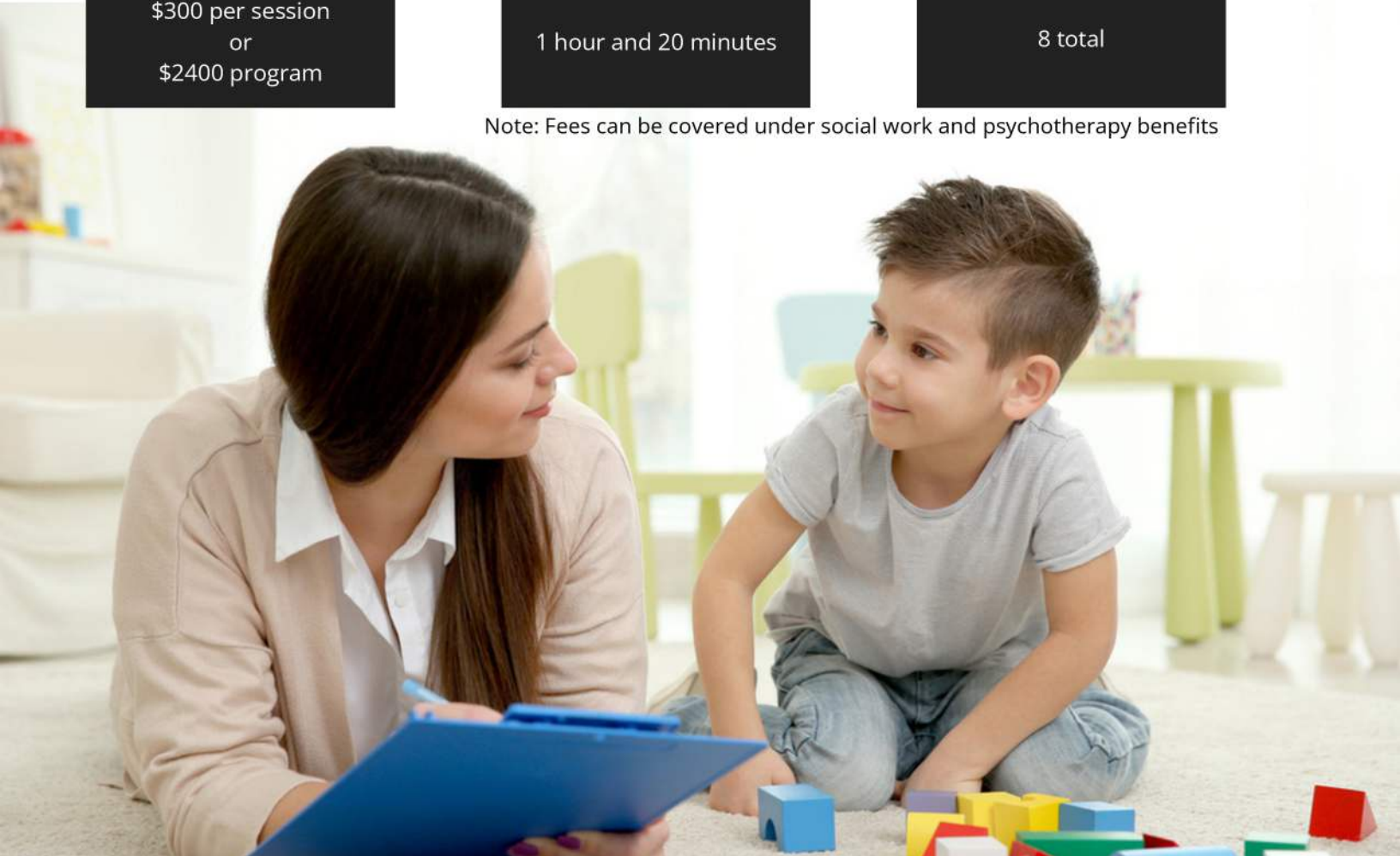
#### SESSION DURATION

1 hour and 20 minutes

#### TOTAL SESSIONS

8 total

Note: Fees can be covered under social work and psychotherapy benefits



**Overall, social skills training is an important aspect of a child's development, as it can help them build positive relationships, reduce conflict, improve academic performance, enhance emotional regulation, and prepare for success in adulthood.**



## **Social Skills Training Program**

### **Initial Assessment**

#### **Module 1 - Improving Communication**

**1. Practicing active listening:** Active listening is an essential component of effective communication. We encourage the child to pay attention to what others are saying, make eye contact, and respond appropriately. This can help the child better understand the message being conveyed and respond appropriately.

**2. Using role-play exercises:** Role-playing is an effective way to help a child develop their communication skills. We will provide scenarios that require the child to use specific communication skills, such as asking for help or expressing their emotions, and have them practice with a partner or in a small group.

**3. Encouraging clear and concise language:** We will help the child to develop clear and concise language by providing them with feedback on their word choice and sentence structure. We encourage them to use language that is easy to understand and avoid jargon or slang.

**4. Using visual aids:** Visual aids can be helpful in improving communication skills for children. AERCS Therapists use pictures or diagrams to help children more easily comprehend complex ideas, and we encourage our subjects to use visual aids when communicating with others.

**Overall, social skills training is an important aspect of a child's development, as it can help them build positive relationships, reduce conflict, improve academic performance, enhance emotional regulation, and prepare for success in adulthood.**

## **Module 2 - Problem Solving**

**1. Brainstorming:** Brainstorming is a technique that involves generating multiple ideas or solutions to a problem. We teach the child how to brainstorm and encourage them to come up with as many solutions as possible, even if some seem silly or unrealistic.

**2. Using visual aids:** Visual aids, such as flowcharts or diagrams, can help children understand complex social situations and identify potential solutions. We encourage the child to draw out the problem and potential solutions to help them visualize and understand the issue.

**3. Encouraging reflection:** After a problem-solving activity or role-play, we encourage the child to reflect on what worked and what they could have done differently. Reflection helps children to learn from their experiences and improve their problem-solving skills.

**4. Collaborative problem-solving:** We encourage children to work together to solve problems, emphasizing the importance of communication, active listening, and compromise. By working collaboratively, children can learn to understand different perspectives and find solutions that work for everyone involved.





### **Module 3 - Decision Making**

- 1. Practicing decision making:** We provide opportunities for the child to practice making decisions. We start with small decisions and gradually increase the complexity of the decisions as the child becomes more comfortable.
- 2. Encouraging critical thinking:** We encourage the child to think critically about the decisions they make. We ask them questions to help them consider different perspectives and potential outcomes.
- 3. Discussing values and goals:** AERCS Therapists help children identify their values and goals and use the milestones as a basis for decision making. We encourage children to consider how different decisions align with their values and goals.
- 4. Providing feedback:** Provide feedback to the child on their decision making and encourage reflection.

### **Module 4 - Conflict Resolution**

- 1. Utilizing active listening skills:** how to listen actively by summarizing what the other person is saying and asking clarifying questions.
- 2. Practicing perspective-taking:** learn to take the perspective of the other person by asking them to imagine how the other person feels or what they might be thinking.
- 3. Teaching negotiation skills:** finding a solution that works for everyone involved. Identifying common ground, brainstorming solutions, and compromising.
- 4. Encouraging problem-solving:** Conflict often arises from a problem that needs to be solved. We encourage the child to focus on finding a solution to the problem rather than winning the argument.
- 5. Emphasizing the importance of communication:** Good communication is key to resolving conflicts. Expressing their feelings and needs clearly and respectfully, and how to respond to the other person's communication in a constructive way.

## **Module 5 - Self Control**

**1. Teaching mindfulness techniques:** Mindfulness techniques, such as deep breathing or counting to ten, can help children regulate their emotions and improve self-control.

**2. Practicing relaxation techniques:** Relaxation techniques, such as progressive muscle relaxation or visualization, can help children reduce stress and improve self-control.

**3. Using social stories:** Social stories can help children understand and learn appropriate behaviors in different situations. Create social stories that focus on self-control and provide examples of what the child can do in challenging situations.

**4. Practice self-reflection:** Encouraging the child to reflect on their behavior and emotions and identify strategies that help them maintain self-control.

## **Module 6 - Empathy**

**1. Teaching perspective-taking:** Perspective-taking is the ability to understand how others feel and see things. We help the child learn to take the perspective of others by asking them to imagine how the other person feels or what they might be thinking.

**2. Using role-playing:** Role-playing is a great way to help children practice empathy in a safe and supportive environment. Create scenarios where the child must imagine how another person is feeling and respond in a supportive way.

**3. Practicing gratitude:** Gratitude can help children develop empathy by increasing their awareness of the most positive things in their lives and the lives of others. We encourage the child to focus on those things for which they are thankful for and to help them find ways to express their gratitude to others.

## **Final Assessment**



# AERCS EMOTION FOCUSED THERAPY PROGRAM

## What is Emotion Focused Therapy for Children?

Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) for children is a therapeutic approach that aims to help children and families identify and manage their emotions in healthier ways. EFT focuses on helping children and families build emotional awareness and emotional regulation skills, improve communication, and strengthen relationships.

EFT is based on the belief that emotions are an important part of the human experience and that they play a key role in shaping behavior, thoughts, and relationships. The approach is grounded in attachment theory, which suggests that early experiences with caregivers shape the way that children relate to others and manage emotions throughout their lives.

**EFT for children typically involves several key components, including:**

- 1. Building emotional awareness:** Children and families are encouraged to identify and label emotions, as well as understand the triggers that lead to emotional responses.
- 2. Developing emotional regulation skills:** Children and families learn techniques for managing and regulating emotions, such as deep breathing, mindfulness, and relaxation exercises.
- 3. Improving communication:** EFT focuses on improving communication between family members by encouraging open and honest expression of thoughts and feelings.
- 4. Strengthening relationships:** EFT aims to improve attachment and strengthen relationships between family members by increasing emotional understanding and responsiveness.

**EFT for children may be used to treat a range of emotional and behavioral problems, including anxiety, depression, trauma, and relationship difficulties.**

## Why is Emotion Focused Therapy Important for Children?

**EFT for children typically involves several key components, including:**

- 1. Emotional regulation:** EFT helps children learn to regulate their emotions in a healthy way. Children who struggle with emotional regulation may have difficulty managing their feelings, which can lead to behavioral problems, anxiety, and depression.
- 2. Communication skills:** EFT helps children and families develop effective communication skills, which can improve relationships and reduce conflict. Children who struggle with communication may have difficulty expressing their needs and emotions, which can lead to frustration and misunderstandings.
- 3. Family dynamics:** EFT focuses on improving family dynamics by helping family members understand and respond to each other's emotions. This can lead to greater empathy and support within the family unit.
- 4. Trauma and attachment:** EFT can be particularly effective in treating children who have experienced trauma or disruptions in attachment. By focusing on emotions and relationships, EFT can help children and families heal from past experiences and build stronger bonds.
- 5. Long-term benefits:** EFT can provide children with lifelong skills for emotional regulation, communication, and relationship building. By learning to manage their emotions and communicate effectively, children can develop healthier relationships and improve their overall well-being.

**Overall, EFT is important for children because it can help them develop the emotional regulation, communication skills, and strong relationships they need to thrive both now and in the future.**



## Who provides Emotion Focused Therapy to Children?

### AERCS Therapists:

Our team of Masters level Registered Social Workers and Registered Psychotherapists at AERCS provide emotion focused therapy for children. Our Certified Play Therapist and Registered Early Childhood Educator is available to join in and collaborate during the session. These highly skilled therapists have lots of experiences in the education sector. These experiences include working for school boards, as teachers, school social workers, RECE's and program development specialists. They operate with a trauma informed, anti oppressive, culturally sensitive lens.

### Emotion Focused Training Program Overview:

#### COST

\$300 per session  
or  
\$3600 program

#### SESSION DURATION

1 hour and 20 minutes

#### TOTAL SESSIONS

12 total

Note: Fees can be covered under social work and psychotherapy benefits



Overall, social skills training is an important aspect of a child's development, as it can help them build positive relationships, reduce conflict, improve academic performance, enhance emotional regulation, and prepare for success in adulthood.

## Emotion Focused Therapy

### Initial Assessment

### **Module 1: Emotions Are Our Friends**

#### Recognizing Emotions

- Recognizing a range of emotions in self and others.
- Assessing the intensity and/or the level of emotion.
- Understanding connections between thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- Managing strong emotions and using strategies to self-regulate.

#### **Applying strategies such as:**

- Using a “feelings wheel” to learn words to express feelings.
- Using a “feelings thermometer” or pictures to gauge intensity of emotion.

### **Module 2: Having Fun With Busy Brains**

#### Stress management and Coping

- Managing stress through physical activity.
- Seeking support.
- Problem solving.

#### **Applying strategies such as:**

- Deep breathing guided imagery.
- Stretching.
- Pausing and reflecting.
- "Unplugging" before sleep.



## **Module 3: Being Friendly to Myself**

Positive Motivation and Perseverance

- Re-framing negative thoughts and experiences.
- Practising perseverance.
- Applying a growth mindset.
- Reflecting on things to be grateful for and expressing gratitude.
- Practising optimism.

### **Applying strategies such as:**

- Sharing positive messages for peers.
- Using personal affirmations.

## **Module 4: Healthy Relationships**

Building Empathy and Teamwork

- Being cooperative and collaborative.
- Using conflict-resolution skills.
- Listening.
- Being respectful.
- Considering other perspectives.
- Practising kindness and empathy.

### **Applying strategies such as:**

- Seeking opportunities to help others and “give back”.
- Using role play to practise language and actions.

## **Module 5: Being Happy Me**

Self-Awareness and Sense of Identity

- Knowing oneself.
- Caring for oneself.
- Having a sense of mattering and of purpose.
- Identifying personal strengths.
- Having a sense of belonging and community.
- Communicating with assertiveness.

### **Applying strategies such as:**

- Monitoring progress in skill development.
- Reflecting on strengths and accomplishments and sharing these with peers or caring adults.

## **Module 6: Thinking Me**

Critical and Creative Thinking

- Making connections.
- Making decisions.
- Evaluating choices.
- Communicating effectively.
- Managing time.
- Setting goals.
- Applying organizational skills

### **Applying strategies such as:**

- Using webs and diagrams to help identify connections and interrelationships.
- Using Teaching Games for Understanding to develop strategic thinking.
- Using organizational strategies and tools, such as planners and goal-setting frameworks.



# FEES

Therapy Type	Individual Session	Full Program
Play Therapy Sessions	\$190 / 50 Min.	-
Social Skills Training Program	\$300 / 80 Min.	\$2400 program 8 Sessions
Emotion Focused Therapy Program	\$300 / 80 Min.	\$3600 program 12Sessions

**Fees can be covered under social work and psychotherapy benefits**

# SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

For additional information, or to begin the process of therapy at AERCS, please contact us to book a complementary 15 minute phone call consultation.



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# AERCS TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

## **Gloria Segovia, MSW, RSW, RP**

In Person and Online

Gloria Segovia is a Dual-language (English and Spanish) Registered Psychotherapist and Registered Clinical Social Worker with over 15 years of experience. She is experienced in providing clinical social work and psychotherapy to children, youth, families, and couples. Gloria has worked in private practice as well as in the hospital sector, and supervises masters level social work students in their practicum through York University.



Gloria is an empathic and compassionate master's level social worker with over a decade of experience in supporting people through mental health and addiction challenges. She specializes in addiction and relapse prevention as well as couples counseling. Gloria is registered with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers and the College of Registered Psychotherapy of Ontario, both in excellent standing.

As a child therapist, Gloria's focus is to help children and families overcome challenges and promote emotional wellness. With extensive experience working with children of all ages, she has developed a strong passion for empowering children to become confident, resilient, and happy individuals.

Using evidence-based therapies and techniques, such as play therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, emotion focused therapy and trauma-informed care, Gloria works with children to address a wide range of emotional and behavioral concerns, including anxiety, depression, ADHD, ADD, OCD, trauma, and behavioral problems. She believes in a holistic approach that includes collaboration with parents and caregivers to help them better understand their child's needs and develop effective parenting strategies.

Gloria is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for children to express themselves and explore their feelings. She believes in a strengths-based approach that emphasizes a child's unique strengths and abilities and strives to create a positive and uplifting atmosphere where children can build their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Through ongoing professional development, Gloria stays up to date with the latest research and best practices in the field of child therapy, and is dedicated to providing the highest quality of care to every child and family I work with.



Gloria Segovia with a client in the AERCS Orangeville office.

### **Belief in Strength-Based**

Gloria believes that we all have the ability to grow and change. This leads her to pay attention to client strengths, in addition to their challenges. It is her belief that therapy cannot only help clients address concerns and symptoms, but also assist them in developing greater connection and meaning in their lives.

### **Safe Environment**

Gloria's experience in various roles has given her the opportunity to work with individuals of diverse backgrounds. As such, it is important to recognize and respect the full range of our differences. In doing so and in Gloria's therapeutic practice, she remains committed to fostering a safe environment which promotes equality, inclusion and diversity. As a therapist, it is Gloria's aim to foster an environment where you feel safe to unpack your vulnerabilities and emotional burdens.



## **Julie Anderson, Registered Psychotherapist, RP (Q)**

In Person and Online

Julie Anderson is a Registered Psychotherapist (Qualifying) with the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) and a member of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA). Her educational background includes a Master of Arts in Psychological Counselling (In Progress), Master of Education, Bachelor of Education, and Bachelor of Arts (Psychology).



Julie has provided psychoeducation and health promotion opportunities to diverse individuals and groups of adults, children, and youth within a large school board and while working for the Ontario government. She is experienced in creating positive change and believes that everyone has the capacity to overcome challenges through respectful understanding, collaboration, and effective goal setting.

Julie's approach to therapy is client-centered and collaborative. She believes in working closely with her clients to develop individualized treatment plans that address their unique needs and goals. Julie uses a variety of therapeutic modalities, including play therapy, art therapy, and talk therapy, to help children and families express themselves and explore their emotions in a safe and supportive environment.

Julie will actively listen, without judgement, to understand the issues that you are experiencing and help you determine a specific focus. Then, working together, you and Julie will establish realistic, action-oriented goals for improved health and healing. Drawing on relevant interventions, strategies, and supervisory support, Julie can help facilitate positive changes for individual clients, couples, and therapeutic groups.



**Resilient**

Julie strongly believes that each person holds within them the strength and capability to overcome all challenges that come their way. She believes that by empowering clients to identify and make meaningful shifts in their lives, through vulnerability, self-compassion and manageable daily skills, their strengths will surface.

**Accepting, Genuine & Inclusive**

Julie approaches therapy in a warm, non-judgmental and accepting way, while also being honest and direct as she believes trust and integrity are essential elements for a therapeutic alliance to be successful.

**Person-Centered, Strength Based Approach**

Julie believes working to eliminate distress and helping the client reach their individual goals facilitates personal growth and self-confidence. By focusing on the client's goals (person centered), not the therapists, Julie is able to be wholly present, to listen and engage fully with the client and their story and to recognize and individually address their expectations while in therapy.

**Safe Environment**

Julie's experience in various roles has given her the opportunity to work with individuals of diverse backgrounds. As such, it is important to recognize and respect the full range of our differences. In doing so and in Julie's therapeutic practice, she remains committed to fostering a safe environment which promotes equality, inclusion and diversity. As a therapist, it is Julie's aim to foster an environment where you feel safe to unpack your vulnerabilities and emotional burdens.

## **Alison Clironomos-Di-Matteo, Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE), Wellness Coach.**

In Person and Online

**Alison empowers kids and mitigates childhood trauma.**

A childhood cancer survivor, Alison Clironomos-Di-Matteo knows what life is like in paediatric care of SickKids hospital. She survived and continues to thrive, now giving back to the community as a Wellness Coach, Certified Play Therapist, and Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE).



Alison is passionate about teaching and giving safe spaces for children and adolescents to feel loved, supported, and valued. Utilizing play-based therapy, child-centered play therapy, and cognitive behavioural play therapy, children construct their own unique sense of self, and feel valued, respected, heard, and more understood. Alison helps children take risks and feel more comfortable trying new things in a therapeutic environment.

Alison and AERCS therapists work collaboratively to address a variety of issues affecting children including obstacles and issues associated with ADD/ADHD, ODD, depression, anxiety, OCD, disruptive behaviors, and trauma. She also works with children who are facing school problems, bullying, family problems, grief and loss, and health issues. Alison is a treasured asset to our team of Professionals at AERCS.

## **JOSELIN ZAK, MSW, RSW, Certified Hypnotherapist Psychotherapist**

Online Only

Joselin Zak is a registered Social Worker with over 15 years experience. She has received her Child and Youth Worker Diploma from Humber College, Bachelor in Psychology at York University and Master of Social Work from Laurier University and is a Certified Hypnotherapist. She is a social worker in good standing with the Ontario College of Registered Social Workers and Social Service Workers, and with the Ontario Association of Social Workers.



Joselin works through a relational therapeutic framework where she takes time to truly understand her clients by building a healthy and therapeutic relationship. She utilizes strategies such as empathy, mindfulness, meditation, CBT, DBT and deep rooted core beliefs. Joselin incorporates acceptance (both of the self and of others) and compassion to help individuals live happier and more fulfilling lives.

Joselin's areas of passion and expertise include advocating for children and their families, treating anxiety, depression, transition, grief, trauma, parenting, emotional regulation and social skills. She uses evidence base approaches and works closely with kids to identify problems, develop strategies and make healthier choices.

Joselin prides herself on her ability to connect with people, creating a safe environment where they can develop healthy choices to increase success in their psychosocial world. She works closely with families, teachers and community supports to understand developmental trauma and the deficits and struggles it has on children. Joselin strongly believes that children do well if they can do well, and her role is to identify the deficits and increase the skills to broaden one's capabilities. Joselin emphasizes the importance of connection, attachment and relationships and believes that increasing self awareness and self confidence is at the root of these connections.



**Intention and Focus**

Joselin utilizes empirically based strategies to assist her clients in living more intentional and focused lives to address challenges, foster growth and build resiliency. Through this approach Joselin is able to support her clients in self awareness and balanced wellbeing through mindfulness, energy awareness and mind-body wellness.

**Client Centered**

Joselin is committed to providing a client centered approach focused on self-awareness. Joselin and her clients work together to set goals and Joselin can pull from a variety of therapeutic methodologies to best foster growth in her clients.

**Compassion and Acceptance**

Joselin brings a genuine curiosity to her work, and a deep desire to understand her client's lived experiences. As such, she listens carefully to her clients, such that they feel understood and validated. It is a priority for her to create a supportive, compassionate, and non-judgmental environment.

**Safe Environment**

Joselin's experience in various roles has given her the opportunity to work with individuals of diverse backgrounds. As such, it is important to recognize and respect the full range of our differences. In doing so and in Joselin's therapeutic practice, she remains committed to fostering a safe environment which promotes equality, inclusion and diversity. As a therapist, it is Joselin's aim to foster an environment where you feel safe to unpack your vulnerabilities and emotional burdens.

## **Amallie De Fonseca, MSW RSW**

In Person and Online

Amallie is a Licensed Masters Social Worker with over 17 years experience working in a variety of roles. A Toronto native, she graduated with a Masters in Social Work degree from the University of Toronto, a Bachelors of Social Work degree from the University of Windsor and a Bachelors of Arts with Honours degree from Queens University. She is licensed with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers as well as the State of Michigan and remains in good standing with both licensing bodies.



Amallie De Fonseca has a passion to work with the community and experience treating families, couples and individuals and children. She has worked in the ICU and Emergency units during Covid, as well as has a history of working in outpatient, substance treatment facilities, refugee and domestic violence shelters, inpatient hospital settings while supporting clients to rebuild their lives; with court mandated clients with substance abuse, victims of crime and through complex trauma.

Amallie's approach to child therapy is child-centered, meaning that she focuses on the child's unique needs and preferences, while also incorporating the family's goals and values into the treatment plan. She uses evidence-based techniques such as play therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and mindfulness to help children build resilience, self-esteem, and healthy coping strategies.

Amallie believes in creating a safe and supportive environment where children can express themselves freely, without fear of judgment or shame. She also works closely with parents and caregivers, providing guidance and support to help them better understand and support their child's emotional needs.

Amallie also has experience working with clients with anxiety, depression, anger management, relationship issues, grief, women's health issues, family systems issues, divorce, academic difficulties, intergenerational conflicts, and PTSD.

Amallie's training and professional development is in the areas of: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Gottman Marital Approach, Family Systems Therapy, Harm Reduction, Solutions Focused Therapy, Empowerment Model, Psychodynamic Therapy and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy.

**Non-Judgemental**

Amallie has extensive experience working with a variety of different populations and believes it is important to understand the world from each client's point of view including the complexities that life often brings. By fostering a supportive therapeutic alliance, clients feel comfortable to discuss their struggles and successes in a supportive environment.

**Collaborative Partnership Approach**

Amallie believes in helping clients by walking with them on their paths to finding resolutions. She works collaboratively with a client and their support system to achieve goals. Amallie often will help clients to advocate, express their needs and find ways to balance their needs while building strength and insight into themselves. It is when a client is empowered in a supportive therapeutic relationship that they can take steps towards achieving their goals.

**Commitment To Client Centered Focus**

Amallie is committed to providing client's therapy that fits their needs and uses a variety of different therapeutic modalities to assist clients in interventions. By using practical and solution focused modalities, Amallie is able demonstrate her passion for working with the client and their partners centered on fostering growth and building support.



## **Esther Osarogiuwa, MSW, RSW**

In Person and Online

Esther is a dual-language social worker. She speaks both English and various Nigerian dialects, including Bini. She is native to Nigeria.

Esther is a Registered Social Worker and a Master of Social Work graduate from York University, in good standing with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers. Esther has experience working with Children, Adolescents, teens, adults, families, and couples.



She has extensive experience in community settings and has worked in disability (mental and physical) case management, and resource navigation with adults, youth, and families.

Esther utilizes client-centered, cognitive behavior therapy (CBT), Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT), and talk therapy. She is informed in several therapeutic approaches including DBT, Mindfulness, and Solution Focus Therapy, and draws on different modalities to fit her client's unique needs, while keeping careful consideration of cultural concerns and practices.

Esther has experience working with anxiety, depression, family issues, trauma-related diagnoses, self-harm/ suicidal ideation, substance/ alcohol use, addiction, anger management, developmental disabilities, and more.

Esther recognizes the importance of family involvement in the therapeutic process and offer parent coaching and family therapy to support positive change in the family system. Her goal is to empower children and families to build on their strengths and to develop the skills they need to navigate life's challenges.

As a dedicated professional, Esther engages in ongoing professional development and stays up to date with the latest research and best practices in child therapy. She believes in the power of therapy to help children and families heal, grow, and thrive, and is committed to providing the highest quality of care to the children and families she works with.

**Client Centered**

Esther is committed to providing client centered counselling focused on self-awareness and assessment of needs. Esther is dedicated to fostering growth and resilience to help clients identify what they are going through in their individual circumstances and establish goals.

**Commitment To Evidence Based Treatment**

Making use of evidence-based therapies and training, Esther's approach is to offer individualized techniques and strategies that clients can employ in their daily life and master as part of their everyday toolbox. This is also accomplished by Esther's commitment to engage in ongoing training and supervision.

**Safe and Non-Judgemental**

Esther's approach in therapy is done in a safe, warm, and non-judgemental environment and comes from a place of kindness, empathy and support. It is a very strong priority to work with her clients in a collaborative manner so that they feel they can move forward in their lives; as well as feel empowered and engaged in support of their overall emotional well-being.

**Partnership Approach**

Esther's approach in therapy is done in a safe, warm and non-judgemental environment and comes from a place of kindness, empathy and support. It is a very strong priority to work with her clients in a collaborative manner so that they feel they can move forward in their lives; as well as feel empowered and engaged in support of their overall emotional well-being.

**Safe Environment**

Esther's experience in various roles has given her the opportunity to work with individuals of diverse backgrounds. She remains committed to fostering safe environments which promote equality, inclusion and diversity.



## **Nazeema Kassam, MSW, RSW, Accredited Family**

In Person and Online

Nazeema Kassam is a Registered Social Worker and an accredited family mediator with the Ontario Association of Family Mediation. She has her Masters of Social Work degree from Columbia University (New York).



Nazeema brings more than 15 years of Social Work experience from various clinical settings, which include:

healthcare facilities, schools, rehabilitation clinics, community organizations, her own private practice, and multi-disciplinary clinics. As a

clinical social worker, she uses many different modalities when providing counselling to children, youth, individuals and couples which includes cognitive-behavioral, emotional focused therapy, mindfulness, Gottman couples counselling, narrative and solution-focused approaches.

In addition, she is a clinician with extensive experience working in the field of separation, divorce, and mental health counselling. She provides family mediation services to couples and families who are going through a separation/divorce.

Nazeema's primary goal is to provide a safe and supportive environment for children to explore their thoughts and feelings, and to develop the skills they need to navigate life's challenges. She has a strong background in child development and is dedicated to helping children and families build strong, healthy relationships.

Nazeema has experience working with children of all ages, from toddlers to teenagers, and uses a range of evidence-based therapies and techniques to support their emotional and behavioral well-being. She works collaboratively with parents and caregivers to develop individualized treatment plans that address the unique needs of each child and family.

Nazeema is committed to ongoing professional development and stay up-to-date with the latest research and best practices in child therapy. Above all, she believes in the power of therapy to help children and families heal, grow, and thrive.



**Safe Environment**

Nazeema's experience in various roles has given her the opportunity to work with individuals of diverse backgrounds. As such, it is important to recognize and respect the full range of our differences. In doing so and in Nazeema's therapeutic practice, she remains committed to fostering a safe environment which promotes equality, inclusion and diversity. As a therapist, it is Nazeema's aim to foster an environment where you feel safe to unpack your vulnerabilities and emotional burdens.

**Honesty and Trust**

In Nazeema's therapeutic approach, she believes that emotional honesty is a key in owning our stories and in being able to verbalize the impact of some of our lived experiences. Learning to accept how we feel can start to empower us. As your therapist, Nazeema will hold space, empowering you to make courageous decisions towards hope, healing and change!

**Partnership Approach**

Nazeema's work focuses on meeting her clients where they are and fostering a relationship that allows for the creation of a deep connection and a collaborative space where possibilities can be explored and change can happen.

## **Joanna Gut, MSW, RSW, Certified Hypnotherapist**

In Person and Online

Joanna Gut is a Registered Social Worker with a Master of Social Work degree from York University. Joanna's professional experience includes working with children, individuals, families, and couples.

Joanna has experience working with children from diverse backgrounds and a wide range of emotional and behavioral needs. Her approach to therapy is collaborative and holistic, and she believes in tailoring treatment plans to meet the unique needs of each child and family. Joanna draws from a range of evidence-based techniques, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness, and trauma-focused therapy, to help children build resilience, improve coping skills, and develop healthier relationships.



### **Client Centered**

Joanna is committed to client centered counselling and considers client concerns within the greater context of their lives. Joanna and her clients work together to set goals for therapy and find solutions that are mutually agreed upon. She believes clients have many strengths, which can be used to assist them in achieving their therapeutic goals.

### **Inclusivity**

Joanna strives to be inclusive of individuals from diverse backgrounds and is committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment for all of her clients. She is non-judgmental, respectful, empathetic, warm, and recognizes that individual clients have had their own unique life experiences.

### **Safe Environment**

Joanna's experience in various roles has given her the opportunity to work with individuals of diverse backgrounds. As such, it is important to recognize and respect the full range of our differences. In doing so and in Joanna's therapeutic practice, she remains committed to fostering a safe environment which promotes equality, inclusion and diversity. As a therapist, it is Joanna's aim to foster an environment where you feel safe to unpack your vulnerabilities and emotional burdens.

**Lifelong Learning**

Joanna is passionate about her education in Mental Health and will continue to study evidence-based therapies, as they are relevant to her interests and client concerns. She is also committed to advocating for equality inside and outside of the therapy office and is continually learning new ways to do so.



# SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

For additional information, or to begin the process of therapy at AERCS, please contact us to book a complementary 15 minute phone call consultation.



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