



LandPlay

Forest School Principles
with Therapeutic Play



Nature is a tool to get children to experience not just the wider world but themselves – Stephen Mass



Being outdoors and connecting to nature and the landscape as a therapeutic tactile, kinesthetic experience has been an essential aspect of my own wellbeing. I have continued to develop my interest over the years as a Play and Creative Arts Therapist, exploring nature, the land and the sea and volunteering in Forest Schools. Offering LANDPlay means that I can tap into the multi-sensory benefits of Mother Nature, alongside the well known therapeutic benefits of Play and The Creative Arts.

Why therapeutic play outdoors?

Playing outdoors provides SENSORY experiences which are far more varied than those we can provide indoors.



Sensory play is the crucial building block of infant development. We build our perception of the world, our relationship to the world and to others through

our senses. The outdoor space is used to encourage children to creatively explore the natural materials and space.

Some of the physical benefits of being outside are obvious eg more oxygen, more physical movement, more vitamin D. Just by being in an open outdoor space we become more aware of our body sensations. A strong connection between the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system and the brain is vital for health and wellbeing.

LANDPlay means that the child increases sensory activity, priming the brain to make new connections and grow. LANDPlay encourages physical activity which strengthens mind-body connection, develops confidence and self-esteem.

LANDPlay encourages the client to 'make friends' with a localised area of nature and develop sense of belonging. Feelings of security deepen as we become familiar with a special space and become aware of how subtle changes occur naturally over time. To understand the natural flow of change helps us to accept change in our own lives.

Children are naturally curious to explore the world around them LANDPlay involves providing opportunities for the client to explore and work with the nature elements;

WATER

EARTH

FIRE

AIR



Tools: Nature is a terrific playground!

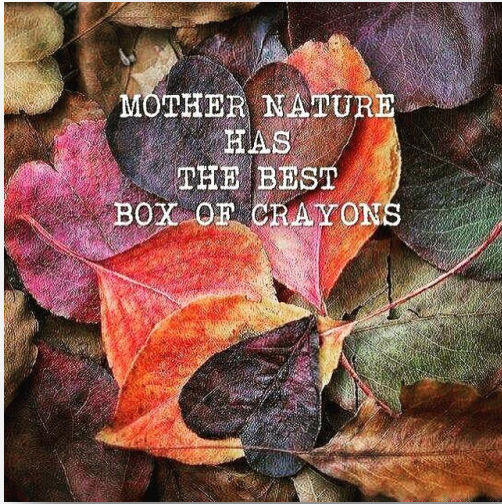
The LANDPlay toolkit is based on natural materials (see below) and I encourage the child to bring the natural objects into the playroom should the weather be such that part of the session needs to take place inside the playroom.

Natural resources, objects such as wood, seeds, stones, shells,

dried flowers, clay, sand and water are used, alongside traditional toys, puppets,

world music instruments, arts and crafts.





The LANDPlay space is located in a safe, secure natural area which can be private but accessible to facilities such as toilets.

With different climates eg when temperatures are hot, cold or weather is wet, I may need to adapt the session as it may not be possible to hold the whole session outside.

Consistency is important

A LANDPlay session – just as with indoor play therapy, should be consistent – the chosen area is the same area each week.

The LANDPlay session usually lasts 50-60minutes

A LANDPlay session can be 1:1 or one adult to 3 to 4 children.



Playing outdoors provides more opportunities for real messy play ... ie "no matter how messy I get I can always clean up" ; establishes feelings of resilience.

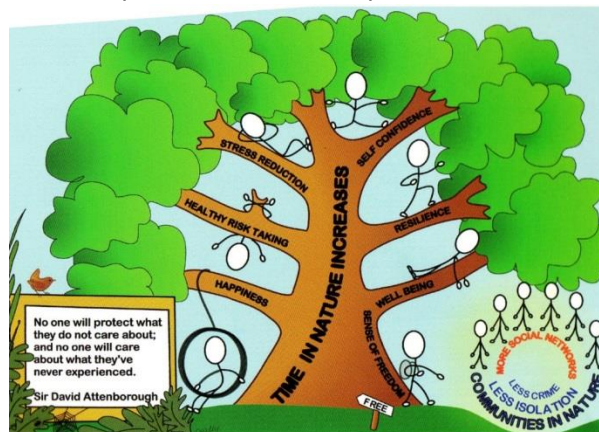
Playing outdoors in a natural environment provides children with a sense of freedom and develops physical strength; establishes mind-body connection 'this is what I can do!'

Safety

I adhere to the Professional Standards and Procedures of PTUK and am on the Professional Standards Agency Register, I hold insurance, a full DBS, I attend regular supervision and ensure CPD is up to date. H&S Risk Assessments and Risk Assessments in light of Covid will be discussed prior to sessions starting and updated at intervals.

CHILD PROTECTION SAFEGUARDING

- LANDPlay Therapists abide by the Safeguarding procedures of the PTUK ethical framework.
- Safety boundaries are confirmed between therapist and child at the start of every session
- If a child discloses information which suggests she/he/is not safe the session will stop and correct procedures followed.



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NATURE PLAY

TEACHES KIDS TO

CLIMB HIGHER THINK CREATIVELY
FIND THEIR OWN RHYTHM EXPLORE
IMAGINE RELY ON THEIR SENSES
ASSESS RISK TEST THEIR BOUNDARIES
USE THEIR OUTSIDE VOICE OBSERVE
NURTURE LIFE RESOLVE CONFLICT
CULTIVATE A SENSE OF PLACE & SELF
IMPROVISE SOLUTIONS FEEL FREE
RECOGNIZE BEAUTY COLLABORATE
BE RESILIENT REGULATE STRESS
LEARN THROUGH PLAY WONDER WHY
GET MESSY DEVELOP THEIR STRENGTH
BUILD IMMUNITY GAIN PERSPECTIVE
FEEL CONNECTED TO THE WILD

Wilder Child | www.wilderchild.com