

# 18<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Clinical Nursing & Practice

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## Pediatrics and therapeutic play

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The play is the most natural means of learning realized with or without a certain aim, with or without rules, with all the developmental areas of the child, involving the child voluntarily and enjoyably, with or without tools. Florence Erikson is one of the first nurses planning a play initiative for hospitalized children. She identified that children who play with medical supplies can express their feelings more easily. Therapeutic play is a game technique that is used to develop positive coping strategies before, during and after stressful events that reduce the trauma of illness or hospitalization, assess the child's feelings and misunderstandings about treatment or procedures. Therapeutic play is intended to make the child feel good emotionally. Therapeutic play reduces stress and trauma to hospitalization, provides information about health care, expressing anxiety, gaining control in emotion and coping with fear and self-control and determines the child's knowledge about the illness. It also determines emotions and misconceptions about treatment and procedures, allows the child to make choices and keep control, helps the child and his family to learn the procedures and prepare them for the procedures. It is useful for redirecting attention and defeating fear of hospital and treatment. It supports healing and reduces the anxiety of the parents as much as the children before the operation. It strengthens family bond and in-patient child's play with their siblings during the visiting hours is a prerequisite for maintaining family-centered care. The use of this play in nursing care for a child is an indispensable part of a successful delivery of a traumatic care.

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