



## Play Therapy - Series of Sessions

Gemstones was contracted to provide a series of play therapy sessions for 'A'

Six year old 'A'

Had been having toileting problems since he began the toileting process. He had been referred to a Paediatrician who couldn't find any physical problems for his constipation. He was referred for play therapy within the hospital and was prescribed a laxative. School contacted us to ask for support with 'A's' behaviour and continuing toileting problems.

### Issues identified

These problems included soiling and anxiety at lunch play in particular, thus affecting socialising and building positive relationships with peers.

### Provision

'A' was offered an initial five sessions of Play Therapy

These sessions were planned to:

- Gain 'A's' trust through his interests.
- To develop a sense of fun through play.
- To support 'A' to make positive friendships.

### Desired outcomes:

- Improved relationships with peers.
- Improved confidence at school through development of a sense of fun.

'A' and his interests led the sessions. At the initial meeting with 'A' he told me that he liked animals, which led the therapist to use mostly animal puppets for the sessions.

'A' was introduced to a puppet tortoise that had travelled from Australia and had no friends and was lonely. He needed a friend. 'A' soon built up a friendship with the puppet and set up games to play with it.

All four sessions were kept in the metaphor concentrating on developing a relationship with the puppets and the therapist.

Two final sessions were planned to take part in 'A's' school. Using the puppets 'A' was asked to show the therapist his school and share the good and bad things about coming to school. 'A' said that he had no friends at play time and felt that nobody liked him.

Furthermore, he didn't like any of the children in his class. (The therapist arranged for the school to provide a class photo for the final session)

The final session was spent looking at the photo, discussing the children in the class, discussing individual skills and friendship groups. 'A' was able to speak very positively about some of the children.

These six individual sessions formed the play therapy part of the support and was followed by two whole class sessions. These sessions were in the form of circle times on friendships.

Observing 'A' with his peers the therapist and teacher were able to adapt the circle time plan to include a solution focused discussion on play times asking the following:

- What works well at play times?
- What would you like to change about your playtimes.
- New ideas for fun play times.

#### Outcomes

- 'A' began to build friendships at school.
- He became less anxious about playtimes.
- Significant reduction in problems in the playground and the eradication of toileting problems.