

**Title** – The Effects of Play Therapy on Hospitalized Children

**Program of Study** – Family and Child Development

**Presentation Type** – Physical Poster

**Subtype** – Theoretical Abstract

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#### Abstract

The general premise for this proposed study is to elucidate the effects therapeutic play has on the harmful components accompanying hospitalization for pediatric cancer. Anxiety, fear, and depression are all common psychological responses for enduring intensive care in the chronic illness ward. The impactful nature of hospitalized procedures and operations increase the likelihood for psychometric and behavioral challenges, which will evidently cause the child's mental well-being to deteriorate notably. Previous studies indicate play therapy as the most effective solution for eliminating negative emotional responses in addition to improving the child's mental health. Therapeutic play interventions are an integral component in mitigating anxiety levels in children. Considering these components, one might hypothesize that the child's participation in play interventions will reduce hospital-related anxiety and depression in contrast to those who do not receive specialized care. Utilizing the information from existing literature allows researchers to conduct further studies into the impact play therapy has on hospitalized children. Furthermore, mixed methods containing both qualitative (e.g., open-ended interviews) and quantitative research (e.g., surveys and assessments) will outline the central basis for data collection. Following data retrieval, data will then be analyzed through the Statistical Package

for Social Science, t-tests, and independent research analysis to determine the concluding results. Although many studies integrated mixed methods into their research design, several gaps and weakness prominently surfaced while reviewing the previous literature, considerably the children's age spectrum and location. This proposal will address these gaps by researching the impact play therapy has on chronically ill, elementary aged children who reside within the United States. Following literature consultation, potential outcomes of the study are probable towards positive correlations between play therapy and reduced anxiety. Considering the theoretical approach to the proposal, results for this study are not available.