

## Boy Play

### Understanding the influence of gender on children's pretend play development

#### Expressions of Interest Sought

Online – 3 hour session

Term 3, 2022

Through play and playful experiences young children engage and enhance aspects of their language, cognitive competence, social skills, emotional resilience and physical development. Research has supported the importance of play as an integral activity and measurement of children's development. However, as they grow older, boys and girls differ not only in playmates but also in their preferred toys, games, and activities; play locations and play styles.

Children's preferences about toys and activities are influenced by societal gender stereotypes that are often reinforced through cultural expectations/"norms", media, advertising and more recently videogames and the internet. Boy play is often characterised as more noisy, physical, competitive and outdoor-based compared to their female peers. By having an understanding of the impacts of gender on play development, therapists can more effectively structure their play interventions to engage boys; as well as contribute to clinic, home and classroom environments that support their individual play skills and play with peers.

#### Aims/Objectives

This workshop will provide participants with

- an overview of the neurological differences between genders
- an understanding of the gender impacts on toy and activity preference, engagement in different types of play (ie symbolic play, construction, rough-n-tumble, games), play location and socialisation
- an understanding of the benefits of "playful aggression" (ie mock fighting, chasing, wrestling, superhero play) on understanding and regulating social behaviour and emotional development.
- An overview of some of the clinical considerations of gender when implementing pretend play assessment and interventions across the age continuum; and when engaging father's in play.

This online module is suitable for occupational therapists/speech pathologist who have attended a *Developing Pretend Play Skills in Children Assessment and intervention* workshop; and consider pretend play skills intervention as part of their professional "tool kit" and are wanting to further enhance their knowledge and skills in this area. This workshop builds on previous workshops and it will be assumed that participants understand the development of pretend play and assess a child's pretend play within their practice.

## Workshop Delivery

Participants will be expected to complete the workshop requirements via an integrated system of pre-reading material and interactive online presentations. Participants will be responsible for having access to the Internet for some or all of the workshop content.

- **Pre-Reading/Workshop Manuals** participants will be mailed a hard copy of the workshop manual which will include
  - pre-reading to assist with refreshing knowledge with regard to the importance of play and assessing play
  - presentation notes, covering the online presentation content as well as the case studies used in the interactive components of the presentation.
- **On line presentation** – using Zoom videoconferencing, participants will have the opportunity to link into a 3 hour presentation (with 30 min break mid-session). The session will include interactive components (ie group discussions, case studies and Q&A sessions) to assist with integrating participants newly acquired knowledge and skills.

## About the Presenter



**Emeritus Professor Karen Stagnitti** graduated with a Bachelor degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Queensland in 1977. Since this time she has mainly worked in early childhood intervention programs in community based settings as part of a multidisciplinary team. In 2003 she graduated from LaTrobe University with a Doctor of Philosophy. Her area of research is children's play. Karen has written 6 books and has over 130 national and international papers and book chapters published. Her norm referenced standardised play assessment, the Child-Initiated Pretend Play Assessment 2, (revised manual and score sheets) was published in early 2020. She worked as Professor (Personal Chair) in the Occupational Science and Therapy program and taught into the Master of Child Play Therapy at Deakin University, Victoria until December 2018. She is now Emeritus Professor at Deakin University

**Expressions of Interest** for this workshop are now being sought. Please contact Zi Mei Events on [info@zimei.com.au](mailto:info@zimei.com.au) or (07) 3358 3689 to register your interest.