***What to tell your child prior to the first play therapy session***

You can tell your child that he/she will be coming to be with a therapist in his/her special playroom every week, where there are lots of toys to play with. You can also mention why he/she is going to meet with a therapist by generally stating, “Things don’t seem to be going very well for you at home, and sometimes it helps to have a special time just for yourself to share with a special person. The therapist will not make you do anything you don’t want to do and you will be able to choose when you want to say something.”

Because the therapist and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be discussing the child’s treatment throughout the duration of services, it is helpful to inform the child about this to ensure trust and honesty are maintained. An example of a conversation about this looks like:

🡪 “Sometimes the therapist will need to talk to us, (your parents), about how you are doing. We do this because we care about you and we are here to support you.”

A way you can be a supporter of the therapy process is to help your child develop a better understanding of a play therapist’s role. Here are example phrases you can mention to your child about how a therapist can be helpful:

* “A play therapist is different from a teacher or other adults in your life because they won’t tell you what to do. You get to tell them how you would like to spend this special time you get every week. You call the shots in the play room.”
* “The therapist might help you learn new things about yourself while you play.”
* “The therapist can help and support you when you are having a hard/difficult time.”
* “The therapist will provide a safe space to play with you and to listen to what you have to say, if you choose to say something.”
* “The therapist might be able to help you work through some of your problems”