**CHILD AND ADOLESCENT THERAPY TRAINING PROGRAM**

**TRIMESTER I – PREGNANCY THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD**

**Class 1: Introduction to Child Therapy Training Program- Susan B. Sherman D.S.W.**

The following questions will be discussed and two case examples, one of a “successful “and one of an “unsuccessful” child treatment, will be presented.

*What kinds of problems present themselves at each stage of a child’s growth? What are normative age related conflicts and when is it appropriate for therapy to be sought for a child?*

*How do we engage both the child and his parents in the therapeutic process?*

*How do we employ key psychoanalytic concepts in our work with children? How is transference, countertransference, resistance and defenses, the therapeutic alliance, and the analytic frame, utilized in child therapy?*

**Class 2: The Expectant Parent – Ruth Wyatt, L.C.S.W, M.A.**

In this class we will discuss what is considered by many to be “one of the most powerful transformations in human experience,” that of becoming a parent. We will look at some of the issues the expectant parent faces, issues such as Identity transformation, image-making, shifts in familial relationships and dynamics, separation/individuation.

*How do we understand and make use of the expectant parents’ experience to help them cope with their pregnancy and prepare for the upcoming birth of their child?*

**Class 3: First Year of Life - Suzan Sayder, LP, M Psych Psych**

We will explore how the emotional life of a baby begins to develop through interactions with primary caregivers. Temperament, intergenerational trauma, parental mental health and developmental tasks of separation will be discussed. Videos will be used to learn from experience about the possible meaning of non-verbal communication.

*How do pain and struggle contribute to emotional growth and development?*

*How do observation skills inform our clinical work by helping us become more attuned clinicians?*

**Class 4: Classical Attachment Theory - Suzan Sayder, LP, M Psych Psych**

Attachment Theory is based on the idea that babies adapt their behavior to the responses of their caregivers in an attempt to feel safe, avoid danger and survive. We will explore how secure and insecure attachment patterns are established during the first year of life.

*How are early pre-verbal experiences re-evoked during later developmental stages?*

*What are the cultural shortcomings of attachment theory?*

**Class 5: Modern Attachment Theory - Suzan Sayder, LP, M Psych Psych**

Advancements in neuroscience show how early experiences become encoded in our brains during the first 18 months of life, influencing how we respond to others later in life. With a light touch on scientific findings, we will consider how this information can be useful to clinicians in understanding emotional development, including capacities for empathy, self-awareness and self-regulation.

*How do early attachment patterns impact future relationships in childhood, adolescence and adulthood?*

*How can later relationships change our first attachment style?*

**Class 6: Child Therapy in the Toddler Years (2-4 years old) –**

**Frances La Barre, Ph.D.**

We will view videotapes of different parent-child couples to see varied problems that develop in this period when children’s feelings about themselves emerge along with their abilities to regulate emotion and balance their own wills with that of others. By 18 to 30 months temper-tantrums may yield to a practical “theory of mind,” a sense of their own and others’ intentions, motivations, and feelings.

*What do we observe and experience with parent and child that informs us about their difficulties, and how do we best use that information to bring the two into better connection and communication?*

*How do we work with children whose language skills are still developing?*

**Class 7: Child Therapy in the School Years (4-6 years old) - Frances La Barre, Ph.D.**

At ages 4, 5, and 6 years old, children’s play themes reveal inner life, preoccupations and fears. Disruptions of language development, self-control, curiosity, and social relationships come from various sources important to our understanding. We will discuss how we discover and use the meanings in a child’s play to understand the anxieties that interfere with development.

*How do psychotherapists work to sense in the child’s play and in the relationship with the child, ways to understand and reflect back our understanding of their difficulties?*

*How do we use parents and teachers’ observations and reactions to the child patient to inform our understanding?*

**Class 8: Working with LGBTQ parents – Deborah Glazer, Ph.D.**

While the transition to parenthood can be challenging to everyone, there are special issues faced by LGBTQ individuals as they begin their journey as parents. Questions arise about how to become parents and how same sex parents organize parental roles. In addition, residual developmental issues related to the development of an LGBTQ identity can affect how individuals experience themselves as as parents.

*How do individuals decide how to become parents in couples with same sex or transgender parents?*

*How does comfort or discomfort with gender roles affect how the parenting roles are defined?*

**Class 9: Young Children with Special Needs (Atypical Neurodevelopmental Disorders) and Their Families – Wendy Kamaiko-Solano, D. S.W.**

The treatment period of young children usually includes assisting the family with accessing resources to obtain a diagnosis and enhancing their understanding of their child.  We will consider how the child’s special needs may alter their capacity to adapt and to move forward in developing relatedness in their environment.

*How can we understand the young child’s awareness and experience?*

*How can we help parents grapple with their feelings and improve parent-child interaction?*

**TRIMESTER II – THE SCHOOL- AGED CHILD**

**Class 1:**

**a. Overview of the Latency Period – James Wells, L.C.S.W.**Despite the fact that clinicians often say that the majority of child referrals are school-aged children, there is less written about this period than early development or adolescence. This class will discuss what is happening for school-aged children developmentally.

*What are the unique developmental challenges for school-aged children?*

**b. Deciphering the Camouflaged Meaning of Clinical Material –   
David Rosenthal, Ph.D.**We are usually under pressure to get children to open up in therapy about their underlying issues. However, children are already working on their problems and traumas in indirect, disguised ways. This class will help students identify the intense work children are doing as they play and talk about sports, TV shows, and video games using case examples from individual and group therapy.

*How can we become more aware of the underlying meaning of children’s talk and play?*

*When a child is working symbolically on problems or traumas, should we make the child aware of the underlying meaning of their work?*

**Class 2: Parents and Their School-aged Children – Ruth Wyatt, L.C.S.W., M.A.**As children engage with the outside world in earnest (through their entrance into school) parents typically feels a host of contradictory emotions. In this class we will consider the parents’ experience of their children, the influence of parents and their history on their children and the ways the therapist can best work with the parents during this stage of their children’s life.

*How do the parents’ own histories and struggles affect their relationship with their child?*

*How do we make use of our negative countertransference towards the parent?*

**Class 3: Understanding and Responding to Resistant Behavior in Individual and Group Therapy with Children - David Rosenthal, Ph.D.**This class will discuss how resistant behaviors are valuable, self-protective coping mechanisms for children.

*How can our response to resistant behaviors create a growth-promoting holding environment for children in therapy?*

**Class 4: Play Therapy Techniques with School-aged Children – James Wells, L.C.S.W.**This class will provide some techniques of engaging children through play, discuss how to understand the sometimes confusing experience of children’s play, and help students to use their countertransference to broaden their knowledge of their clients.

*How is what we see and experience in the room linked with the child’s emotional story?*

**Class 5: How to do Effective Therapy with Non-Communicative Children –**

**David Rosenthal, Ph.D.**

There are a variety of reasons why some children come to therapy too cautious to play, and also unable or unready to talk or make contact with the therapist. Most therapists feel frustrated and helpless working with non-communicative children. This class will present a variety of methods for working successfully and effectively with children who remain non-communicative in therapy for weeks, months, and even years at a time.

*Is it necessary to get children to talk or play in sessions?*

**Class 6:Gender and Sexuality in the School-Aged Child – David Pauley, L.C.S.W.**

This class will illustrate the concept of gender fluidity and the resultant anxieties in children, parents, and clinicians.

*What does it mean to practice in a LBGTQ-affirmative way with children and families?*

*How do we recognize “regulatory anxiety” around issues of gender and sexuality as it comes up for us in our work?*

**Class 7: Assessing Levels of Suicidal Risk in School-Aged Children –**

**David Rosenthal, Ph.D.**

Most therapists working in schools, agency settings and in private practice will be be asked to assess children for suicidal risk. This can be a stressful part of our work. This class will clarify some of the current myths about assessing suicidal risk.

*When assessing suicidal risk, how can we “play it safe” without sending children to the Emergency Room unnecessarily?*

**Class 8: School-Aged Children with Special Needs - Wendy Kamaiko-Solano, D.S.W.**

The school-aged child with special needs most often enters treatment with a label which may be less or more amenable to treatment.  In the expanding environment of the classroom, the child with special needs may have relationships derail or enhanced.

*How do we consider if the child’s difficulties are due to their special needs?*

*How does the parent balance the additional demands of their special needs child while appreciating their own needs?*

**TRIMESTER III-ADOLESCENCE**

**Class 1: Introduction to Adolescence - Susan Sherman, D.S.W.**

Adolescence is a time of dramatic changes in the growing child, filled with multiple developmental achievements as well as conflicts and challenges for the teenager, the parents, and the therapist. Peter Blos considered it to constitute a second separation/individuation process. Topics in this trimester will include: identity formation: sexual, cultural, and beginning formation of the adult self. We will consider such questions as the following ones:

*How does adolescent work differ from work with younger children? How does the therapist work with the adolescent while maintaining a working relationship with the parents?*

*How are questions of confidentiality negotiated when the adolescent displays dangerous behavior, such as drug and alcohol abuse, self-harming behaviors, suicidality, promiscuity?*

**Class 2: Early Adolescence -Susan Sherman, D.S.W.**

In early adolescence, teenagers grapple with the many manifestations of puberty: hormonal changes, changes in parental and teacher expectations, changes in one’s peer group. Young adolescents have concerns about appearance and “normality” and their acceptance by peers. They wish to become more independent while simultaneously needing to be supported by limits, nurturance and support.

*How can we as adults create a trusting and holding environment and provide understanding as the adolescent struggles with their new and conflictual feelings?*

*How do we integrate the adolescent’s internal world with their external experiences at school, home, and with peers?*

**Class 3: Middle Adolescence - Marilynn Massa, L.C.S.W**

We will explore the physical, emotional, and cognitive challenges of the mid adolescent. The role of the family, peer group and school environment are examined focusing further on issues of identity and intimacy. Middle adolescence is a phase characterized by periods of elation, irritability, moodiness and depression.

*Is middle adolescence a transitioning period? If so, how does it play out?*

*How does the therapist help the adolescent patient negotiate and contain fluctuating mood states and strong feelings?*

**Class 4: Late Adolescence - Susie Greenebaum, L.C.S.W.**

The late adolescent must confront approaching adulthood, often leaving home and gaining greater autonomy. Personal and vocational goals begin to solidify as adolescents consider their value systems and identities, while formulating or re-formulating their approach to life and the future.

*How does the therapist help the patient in a crucial separation and moving forward?*

*How is the therapist impacted by the loss of the patient, akin to but also different from the parent’s loss?*

**Class 5: The Tightrope of Parenting Adolescents – Ruth Wyatt, LCSW, M.A.**

To some extent the adolescent years pose similar challenges as the toddler period, with its focus on separation and individuation. In this later stage, however, parental feelings of loss, guilt and anger are often heightened by the decrease in their control over their adolescent and/or the impending departure of their adolescent from the home.

*How can the therapist balance helping their adolescent patient separate from parents while staying connected to them? How can we support the parents' attempt to stay connected to their teen while allowing for separation?*

**Class 6: Working with LGBTQ Adolescents - Deborah Glazer, Ph.D.**

Adolescence is a time of turmoil as children begin to develop as more mature sexual beings. The experience of non-normative gender identity or same sex desire can exacerbate the storminess of this development phase as teens navigate complex relationships with family and peers. Questions arise about the role of the therapist in facilitating the adolescent's comfort with self-exploration at this pivotal time.

*How do non-normative gender identity and same sex desire affect the developmental progress?*

*What is the role of the therapists in facilitating self-exploration in LGBTQ teens?*

**Class 7: The Adolescent with Special Needs -Wendy Kamaiko-Solano, D.S.W.**

In adolescence the developmental push for separation and individuation and sexual and romantic interests posit specific challenges for adolescents with special needs and their families. We will consider how the views of others impact the adolescent’s sense of self.

*How do clinicians continue to advocate for the adolescent as they coordinate with other professionals and parents?*

**Class 8: Review of Program and Summation - Susan Sherman, D.S.W. and representative faculty**

In our final class, we will look back at how the child develops and discover together what questions remain. We will take up participants’ clinical challenges, experience in the program and future endeavors in child work.