

Tell stories with therapeutic outcomes

You don't have to be a therapist to use storytelling to help children emotionally.

The educator's role

As an educator, you're likely already using stories to help calm and settle children.

Therapeutic storytelling is a way to bring containment, structure and logic to an experience that may seem overwhelming, chaotic or fragmented to children.

With you as their storyteller, the child can engage with, learn from and potentially benefit from their experience.

Understanding therapeutic storytelling

Therapeutic storytelling is about sharing and exploring a story with children to help them process an emotional experience.

Learn more about Dr Andrea Baldwin's model for therapeutic storytelling, and watch a video from the Queensland Centre for Perinatal and Infant Mental Health (QCPIMH) demonstrating how conversational reading can be therapeutic.

This module discusses how, in the context of a traumatic event in the community, therapeutic storytelling supports preparation, response and recovery.

Practising therapeutic storytelling

Explore these areas for using stories therapeutically to support children:

- Strategies for taking care of your own wellbeing, and supporting the wellbeing of a child experiencing distress.
- How to select suitable stories, adapt them and apply therapeutic techniques in your everyday practice.
- Ideas and videos on how to expand therapeutic storytelling through play-based learning, such as dramatic arts, expressive arts, and movement and music.

Conclusion

Whenever you provide a safe place for a child to process challenging feelings, you are making storytelling therapeutic. As the storyteller, the power of the stories you share comes from the nurturing, trusting relationships you've already established with the children in your care.