

What Play Does – by Linda Klein, LPC, RPT/S

Play provided the mechanism for physical development and was the reflection of the history of the human species. (Hughes, 95) Play benefits are physical, intellectual, emotional, social and biological.

Hughes referenced play as a mechanism for:

1. Surplus energy – discharge the natural energy of the body.
2. Energy renewal – to avoid boredom while natural body functions are restored.
3. Practice for Adulthood – to provide skill development and knowledge necessary to function as an adult.
4. Psychoanalytic – to reduce anxiety and offer a sense of control over the world while providing an acceptable way to express forbidden impulses.
5. Cognitive Development – to facilitate cognitive development and consolidate learning that has already taken place while allowing for the possibility of new learning in a relaxed atmosphere.
6. Arousal Modulation – to keep the body at an optimal state of arousal, to relieve boredom and reduce uncertainty.
7. Neuropsychological – to integrate the functioning of the right and left cerebral hemispheres.

The next time you are writing your case notes about what you did in your play therapy session, try throwing a few of these phrases in and imagine the face of the insurance company reviewer as she reads them!

For a great article on Bob Hughes' book, [Evolutionary Playwork](#) read the book review published on February 25, 2012 by [Marc Bekoff, Ph.D.](#) in [Animal Emotions](#) on the Psychology Today website.