



Case Management
Outpatient Mental Health
Home & Community Treatment
Supervision & Consultation
Education & Training
Transportation Assistance

"We believe that all meaningful, lasting growth happens only in the places where struggle, strengths, and support meet."

www.acornoakmaine.com

(207) 614-4108

Our Play Therapy Provider:

PENELOPE SNOW, LCSW

Penelope's professional journey started in 1990, working in the field while also earning a BA degree in Social Work, Summa Cum Laude, from The University of Southern Maine, and an MS degree in Social Work from The University of New England. She has experience working with children, adolescents and adults in a variety of settings. She has worked as a clinical director, community case manager, residential supervisor, foster care caseworker, family advocate, an outpatient clinician, play therapist, college educator, and as a member of the acute psychiatric team in Maine's busiest emergency department. She did a one year internship as a play therapist during graduate school and is a big believer in play! Penelope says, "Play is so much more than we think...it is how we learn to become, and how we understand before we learn the language to describe what we understand or are trying to understand. It's powerful, and sometimes also...fun!"

We
believe
in



PLAY!

PLAY THERAPY
from your friends at
Acorn & Oak

Play is a universal behavior.

In fact, research shows that by the time a child is 6 years of age it is likely they've spent 15,000 hours playing! Play is a means of communicating and also a means through which children seek and achieve mastery over internal and external challenges.

Play is the language of childhood. Toys are the alphabet.

Imagination gives voice, creates the words that express, and then can explain, within, what is happening. Toys can be imaginary, invisible, or simple everyday items like a twig or a rag or a box. Play is about symbolism, about rehearsing roles and figuring things out.

Play Therapy is a preferred mental health intervention for children.

Often children are not referred for mental health support until their behaviors clearly concern their caregivers. Yet often adults that care about those children can see something going on before things get to that point. Play Therapy can help prevent problems from becoming worse, and can help things get better.

Not only can play therapy enhance normal development, it may address what causes abnormal behaviors and reduce developmental delays.

Benefits of play therapy include:

- developing communication
- building competence
- enhancing self-esteem
- creative thinking skills
- problem-solving skills
- easing adaption to change
- resolving trauma effects
- promoting new behaviors
- fostering understanding
- encouraging empathy
- developing insight
- developing attachment capacity
- boosting ego strength
- mastering developmental fears
- developing social skills
- promoting brain health
- catharsis/emotional release
- managing and resolving anger
- promoting health relationships
- strengthening connections



Play therapy is tailored to the child's developmental level and to their unique psychological needs.

Play can be primarily sensorimotor (through about ages 2-3); pretend and dramatic play (ages 2 and up); structured, rule-based games (ages 5 and up); storytelling (all ages); art and expressive activities (ages 2 and up); sand tray and water table play (ages 3 and up); and using building toys or engaging in creative open play using toys and props (all ages).

After the initial session, children often look forward to sessions and willingly engage in play therapy. Mainecare and most private insurance plans cover play therapy.

The potential to heal on a deep level, without the pressure of language-based talk therapy, is supported by research and attested to by kids, families, and providers around the world.