



## AutPlay® Therapy Certification Program

AutPlay® Therapy is a neurodiversity paradigm informed integrative play therapy framework for working with neurodivergent children and their families. AutPlay® was created by Dr. Robert Jason Grant to address the unique needs of neurodivergent children and adolescents (sensory differences, autistic, ADHD, learning disorders, intellectual developmental disorder, etc.) who enter a therapeutic process with a licensed mental health professional.

AutPlay® highlights a family play therapy framework with theoretical underpinnings in humanistic, family systems, developmental, and cognitive behavioral theories. Various seminal play therapy theories (Child Centered Play Therapy, Filial Therapy, Theraplay, Cognitive Behavioral Play Therapy, Gestalt Play Therapy, and Family Play Therapy) are integrated into protocol, all of which incorporate empirical support for working with neurodivergent children. More specific content and protocol of AutPlay® Therapy can be reviewed on the AutPlay® Therapy website – [www.autplaytherapy.com](http://www.autplaytherapy.com). A current list of providers who have completed the AutPlay Therapy Certification Program is maintained and displayed on the AutPlay® website as well.

**Completion of AutPlay® Therapy Certification Program signifies that the therapist has met the requirements to be a Certified AutPlay Therapy Provider®. Certification in AutPlay® Therapy requires the therapist to complete the following:**

OPTION 1 (24 CE hour Program):

- 1) Complete a live (two day intensive, 12 CE Hrs) in person or live webinar training. View training options for live trainings on the trainings page on the AutPlay Therapy website.
- 2) Purchase and read - Grant, R. J. (2023). *The AutPlay therapy handbook: Integrative family play therapy with neurodivergent children*, Routledge Publishing. Complete a post book reading exam on the required book (8 CE Hrs). The book can be purchased on Amazon and other online retailers. The book post reading exam can be found in the AutPlay pre-training form provided upon registering for a training.
- 3) Watch the recorded webinar Understanding Ableism and Neurodiversity in Play Therapy. The recorded webinar can be found in the home study trainings page (1.5 CE Hrs).
- 4) Watch the recorded webinar An Introduction to Play Therapy with Neurodivergent Children. The recorded webinar can be found in the home study trainings page (2.5 CE Hrs).

OPTION 2 (24 CE hour Program):

- 1) Complete the home study course (self-paced 20 CE Hrs). View information about the home study course on the home study trainings pages on the AutPlay Therapy website.

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AutPlay® Certification Program coverage includes symptomology, special considerations, an overview of neurodivergent needs, an intensive examination of the AutPlay® protocol including the phases of therapy, assessment strategies, target therapy areas, parent involvement and training, and limit setting procedures. Completing certified provider requirements further involves learning about the AutPlay® Follow Me Approach (FMA) which is designed for children with higher needs and engagement struggles. Participants engage in experiential activities, role play practice, case conceptualization, and therapy planning as they complete their requirements to become a certified provider.

Licensed Mental Health Professionals and/or those (including students) who are pursuing a licensure in mental health can complete the full certification program. Other disciplines such as educators, speech therapists, occupations therapists, etc. can complete the certification program but do not receive mental health related CE hours.

*Benefits of Becoming a Certified AutPlay® Therapy Provider:*

- Becoming knowledgeable in a comprehensive approach to using the integration of play therapy approaches and interventions to improve the mental health of autistic and neurodivergent children and adolescents.
- Advancing knowledge in the concepts of neurodiversity, ableism, and how to be neurodiversity affirming in mental health processes.
  - Understanding and implementing a specific mental health protocol for addressing the variance of neurodivergence (children across the spectrum).
- Lifetime certification with access to continuing education, supervision, and consultation services.
- Name and contact information maintained in the AutPlay® database and displayed on the provider list on the AutPlay® Therapy website.

*Development of the AutPlay® Therapy Certification Program:*

AutPlay® Therapy began as an effort to provide an effective evidence-based protocol for mental health professionals working with autistic/neurodivergent children and their families. A special focus involved providing a play therapy approach, which could be implemented in a community mental health clinic, to address the mental health needs of neurodivergent children.

At the time of the inception of AutPlay®, most established autism/neurodivergent focused therapies were not mental health based nor designed for mental health professionals. As AutPlay® formed, it became apparent that mental health professionals working with the neurodivergent population would benefit from a formal certification program, not only to ensure a thorough understating of neurodivergence, but to provide validation as a professional with advanced training in addressing neurodivergent needs.

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Before the AutPlay® Therapy Certification Program was official and ready to be offered to participants, the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) and the Association for Play Therapy (APT) was contacted to review the AutPlay® Therapy program materials and verify the program met the standards for receiving certified counselor and play therapy continuing education hours. NBCC and APT are governing bodies in the United States for the National Certified Counselor and Registered Play Therapist and Registered Play Therapist Supervisor credentials. NBCC and APT approved the content and process of the AutPlay® Therapy Certification Program for continuing education hours. [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org) and [www.a4pt.org](http://www.a4pt.org)

The International Board for Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) was also contacted to review AutPlay® Therapy training materials to be approved for IBCCES continuing education hours. IBCCES is an international organization that governs autism related credentialing. IBCCES reviewed the AutPlay® training materials and process and approved the AutPlay® Therapy training as meeting the standard of IBCCES for continuing education hours related to autism. [www.Ibcces.org](http://www.Ibcces.org)

Becoming a Certified AutPlay® Therapy Provider gives an extra layer of accountability, reference, and professional identity that has been lacking in the mental health community regarding working with neurodivergent children and their families. Beyond a competency expectation, certification is also designed to provide a level of confidence for the mental health professional and the ability to reference a specialize training experience. AutPlay® Therapy continues to grow and update as more evidence-based practices emerge and advances in neurodivergent mental health increases.

**Continuing Education** -Trainings hosted by the AutPlay Therapy Clinic/Robert Jason Grant Ed.D are approved by the below continuing education bodies. Trainings hosted by another organization/group are subject to that organization/group's CE approvals.

AutPlay Therapy Clinic has been approved by NBCC as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 6595. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credit are clearly identified. AutPlay Therapy Clinic is solely responsible for all aspects of the programs. Visit [nbcc.org](http://nbcc.org) to learn more about NBCC.

Robert Jason Grant Ed.D is an APT Approved Provider #12-318 for continuing education. Most trainings are approved for APT continuing education, but each individual training listing should be reviewed to identify the type and amount of continuing education offered. Visit [a4pt.org](http://a4pt.org) to learn more about APT (Association for Play Therapy).

Robert Jason Grant Ed.D is a Certified Training Partner for IBCCES (International Board for Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards) #CE159432, offering continuing education for the Certified Autism Specialist and Autism Certificate credentials. Most trainings are approved for IBCCES continuing education, but each individual training listing should be reviewed to identify the type and amount of continuing education offered.

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