

# Hospital play specialist

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Play as a therapeutic tool can help children to understand their illness, conditions & treatments. Play enables a child to make sense of the world around them.

## Why play?

Play is an essential support for children coping with illness and anxieties while in hospital.

It is a valuable communication tool.

Children can greatly benefit from a professional play service supporting them through a variety of healthcare experiences.

Through play we aim to provide a variety of strategies including normalising and developmental play, therapeutic play and procedural play.

Which all offer an emotional outlet.

## What we can provide

We will always endeavour to meet the needs of all children and provide a degree of normality for children and their families in an abnormal surrounding.

We teach distraction and relaxation techniques for all children and their families who will need regular hospital intervention.

We offer therapeutic play sessions supporting children and teenagers as they process their feelings about their illnesses and being in hospital.



“It is suggested that play can help children cope with stress, overcome their fears and develop self-esteem.”

Koller and Goldman, (2014)



We prepare & work with children and young people using medical equipment & language to help them understand their hospital experience at an appropriate age level.

We offer desensitising time, by use of the play room, play facilities and 1:1 sessions in departments.

## The impact of play

Play can help children and young people have a more positive experience of hospital.

When play and distraction are incorporated into hospital treatments it can help reduce the need for sedation.

Play can help children & young people in hospital build resilience which allows them to cope and be better engaged with treatment.

Play can also help give the children their sense of control back, which is often lost through illness & hospitalization.



## Where we work

- Caroline Thorpe Ward
- Children's Outpatients /Clinic
- Paediatric Day Surgery
- Radiology Departments
- A&E
- Audiology
- Ophthalmology



## Who we are and how to contact us

### Hayley Jeffery

Registered Play Specialist  
BSL & Makaton Communicator

### Fran Greenaway

Play Specialist  
Post 16 years assessor

## Contacts

Caroline Thorpe ward

Email: [rduh.ctwplay@nhs.net](mailto:rduh.ctwplay@nhs.net)

Tel: 01271 322704 (direct)

Switchboard: 01271 322577 (ask for extension 2704 or bleep 132)

## **PALS**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email [rduh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rduh.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## **Have your say**

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Tell us about your experience of our services. Share your feedback on the Care Opinion website [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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