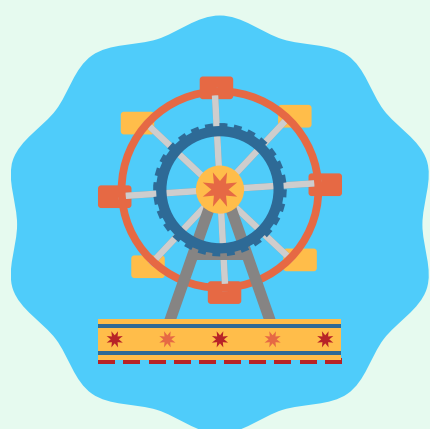


FIVE TIPS FOR USING DRAMA TO PLAY GAMES WITH CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

By Kelly Hunter, author of *Shakespeare's Heartbeat*



KEEP IT FUN

The drama games should be short, fun and repeatable. Skills such as eye contact, facial expressiveness and language can be accessed through your playfulness.



TAKE IT SLOW

Go at their pace, not your own. Use the phrase 'take your time' as often as you like. Playing with a child on the spectrum offers them boundless opportunity to explore and embody sensations and feelings. If you rush, they may miss this opportunity.



EVERYONE DESERVES TO PLAY

No matter the diagnosis, every child and young person on the spectrum is still a child and all children deserve the chance to play.



FEELING IS KEY

As a result of playing, the children may have a range of fresh experiences: physical, emotional and spiritual. These new sensations and feelings can wake the children up to their own lives.



THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

Read the child's needs. Speak in short sentences and never raise your voice.