CAREGIVER SERVICE AGREEMENT

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This information is provided to help assist you with understanding the treatment process, my role as therapist, and the expectations I have to make our work more successful. Please read and check each item below confirming that you have read and understand this information.

\* Please accept...

 That play is therapeutic in its own right, and that although a play therapy session may seem like “just playing” to adults, it is actually a powerful and essential therapy tool for children.

\* What parents can do to help their child succeed in therapy:

 Please allow your child’s sessions to be their own. If you have information to share, I ask you to either call or text me prior to a session or email me. I will do my best to get back to you as soon as I can. We can schedule a parent session for more pressing or lengthy information/concerns.

\* Please DO:

 Make sure your child has a snack before session, has used the restroom, and is well rested.

\* Children are allowed more freedom in therapy than they are at home.

 This is OK. There is no such thing as “bad” behavior in therapy. Children quickly learn that there are different rules in different places. They will learn that they have a "choice" and "can decide" many things in therapy.

\* Remember that...

 Sometimes the child’s behavior gets worse before it gets better. This is normal in therapy and is a sign of progress.

\* A therapist’s goal....

 Is not to find out what happened to your child. It is to facilitate the child’s healing, resolution of trauma, and help the child learn to express his or her feelings.

\* Please DO NOT inquire about the session or question your child for details.

 Play therapy sessions are often very sacred and private for children. We want your child to feel safe to express themselves in whatever way they can. Allow your child to talk with you about their session if they would like. Sometimes play therapy is not “fun”, they are working, just as you would in a therapy session. Questions from parents are often not helpful for their child, instead, use reflective statements if your child does choose to share about their play therapy session, such as “wow, it seems like you really worked hard today” or “you have a lot to share with me today about your play therapy time!” This will allow your child to feel like they are making accomplishments and are not simply trying to please others by saying the right thing.

\* Please refrain from such statements as...

 “Have fun!” or “behave/listen!” when the child starts their play therapy session or “Did you have fun today?”, “what did you do today,” “did you listen..” when they are finished. Often times play therapy is hard work. Your child is expressing themselves sometimes in very new and different ways. They may be processing through difficult feelings, behaviors, thoughts, and/or events. While there may very well be time they reflect on having fun during their play therapy session, it is still therapy, and your child is working through and towards goals!

\* DON’T assign your child a task or agenda for the session, such as....

 “Make sure you tell the therapist about\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, or don’t forget to work on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” Most of the time children eagerly look forward to their time with their therapist, and hearing from their parent what they “should” do can reduce the feeling of freedom and safety they have in a session. Instead, ask for some time with the therapist to provide your input about goals for the therapy.

\* Please DO NOT tell your child:

 To "be good" for the therapist, "do" whatever the therapist asks, or that they are going to therapy because they are "bad" or are the "problem."

\* Please DO NOT:

 Bribe your child to come to therapy or give consequences/punishments for behavior in therapy.

\*  I have read and understand the above information.

By checking this, you are eSigning this form.

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