



## Culturally Responsive Evidence-Based and Community-Defined Practices for Mental Health | Session 6: Preventing Long-Term Anger and Aggression in Youth (PLAAY)

### Presenters:

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### Participant Question & Presenter Response

**Q1**      *Who typically facilitates PLAAY programs?*

**A1**      Different communities, programs and organizations often have a variety of people facilitating PLAAY programs. In school settings, school social workers and counselors can be great facilitators. PE teachers, after-school program leaders, and sports team coaches are often well positioned to facilitate PLAAY as well because they are in a position to help kids practice their skills during a real-world activity. Additionally, the structures and staff are already in place making it simple and cost effective to add PLAAY to the existing programming in PE classes, after school programs, therapeutic groups, and sports teams' practices. PLAAY program specialists with professional licenses and unlicensed community members who have completed PLAAY facilitator training often facilitate in other settings such as therapeutic centers.

**Q2**      *How do PLAAY facilitators ensure that participants are developing social-interaction skills during a game?*

**A2**      Participants practice their PLAAY skills – such as stress reduction, self-advocacy, problem solving, social skills, storytelling, and debating – during games. Facilitators try to step back as much as possible during games in order to create situations that require the children to practice their skills. At the beginning of the program, the children must figure out the organization of the game themselves, often causing impasses and stressful situations. By the end of the program, the children have created an organizational structure that works for them and depends on effective problem-solving and negotiation skills.

**Q3**      *You mentioned that the group activities incorporated in PLAAY need to be competitive. Are there any exceptions to PLAAY's positive outcomes for kids who are less competitive or less social by nature?*

**A3**      The relationship between facilitator and participant is a key component of PLAAY. It is important that facilitators find the right game or group activity to

effectively engage each child so that the relationship can be formed. For less social children, using videos games can be a really great option. PLAAY will not be effective for every child; some children prefer to engage with a more traditional group therapy format instead.

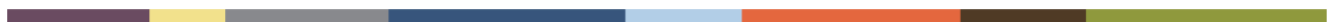
**Q4** *Does PLAAY compliment the trauma-informed approaches and policies that seem to be pervasive in New Orleans schools right now?*

**A4** Yes. PLAAY is a strengths-based, trauma-informed, and healing centered intervention. PLAAY promotes story-telling, journaling, and forming support systems within the group, the home, and the community. These are all impactful tools for processing trauma while targeting and celebrating participants' strengths in order to increase confidence, resilience, self-advocacy, self-esteem, self-worth, and a positive sense of racial identity. This provides children with the ability to recognize and reduce stress effectively in the moment in order to prevent future traumatic events from occurring.

**Q5** *How does PLAAY ensure sustainability of the stress reduction and relationship skills developed during the program after the participants age out of PLAAY?*

**A5** PLAAY providers at the Center for Resilience in New Orleans are working to create a set of measures to track data from participants as they transition out of the program. This data will be used to determine the sustainability of the program's impact. Additionally, the relationship component of PLAAY is essential in ensuring the sustainability of the program's positive outcomes. Research suggests that if a child maintains the relationship they have built with their mentors, coaches, and/or teachers, they are more likely to be engaged academically and have fewer interactions with law-enforcement. Because PLAAY facilitators do not need professional licenses, it is feasible for children to be involved in PLAAY programs their entire childhood, from grade school through high school. This long-term engagement helps to provide sustainable positive outcomes.

**Q6** *What are the costs, time commitments and other requirements for becoming trained in PLAAY?*



**A6**

The Center for Resilience in New Orleans offers PLAAY training on a sliding scale that generally ranges from \$550 - \$750 per workshop. These workshops are typically offered to multiple staff from one organization at a given time. Depending on an organization's need and grant availability, the training cost can occasionally be lowered further. PLAAY training workshops are offered either in-person or virtually and generally include 16 hours of training. The Center for Resilience also offers ongoing support after the initial training workshop and a "Train the Trainer" workshop for organizations that would like to have their own PLAAY trainer on staff.

**Additional Resources:**

- For information about mental health training and technical assistance activities, access your MHTTC Regional Center [here](#).
- [PLAAY Research from The Racial Empowerment Collaborative at The University of Pennsylvania](#)
- [Center for Resilience](#)
- [National Network to Eliminate Disparities in Behavioral Health \(NNED\) Learn](#)

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