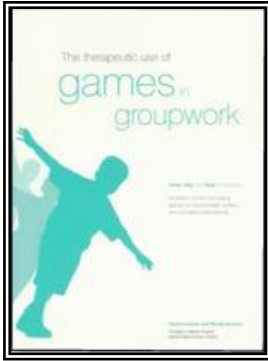


# Book review:

## Therapeutic Use of Games in Group Work

Naomi Audette and Wendy Bunston, Royal Children's Hospital, 2006



Dance movement therapist Naomi Audette has made an excellent contribution to the practical literature in Australia, with her co-authored book on the therapeutic use of games in group work. While the book is not specifically about dance movement therapy, Audette's skills as

a dance movement therapist, and as a performer and clown doctor are evident in her writing. Her collaboration with Wendy Bunston adds considerably to the value of the book, given Bunston's experience in working with 'high risk' children and adolescents and her skills as a trainer and manager. The writers developed this book during the course of their collaborative work in the Community Group Program at the Royal Children's Hospital, a program in which 20 different kinds of group work interventions have been developed and evaluated. The therapeutic group work programs described in the book are well tested, having been delivered over 400 times in schools, community and mental health settings across Melbourne.

It must have been fun brainstorming and describing all of these games! Many of them will be familiar; from childhood and parenting days, but for every reader, there are bound to be many new ideas or ideas presented in a novel way. Chapters include games for every situation: group starters like Name games, Getting to Know You games and Warm-ups; and games to cover different times with the sessions and for different goals; group games for team

building, communication, problem solving, impulse control, partner work, feelings, trust, personal space, relaxation and group closure. There is also a series of Training Games for Professionals. A short list of resources and references gives an idea of the theoretical framework of the authors, and directs the reader to organizations who distribute or sell other resources.

The book's usefulness is indisputable- for those many times in dance therapy practice when one wishes for a brainwave of a quick and easy way to lighten the atmosphere, change the focus, revitalize the group energy or open or close the session on a high note. Having such a clearly documented catalogue of games might make for less time spent planning as well as more interesting sessions. *Therapeutic Games* is a good size for ready reference text, (A4), and is well laid out, with each game clearly described on a single page. This is a resource well worth the modest price, and one that would add considerable value to the professional library of any therapist.

The book costs \$38 and is available from the RCH at:

[http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/mhs/Games\\_Manual\\_Order\\_Form.pdf](http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/mhs/Games_Manual_Order_Form.pdf)

### **Kim Dunphy**

*Kim is vice president of the DTAA and a dance specialist, who works as the Manager of the Cultural Development Network, an organization that promotes and supports the development of culturally vital communities.*