



Approved Standards for the
Internationally Credentialed Sandtray Therapist – Provider (ICST-P)
Credential and Continuing Education Program

Edition 2.1

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The International Association for Sandtray Therapy is the world's only *international* association dedicated solely to the spreading the healing power of sandtray therapy. It is a non-profit entity that exists to support, train and educate mental health therapists at the graduate level. Its purpose is to also help educate the general public about the process and healing power of sandtray therapy.

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Table of Contents

FOREWORD.....	5
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	6
1.0 SCOPE.....	7
1.1 CURRENT STANDARDS.....	7
1.2 SCOPE OF STANDARDS.....	7
1.3 NON-IAST STANDARDS.....	7
2.0 PURPOSE AND CONTENT.....	7
2.1 INTENT OF THE PROVIDER STANDARDS.....	7
2.2 DETAILS OF STANDARDS.....	7
2.3 UPDATE OF STANDARDS.....	7
3.0 CREDENTIALING PROCEDURES.....	8
3.1 INITIAL APPLICATION FOR ICST-P.....	8
3.1.1 Initial Application Packet for ICST-P	8
3.1.2 Good Standing	8
3.1.3 Applicant's Responsibility.....	8
3.1.4 Three-Day Provider Training	8
3.1.5 Application Review.....	8
3.1.6 Incomplete Application	9
3.1.7 Initial Application Fee	9
3.1.8 Malpractice Insurance	9
3.1.9 Continuing Education	9
3.1.10 Professional Licensure.....	9
3.2 RENEWAL APPLICATION FOR ICST-P	10
3.2.1 Renewal Application Packet for ICST-P	10
3.2.2 Good Standing	10
3.2.3 Renewal Period.....	10
3.2.4 Renewal Fee	10
3.2.5 Malpractice Insurance	10
3.2.6 Continuing Education	10
3.2.7 Professional Licensure.....	10
3.2.8 Minimum number of trainings per year	11
3.3 MARKETING AND TRAINING	11
3.3.1 IAST Logo	11
3.3.2 Individual Marketing	11
3.3.3 Directory of Providers.....	11
3.3.4 Removal from Directory	11
3.4 STANDARDIZATION OF TRAINING	11
3.4.1 Best Practices	11
3.4.2 Sequential Order of Levels.....	12
3.4.3 Required Objectives.....	12
3.4.4 Fourth Level	12
3.4.5 Objectives for Levels 1-3.....	12
3.4.6 References and Trainings	12

3.4.7 Number of References for Presentations	12
3.4.8 In-Person Training.....	13
3.5 STANDARDIZATION OF PAYMENT FOR ATTENDEES.....	13
3.5.1 Minimum Payment Fee	13
3.5.2 Maximum Payment Fee	13
3.5.3 Scholarships.....	13
3.5.4 Payment Plans	13
3.5.5 Individual Classes Fee	13
3.5.6 Additional Hours Fee.....	13
3.6 SELECTION OF PROVIDERS AND INSTRUCTORS.....	14
3.6.1 Number of ICST Providers & Members	14
3.6.2 Training Internationally	14
3.6.3 First-Come First-Serve Basis	14
3.6.4 Wait List	14
3.7 EVALUATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION.....	14
3.7.1 IAST Logo & Provider Number	14
3.7.2 Training Evaluations.....	14
3.7.3 Training Attendee Documentation.....	14
3.7.4 Certification Documentation	14
3.8 COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES PROCEDURES	15
3.8.1 Procedures.....	15
3.8.2 Response Time to Complaint.....	15
3.8.3 Rectify the Situation	15
3.8.4 Revoke Provider Status	15
3.8.5 Maintain Provider Confidentiality.....	15
4.0 CONTACT INFORMATION	15
APPENDIX A – DOCUMENTATION OF CALLS.....	16
APPENDIX B – LEVELS OF TRAINING WITH OBJECTIVES	17

FOREWORD

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Disclaimer of Liability. The International Association of Sandtray Therapy, as the developer of this standard, shall not incur any obligations or loss or damages, including, without limitation, indirect, consequential, special, or incidental damages, arising out of or in connection with the interpretation or adoption of, reliance upon, or any other use of the Standard by any party. The International Association of Sandtray Therapy makes no express or implied warranty of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, nor any other express or implied warranty with respect to this Standard.

ACCRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

IAST. International Association of Sandtray Therapy

ICST. Internationally Credentialed Sandtray Therapist

ICST-P. Internationally Credentialed Sandtray Therapist – Provider

1.0 SCOPE

1.1 Current Standards.

The current standard for providers applies to those who currently hold or are seeking to hold the status of Internationally Credentialed Sandtray Therapist-Provider.

1.2 Scope of Standards.

The scope of this standard covers all ICST-P protocols and trainings provided specific to those wishing to obtain ICST status.

1.3 Non-IAST Trainings.

The scope of this standard does not cover trainings not associated or approved by the IAST, such as online trainings or other in-person sandtray trainings that are not providing hours to those who are working towards approval for ICST.

2.0 PURPOSE AND INTENT

2.1 Intent of the Provider Standards.

Current ICST-P Standards are in place to uphold the quality and recognition of the sandtray training programs required to obtain the ICST-P credential.

2.2 Details of Standards.

All details within the standard are in place to maintain support and clarity for those wishing to obtain the ICST-P credential as well as provide a reference for those who are currently providing sandtray trainings.

2.3 Updates of Standards.

The provider standard will be updated periodically as needs arise within the IAST community. The standard is in place to give providers a guide for the best practices with upholding the mission of IAST.

3.0 CREDENTIALING PROCEDURES

3.1 Criteria and Requirements

- 3.1.1 Becoming an ICST-Provider is a position that is highly sought after by many sandtray therapists in the field. The Standards of IAST hold that all Providers must meet certain criteria and then also fulfill other requirements, such as the completion of a 3-day training program, which is focused solely on the mechanics, theory, and training of the ICST-P Program.
- 3.1.2 The reasoning for all of this is to maintain a high quality and standard for all trainers who work to provide credentialing training under IAST. Our goal is to provide each ICST-P with enough support, training, and knowledge to ensure that the only difference between ICST-P's is location and specialty, not quality. Being an ICST-P is both a privilege and a responsibility.

3.1 Initial Application for ICST-P. Initial application forms and fees must be completed by those wishing to be given the ICST-P status.

3.1.1 Initial Application Packet for ICST-P. All applicants will provide the following Initial Application forms and fees to be considered for ICST-P status:

1. Initial fee of \$160
2. Completed Initial Application for ICST-P
3. Proof of professional mental health licensure (see 3.1.10)
4. Copy of updated Certificate of Malpractice Insurance for those practicing in the United States.

3.1.2 Good Standing. All applicants must be a therapist in good standing with their current country/board and maintain an active ICST status. Good Standing includes:

- Maintain ICST credential in good standing
- Maintain license/association for primary practice
- Maintain good standing with current country/board
- Maintain active membership in IAST

3.1.3 Applicant's responsibility. Applicants are solely responsible for the accuracy and completion of the initial and renewal form of the ICST-P.

3.1.4 Three Day Provider Training. All applicants must also complete the 3-day provider-training provided by an IAST-approved vendor.

3.1.5 Application review.

Applications will be reviewed for completeness as well as readiness to train, location, and overall sandtray skill level.

Applications must be completed and returned to the IAST board for review, allowing 2-4 weeks for application review.

3.1.6 Incomplete Application. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Applicants will be notified within 10 business days of incomplete applications and instructed as to what action needs to be performed to correct the incomplete application. Applicants will also be given a time frame in which the given corrections are to be made.

3.1.7 Initial Application Fee. Initial application fee is a non-refundable \$160. The application fee will be paid to IAST to process the initial paperwork and provide appropriate provider status. The application fee will be rendered to the IAST through the secure online portal.

3.1.8 Malpractice Insurance. All applicants must carry appropriate malpractice insurance in order to provide training. A copy of the applicant's Certificate of Insurance must be provided with application and associated fees. International providers are exempt only if this is not available in their country, and should ethically conduct their business and follow their country's ethics till such is available.

3.1.9 Continuing Education. All applicants must complete 3 hours of continuing education each year of ICST-P approved continuing education.

3.1.10 Professional licensure. All applicants need to show proof of current mental health professional licensure, such as one of the following:

- Applicants In the United States:
 - Proof of professional mental health licensure for those practicing in the United States.
 - Proof of Masters Degree in Mental Health.
- International applicants:
 - International Providers will know the current country standards or regulations for Mental Health Therapists.
 - When practicing outside of the United States, applicants do not have be licensed where licensing is not established.
 - Be in good standing in country of practice.
 - Notification of approval to practice mental health therapy within the applicant's country or state of origin if applicable.
 - Proof of membership in a mental health association.
 - Proof of Masters Degree in Mental Health.

3.2 Renewal for ICST-P.

3.2.1 Renewal Application Packet for ICST-P. All applicants will provide the following Initial Application forms and fees to be considered for ICST-P renewal status every 2 years:

1. Renewal fee of \$100
2. Complete renewal application
3. Proof of professional mental health licensure (see 3.2.7)
4. Proof of 3 hours of continuing education that are provider-specific
5. Copy of updated Certificate of Malpractice Insurance for those practicing in the United States. International Providers should submit any supporting documents that are necessary to practice in their country.

3.2.2 Good Standing. To maintain in good standing for the ICST-P, all applicants will need to:

- Maintain ICST credential in good standing
- Maintain license/association for primary practice
- Maintain active membership in IAST
- Complete and maintain records of all approved provider trainings
- Offer at least one ICST training every two years
- Provide list to IAST of all newly graduated ICST from programs
- Maintain at least 3 hours of continuing education for ICST-P's (can be done at a bi-annual retreat for all providers)

3.2.3 Renewal Period. All current ICST-P will need to renew credentials every 2 years.

3.2.4 Renewal Fee. A renewal fee of \$100 will be required to process the renewal application. The application fee will be rendered to the IAST through the secure online portal.

3.2.5 Malpractice Insurance. All applicants must carry appropriate malpractice insurance in order to provide training. All applicants must provide a copy of their updated Certificate of Insurance with renewal application and renewal fee.

3.2.6 Continuing Education. All renewal applicants must complete 3 hours of continuing education every two years.

3.2.7 Professional licensure. All applicants need to show proof of current mental health professional licensure, such as one of the following:

- Applicants In the United States:
 - o Proof of professional mental health licensure for those practicing in the United States.

- International applicants:
 - When practicing outside of the United States, applicants do not have be licensed where licensing is not established.
 - International Providers will know the current country standards or regulations for Mental Health Therapists.
 - Be in good standing in country of practice.
 - Notification of approval to practice mental health therapy within the applicant's country or state of origin if applicable.
 - Proof of membership in a mental health association.

3.2.8 Minimum number of trainings per year. ICST-P's need to offer at least one level of ICST training every year to sustain their provider credential.

- If a provider does not provide any ICST trainings within 1 calendar year of becoming a Provider, their provider status may be revoked.
- This is at the boards' discretion based on what is best for the association, when revoking a provider.

3.3 Marketing and Promotion

3.3.1 IAST Logo. All providers will maintain consistent use of the IAST logo and use of the mission statement.

3.3.2 Individual Marketing. Individual marketing for each provider will be decided by ICST-P and how the individual marketing will be conducted, given the best practices standards of marketing, as taught within the provider training.

3.3.3 Directory of Providers. Providers will be listed in a Directory of Providers on the IAST website, including name, location, brief bio (no more than 3-4 sentences), and any relevant information to aid in marketing and promotion of Provider trainings for the ICST credential.

3.3.4 Removal from Directory. If an ICST fails to submit renewal information when required, the IAST will remove the name of the person from the directory and revoke marketing privileges.

3.4 Standardization of training.

All providers will teach within the model as approved by IAST.

3.4.1 Best practices. The model for becoming an ICST is brain-informed and focuses on best practices in therapy, for both adults and children.

3.4.2 Sequential order of levels. Each level will build upon the prior training and must be completed in sequential order to obtain the ICST credential.

3.4.3 Required objectives. Providers must adhere to the teaching of each of the required objectives within the first three levels of the ICST.

3.4.4.1 Objectives for Levels 1-3 are provided in Appendix B of this Standard.

3.4.4.2. Diversity will be included in Levels 1-3 standards of ICST Training.

3.4.4 Fourth Level.

3.4.4.2 Content for level 4:

- o Level 4 will not be an introductory training but will be further skill enhancement in a specific area and expansion of how it relates to sandtray therapy.
- o The fourth level, or level 4, can be an elective written by the individual provider, which allows the provider to express and teach his or her unique interests and talent within the sandtray.

3.4.4.3 Level 4 shall include:

- Objectives submitted to IAST for approval at least 90 days prior to providing the Level 4 training.
- The title of the training must have the words 'sandtray therapy'
- At least half of the objectives for the Level 4 training must relate to sandtray therapy
- At least 12 hours of direct contact training credits (1 hour = 1 CE credit)
- A specific population focus or topic as applied to sandtray therapy.
- The appropriate references as maintained by IAST.

3.4.6 References and Trainings.

Providers may use appropriate reference materials to meet the objectives for each level. All references must be scholarly work and/or peer-reviewed works.

3.4.7 Number of References for Presentations.

- For each 6 hours of training, providers must have at least 5 cited references included in the presentation.
- If a provider conducts 12 hours of training, a minimum of 10 cited references must be provided as part of the training.
- Any limitations of the cited works must be addressed during the presentation of the material.

3.4.8 In-Person Training.

Levels 1-4 must be provided as Contact or in-person trainings. Online or live-streaming of trainings will not be accepted for Levels 1-4 of the required training program for ICST in order to uphold the experiential nature of this training.

3.4.9 Maximum number of participants. The maximum number of ICST participants/students is 14 for each level of training.

3.5 Standardization of Payment for Attendees

3.5.1 Minimum Payment Fee. In order to provide a consistent and high-quality trainings for all of those wishing to be an ICST, providers will be required to maintain a minimum payment fee for the ICST program.

If providing the levels 1-4 and 15 case consultation hours for training for the ICST, the total price must be at least \$3000 US dollars.

3.5.2 Maximum Payment Fee. Providers may charge more than this standard fee, with no maximum fee, but cannot go below the minimum payment fee.

3.5.3 Scholarships. Scholarships for individual attendees maintain the discretion of the individual provider.

3.5.4 Payment plans. Payment plans are allowed and may have additional fees, per the individual provider's discretion.

3.5.5 Individual Level & Classes Fee.

3.5.4.1 Individual Level Fee. If providing each level of classes in an individual format, such as Level 1 alone, payment must be no less than \$300 per level training lasting two-days.

3.5.4.2 Separate Case Consultation & Supervision Fee. If Levels 1-4 are provided as individual trainings/classes, then the supervision fee must be charged at a minimum of \$1800 for 15 hours of supervision. The training fee for each consulting hour is a minimum of \$120 per hour.

3.5.6 Additional hours fee. Additional hours required to complete the ICST credential can be completed through the IAST training portal online or at the Sandtray Therapy Summit, and are paid accordingly. Additional hours are \$120 per hour minimum, for a total of 15 hours of supervision.

3.6 Selection of providers and instructors

3.6.1 Number of ICST Providers & Members in the United States of America.

Additional ICST-Providers are at the discretion of the IAST Board of Directors, with consideration of the proportion of members per trainer in any given area.

- Maximum 2 providers per geographical area per ratio.
- As the number of members increase, the available provider numbers will also increase.

3.6.2 Training Internationally.

Additional ICST-Providers are at the discretion of the IAST Board of Directors, with consideration of the proportion of members per trainer in any given area.

- Maximum 2 providers per geographical area per ratio.
- As the number of members increase, the available provider numbers will also increase.
- Choosing providers is at the boards' discretion based on what is best for the association, when choosing a provider

3.6.3 Application. This application is only available to current active members of ICST, who are ICST trained, and are in good financial standing with IAST. As IAST membership grow, applications for IAST Providers would be posted.

3.7 Evaluations and Required Documentation

3.7.1 IAST Logo & Provider Number.

All providers must have the IAST logo as well as the provider number displayed on all marketing material as well as continuing education certificates.

3.7.2 Training Evaluations.

- Providers are required to conduct evaluations after each training.
- Providers will collect and maintain evaluations for a minimum of 7 years. Periodic audits of documentation may be conducted by IAST.
- The purpose of the training evaluations should be used to improve trainings and maintain a high level of quality from ICST providers.

3.7.3 Training Attendee Documentation. In addition, sign in and sign out sheets are also required to be collected and maintained after each day of training.

3.7.4 Certification Documentation. Certifications must be provided after each level is completed, signifying that the attendee as completed the level required for ICST.

The below must be provided on the attendee certificate:

1. attendee name;

2. event or program name;
3. name and credentials of trainer;
4. date(s);
5. city and state;
6. number of sandtray therapy credit hours awarded (one [1] hour credit = 60 minutes);
7. IAST Approved Provider XXXX (mandatory phrase)

3.8 Complaints and Grievances Procedures

3.8.1 Procedures. Complaints and grievances against any provider should be completed in writing and submitted through letter or email to the members@sandtraytherapy.org.

3.8.2 Response Time to Complaint.

After a complaint is received, the complainant will receive a written response within 10 business days notifying:

- the complaint has been received,
- the complaint is being investigated,
- and the complainant will be notified of a resolution when it is provided.

3.8.3 Rectify the Situation. IAST will work with the provider to rectify the situation to maintain the highest level of standards.

3.8.4 Revoke Provider Status. If a resolution cannot be addressed, IAST maintains the right to revoke provider status.

3.8.5 Maintain Provider Confidentiality. IAST also maintains the right to maintain confidentiality of complaints and grievances against the providers if desired best for all parties.

4.0 Contact Information.

The International Association for Sandtray Therapy
2605 Southwest Square
Jonesboro, AR 72401
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Appendix A:
Documentation of Consultation Calls

Call Number	Date	Time In/Out	IAST Provider

Signature of Applicant

Date

Signature of IAST Approved Provider

Date

IAST Provider Number

Signature of IAST Approved Provider

Date

IAST Provider Number

Appendix B Levels of Training with Objectives

Level 1: Foundations and Applications of Sandtray Play Therapy

This workshop comprehensively introduces sandtray play therapy, covering its history, foundational principles, and practical applications. Participants will explore the differences between sandtray and sand play therapy, learn about the materials needed for effective sandtray work, and develop skills for working with children and adults. The training emphasizes hands-on learning, including role-play scenarios, group activities, and case study analysis to deepen understanding of therapeutic processes.

Special attention will be given to recognizing common themes in sandtray therapy, understanding developmental considerations for children and special populations, and exploring non-directive play therapy principles. The workshop also highlights the latest sandtray research, focusing on how sandtray therapy promotes emotional regulation and trauma healing. By the end, participants will feel equipped to incorporate sandtray techniques into individual, group, and family therapy settings.

Day 1

Based on the content of this workshop, I am able to:

- 1) **Describe** the history of sandtray work in play therapy.
- 2) **Differentiate** between sandtray therapy and sand play therapy.
- 3) **Identify** the materials needed for sandtray work, including miniatures, sand, and sand trays.
- 4) **Demonstrate** the skills required to process sandtray work with adults and children.
- 5) **List** 20 directives for sandtray work in play therapy provided by the instructor and **generate** additional directives based on case examples.
- 6) **Analyze** several case studies of adults and or children to understand the therapeutic sandtray play therapy processes involved in treatment.
- 7) **Recognize** 10 common themes in sandtray play therapy, including those indicative of mental health concerns and pathways to healing.
- 8) **Discuss** the Therapeutic Powers of Play Therapy and its treatment implications within the sand tray.

Day 2

Based on the content of this workshop, I am able to:

- 1) **Summarize** developmental issues that arise in sandtray work with children and other special populations.
- 2) **Explain** the principles of non-directive play therapy and how they apply to work with children in sandtray therapy.
- 3) **Participate** in and **demonstrate** role-play scenarios involving sandtray play therapy work, including interactions specific to children and adults.
- 4) **Analyze** case studies of children and or adults to **identify** the therapeutic processes occurring in sandtray play therapy treatment.
- 5) **Discuss and analyze** the latest brain-informed research on the therapeutic benefits of sandtray in play therapy.
- 6) **Engage** in a group sandtray activity and **apply** three methods for incorporating sandtray into group and family therapy settings.
- 7) **Discuss** the importance of cultural humility in sandtray play therapy and identify strategies to create a culturally responsive and inclusive therapeutic environment

Level 2: The Neuroscience of Sandtray Therapy

This advanced workshop delves into the neuroscience underpinning sandtray therapy within the play therapy setting. Participants will explore how engaging in sandtray therapy activates neural pathways that support emotional regulation, trauma processing, and brain integration. The training will examine the brain's response to sensory-rich environments, symbolic play, and the relational aspects of sandtray work, offering insights into its profound therapeutic impact. This workshop equips therapists to apply sandtray therapy more effectively with clients across diverse age groups and needs by connecting brain science to practical techniques.

Day 1

Based on the content of this workshop, I am able to:

- 1) **Describe** the basics of brain structure and **explain** how these concepts relate to sandtray play therapy.
- 2) **Identify** the key tenets of interpersonal neurobiology and **apply** them in a sandtray play therapy context.
- 3) **Analyze** case studies to **illustrate** the integration of neuroscience with sandtray play therapy.
- 4) **Explain** how different age groups engage in sandtray and play activities from a brain science perspective.
- 5) **Discuss** the effects of trauma on the brain and **examine** how these effects influence sandtray play therapy.
- 6) **Demonstrate** two or more new techniques for explaining brain structure in relation to play and sandtray therapy.
- 7) **Examine** how cultural factors influence brain development and processing and **discuss** how these factors should be considered when working within the sandtray play therapy setting.

Day 2

Based on the content of this workshop, I am able to:

- 1) **Describe** Polyvagal Theory and **explain** its relevance to play and sandtray therapy.
- 2) **Interpret** sand trays using brain science principles to **identify** therapeutic patterns and processes.
- 3) **Distinguish** between implicit and explicit memories and **explain** their significance in therapy and play.
- 4) **Demonstrate** key skills to **enhance** your effectiveness as a clinician/facilitator of sandtray play therapy.
- 5) **Apply** brain science research principles to **inform** your practice in sandtray play therapy.
- 6) **Explain** how sandtray therapy functions as a form of play therapy from a brain-informed perspective, including the nine integration pathways.

Level 3: Advanced Sandtray Therapy: Deepening the Therapeutic Process

This advanced workshop explores the transformative power of sandtray therapy within the play therapy setting. Participants will engage in personal sandtray experiences, which will deepen their understanding of how to process and work with clients in the sand. By reflecting on their own personal experiences in the tray, therapists will gain insights that enhance their ability to facilitate deeper, more meaningful work with clients. The workshop emphasizes the importance of personal engagement with the sandtray to deepen the therapeutic process, allowing therapists to better connect with clients and facilitate healing. This experiential approach will provide participants with practical tools to integrate sandtray work into their practice with greater depth and empathy.

Day 1

Based on the content of this workshop, I am able to:

- 1) **Explain** how the brain processes experience through the sandtray and play therapy framework.
- 2) **Analyze** personal case studies and instructor-provided examples from the playroom to identify key therapeutic processes.
- 3) **Engage** in case consultations provided by participants to **discuss** potential approaches in sandtray and play therapy.
- 4) **Demonstrate** personal sandtray work with the trainer and fellow participants to **enhance** understanding of the therapeutic process.
- 5) **Evaluate** 2-3 different theories regarding the use of specific methods in sandtray therapy.
- 6) **Practice** techniques in the sandtray from both the client's and therapist's perspectives to **build** practical skills.
- 7) **Develop** and **apply** 5-6 processing prompts suitable for children and adults in sandtray play therapy.

- 8) **Discuss** cultural and diversity considerations in sandtray play therapy and **identify** strategies to create inclusive and culturally responsive therapeutic interventions.

Day 2

Based on the content of this workshop, I am able to:

- 1) **Analyze** live demonstrations of the sandtray play therapy process to deepen the therapeutic process with clients.
- 2) **Critique** and **discuss** the demonstrations using clinical tools and sandtray play therapy techniques.
- 3) **Design** 1-2 sandtray therapy techniques grounded in a specific theoretical orientation.
- 4) **Evaluate** and **reflect** on personal processing skills in sandtray therapy through group connection to deepen the therapeutic processing of client sand trays.
- 5) **Explain** the significance of personal engagement with the sandtray as a tool for becoming a more effective therapist, demonstrated through experiential exercises.
- 6) **Discuss** strategies for integrating sandtray and play therapy into other therapeutic models to enhance clinical practice.

Level 4: Further Skill Enhancement of Sandtray Therapy

This workshop is an advanced sandtray therapy class provided within the play therapy setting. It will cover the objectives written by the Provider.

Level 4:

See standardization of training above (Section 3.4.4)

Each ICST-Provider will write their own objectives for Level 4 to match the advanced training.