

The Forgotten Ones:

Perfect Children Need Play Therapy Too

Have you ever noticed that the children that tend to make their way to your office are the ones that are acting out, aggressive, non-compliant, and anxious? ... And sprinkled in, you might get the sad, depressed, withdrawn children?

But what about “the perfect child”?

You know - the child who rarely asks for anything, follows all the rules, doesn't rock the boat, and in general is...Easy.

Children are typically brought to us because their struggles are obvious - right?! Parents and teachers see their symptoms. Their behaviors and relational patterns are a clear cry for help ...

... “The perfect child,” on the other hand, doesn't have these outward symptoms or at least not the ones that we are used to identifying.

Often these children have learned not to fight.

They've learned to shut down their emotions, yet inside they're filled with anxiety and tension (even if they can't feel it) ... They're so scared of making a mistake. They're frightened that in some giant way they will fail or disappoint others (and themselves).

So the child forms a strategy and strives for perfection - that can lead to them becoming “the forgotten one.”



Here are some of the challenges that these children may face ...

1. The pressure they carry inside for perfection and compliance can lead to internal conflict between who they are versus who they think they should be.
2. They carry the weight of the world on their shoulders, internalizing their emotions and eventually numbing out or adopting avoidance patterns.
3. They often don't learn how to handle the intensity that lies under their “perfect image.”
4. The idea of conflict feels beyond painful and the need to succeed or stay below everyone's radar becomes a high priority.
5. These children often navigate the world through their left-brain – they think their way through life instead of learning how to feel their way through life.

***Let's not forget these kids. Let's find them in the classrooms and in the families we work with.
Let's look them in the eye and help them know that they are seen
– they haven't been forgotten.***