



Family
Psychology
Centre

D&D Therapy Group Q&A

Program Basics

When does the group run?

Wednesdays, 4–6 pm from January 7th to March 25th, 2026
(12 consecutive weekly sessions).

Where is it located?

Family Psychology Centre – Eglinton Office
181 Eglinton Ave E, Suite 300
Toronto, ON M4P 1J4

How much does it cost?

\$2400 total for 12 weekly sessions (each session is 120 minutes).

Intake session and parent check-ins every fourth session are included in the fee.

Who can join?

- Participants must:
- Be 10–16 years old
- Have basic speech, reading, and numeracy skills
- Feel comfortable attending without a parent in the room



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Who facilitates the group?

The group is facilitated by two clinicians from the Family Psychology Centre:

- Aaron Strate, MPsy, RP(Q)
- Francis Wall, M.A., Ph.D. Candidate

About the Program

What will participants do in this group?

Get ready for an epic quest!

This group uses therapeutically applied Dungeons & Dragons to help participants explore challenges and build skills in a fun, imaginative environment.

Through collaborative storytelling and roleplay, participants will:

- Practice problem-solving and flexible thinking
- Strengthen social communication and perspective-taking
- Work on emotion regulation and impulse control
- Explore real-world challenges safely through the lens of a fantasy adventure
- Build confidence, creativity, and resilience
- Participants are matched according to age, developmental stage, and areas of need.



How does playing D&D support therapy?

Tabletop role-playing games like D&D are collaborative storytelling experiences. Each participant controls a character who grows and changes as the adventure unfolds.

- Dice add an element of unpredictability
- The Game Master (GM) guides the world and story
- Gameplay includes exploration, social interactions, puzzles, and simulated combat
- These gameplay elements naturally support skill development in a supported, low-risk environment.

Goals and Therapy Process

What are the therapeutic goals?

Goals are individualized and discussed during the intake process. Group therapy also provides shared goals through its social and collaborative nature.

Common goals may include:

- Improving impulse control
- Strengthening emotion regulation
- Enhancing organizational skills and the ability to follow multi-step instructions
- Developing social communication and engagement



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- Managing expected and unexpected social behaviour
- Increasing comfort with social exposure or sensory challenges
- Participants remain in control of their own comfort level regarding disclosure, vulnerability, or social sharing.

Facilitators ensure a safe, supportive experience for all.

Group Format & Structure

Do participants need experience with D&D?

No. No previous experience is required.

Participants learn as they play, and for many, discovering a new hobby becomes an added benefit of joining the group.

What is the structure of each session?

Each 120-minute session includes:

- 5-minute check-in and story recap
- 75 minutes of gameplay
- 30 minutes of group processing, discussing therapeutic themes and real-life applications

What is the “leveling up” process?

The 12-week arc progresses through one continuous story of 'campaign':



- Early sessions focus on community-building, safety, and group cohesion
- Later sessions involve increasingly rich challenges, skill-building, and opportunities for personal growth
- The story unfolds as one continuous campaign to support immersion, engagement, and narrative learning

Communication & Parent Expectations

How will parents be involved?

To support therapeutic goals, facilitators provide parent communication every fourth session via:

- Parent coaching sessions
- Phone check-ins
- Email updates

Can parents sit in on sessions?

No. To protect participant confidentiality and maintain the therapeutic environment, parents do not join the 120-minute group sessions.

Is there an ongoing community after the program ends?

There is no formal ongoing community between cycles, but participants are welcome to join future groups.



Resource Library

These resources offer more insight into the use of RPGs in therapy:

YouTube: Therapeutic D&D Overview:

<https://youtu.be/6orgSqUtWTY?si=iHbSTK4MENRwvhWL>

Article: “Why We’re Starting a Dungeons & Dragons Therapy Group” (Johns Hopkins University):

<https://wellbeing.jhu.edu/blog/2021/03/24/why-were-starting-a-dungeons-and-dragons-therapy-group/>

Article: APA Monitor – Role-Playing Games in Therapy

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2025/04-05/role-playing-games-therapy>

Academic Paper: The Therapeutic Use of Role-Playing Games

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11299717/>