

Dr. Willert's Helpful Hints for using Willabee

System Requirements

1. You can access Welcome to Willabee on any device with Internet capabilities. However, smaller mobile devices such as phones typically have too small of a screen to allow you to view the full video content. You will be able to see Will, but not his drawing of a character or concept. While this is not ideal, it would work at times when you simply want to refresh the child's memory and present Will's dialogue. **However, I want to emphasize that Willabee was not designed for use on a cell phone; the screen is just too small.**
2. For the optimal experience, you should use a tablet, laptop, or desktop computer.
3. Use the most up-to-date web browser available (e.g., Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox, latest version of Internet Explorer) and have a reliable Internet connection.

Helpful Hints for using Willabee with Children

View a video library of helpful hints on YouTube at <http://bit.ly/WillabeeTips>

1. Click on the Character Glossary on the first webpage, print the entire glossary of characters and concepts on a color printer, and display them in a poster format on a wall or door in your office. This is attention-grabbing to children, it provides a visual reminder to you to use the Willabee tool whenever applicable, and the sight of the poster often starts a conversation about Willabee between the therapist and child.
2. On the first webpage, you should read about the product by clicking "About the Willabee Project." This will give you a little history on the evolution of Willabee.
3. To simply explore Willabee with a child in a session, click on "Will" to get a quick overview of the places you can go. Next, depending on whether you want to examine emotions (sadness, anger, anxiety, or holding on to negative feelings) or skills, you can click on a specific location like the Sad Shack and check out characters or concepts to find one that is relevant for your therapy session.
4. On the first webpage, you can click on one of the locations (Sad Shack, Skills Building, Worry Way, Grudge Hut, Madhouse, and Coping Shoppe). This will take you immediately to a second webpage with various characters and concepts. Refer to the glossary that you printed out earlier to locate a relevant character or concept. For example, Clyde the Cloud (down on self), Unibrow (worry about physical looks), Levels of Anger (a visual tool for rating the intensity of anger), etc.

5. Learning how to scale and rate the intensity of an emotion is an important coping skill for children. This skill can be taught by using Boxes of Worry in Worry Way, Circles of Sad in the Sad Shack, and Levels of Anger in the Madhouse.
6. Although younger children typically think concretely and dichotomously, it is often helpful to introduce the concept of flexible thinking so they can become aware of new thought possibilities. This can be done by using the visual aid Shades of Gray found in the Coping Shoppe; or clicking on the characters Flex, Shapey, Ike the Light in the Skills Building, or Awesome Helmet in the Coping Shoppe.
7. For children who have emotion regulation or anger management problems, you can use Drummy and Conga Tom, both in the Skills Building, to examine physiological arousal and calming. You can also click on “Drummy playing Conga Tom” to actually rehearse escalating and de-escalating with the child. When the drum beat is slow and steady, this illustrates the resting state. As the rhythm gets steadily faster, this is analogous to increasing degrees of physiological arousal. To rehearse de-escalation, the child can then be instructed to breathe in slowly and deeply through his/her nose and exhale slowly through his/her mouth, coinciding with the rhythm slowing down and reaching a resting state again.
8. To teach children the step-by-step problem-solving process offered by the cognitive-behavioral model, just click on Professor Majingles in the Coping Shoppe. This will lead the child through the steps of problem-solving in the session, and you can review how the chosen possible solution worked in the next session.
9. As you become familiar with the characters and concepts in Willabee, you can go to a particular location and “Download” and print any character or concept before or during the session, allowing the child to write or draw on it and take it with him/her when the session is over. This print-out could then serve as a memory aid (and maybe even end up being posted on the refrigerator at the child’s home).
10. Please use the “What If” poem to provide the child with examples of worry-filled thinking and to open a discussion about managing these.