Book reviews

Communication of social support

Messages, interactions, relationships and community

Brant R. Burleson, Terrance. L. Albrecht & Irwin G. Sarason

1994, Sage,
Thousands Oaks-London-New Delhi
ISBN 0-8039-4350-4 (hardback)
ISBN 0-8039-4351-2 (paperback)

How are different forms of support communicated from one individual to another? What is the structure of a supportive interaction? What message forms are effective in conveying support? And what types of messages, even when well intentioned, tend to injure or offend? Answering these and other significant questions, this comprehensive volume focuses on interdisciplinary approaches to understanding the process, structure, and function of communication in support and helping relationships. Notable researchers present diverse perspectives showing how support is co-constructed between providers and recipients. Unique in its approach, the book examines functional and dysfunctional patterns involved in the communication of support, and offers both academic and applied audiences an understanding of social support as a communication process grounded in ongoing relationships.

Communication of Social Support is essential reading for anyone studying or working in social support environments and a valuable text for courses in social psychology, social interaction, personal relationships, interpersonal communication, communication theory and related areas.

Meaningful relationships

Talking, sense and relating

Steve Duck

1994, Sage,
Thousands Oaks-London-New Delhi.
ISBN 0-8039-5702-5 (hardback)
ISBN 0-8039-5703-3 (paperback)

Meaningful Relationships challenges the reader to leave traditional academic pathways in the pursuit of understanding the nature of human relationships and plunge into this most important theoretical accomplishment in the field to date. The author, Steve Duck, argues that relationships are never "done deals" but, rather, are continually unfolding and in need of perpetual responsive action and construction. Central to this discussion is the author's contention that relationships are solidly based in the recognition of shared meaning discovered in the way we metaphorically represent the world to ourselves and to others through everyday talk and symbols. Rather than unfolding in a sequential manner, the theories presented in *Meaningful Relationships* are approached from different angles showing simultaneous relationships in different contexts.

An outstanding addition to the Sage Series on Close Relationships, this book is stimulating in its novel approach and will be of interest to scholars and students in close relationships, psychology, interpersonal communication, sociology, family studies and social work.

Child care in the EC

A country-specific guide to foster and residential care

M.J. Colton & W. Hellinckx

Aldershot: Arena

ISBN 1-85742-178-7 (hardback)
ISBN 1-85742-179-5 (paperback)

Despite the current uncertainty about the future development of the European Union (EU), there is increasing recognition among child welfare administrators, researchers, practitioners and students across the EU that much can be learned from the policies and practices of other member states.

This book offers a systematic description of residential and foster care in each of the constituent countries of the EU. In addition, it presents a concise account of the research on residential and foster care undertaken in each country. The book is, therefore, unique in that it represents the first coherent account of policy, practice and research in the field of residential and foster care in all the countries of the EU.

In the concluding chapter, M.J. Colton and W. Hellinckx highlight common developments among member states with regard to residential and foster care, emerging alternatives to these forms of care, and developments in child care research. Notwithstanding the difficulties associated with making international comparisons, the editors firmly believe that studies across national frontiers can help to produce the knowledge that will result in better lives for children in need everywhere.

The expertise of all those who have contributed to this volume ensures its reliability and usefulness for child welfare policy-makers, researchers, practitioners and students.

Suicide - the ultimate rejection?

A psycho-social study

Colin Pritchard

Buckingham: Open University Press

ISBN 0-335-19033-2 (hardback)
ISBN 0-335-19032-4 (paperback)

Suicide - *The Ultimate Rejection? is* an interdisciplinary text based on Colin Pritchard's first-hand experience both as a practising social worker in psychiatry and as a social researcher. It provides an analysis of current research on suicide, exploring possible 'causes' and how best to intervene, and makes the case for a science-based practice 'art'. International suicide rates are examined as the author considers suicide in a cross-cultural context showing how it is differently understood in different ethnic groups, reflecting various degrees of stigma. He argues for greater recognition of these key differences between cultures and ethnic groups, and shows how important they can be to our understanding and intervention.

Suicide - *The Ultimate Rejection?* explores the concepts of prediction and prevention and deals with the question of how the current health and community services might work to reduce the number of suicides in line with the targets set by the government's *Health of the* Nation. Different approaches to intervention and treatment are considered, with an emphasis on those which research has shown to be the most promising. Special attention is given to the families of the victims, and in the final pages a wider view of suicide is explored, which includes euthanasia. Using new research, Colin Pritchard examines the practical and moral issues raised by euthanasia.

This book will be of interest to students of social work, psychiatric nursing, health visiting and medicine, as well as to health professionals and counselors.

Treating children and adolescents in residential and inpatient setting

Robert D. Lyman & Nancy R. Campbell

1996, Sage,
Thousands Oaks-London-New Delhi.
ISBN 0-8039-7046-3 (hardback)
ISBN 0-8039-7047-1 (paperback)

Every year more than 50,000 young people receive mental health treatment in residential and inpatient settings such as hospitals, group homes and residential treatment centers. A referral to an intensive residential or inpatient treatment program is a major decision that affects the whole family. Treating Children and Adolescents in Residential and Inpatient Settings will help professionals and parents to make their decisions about instutionalizing children and adolescents. The book discusses issues like: How are the decisions to place young people in a program made? What kind of program should be considered, what kinds of treatment are offered and how effective are these programs?

Treating Children and Adolescents in Residential and Inpatient Settings provides a 'state of the art' assessment of current therapeutic models and inpatient/residential treatment options, and suggests guidelines on 'how and when' to use such special services. To this end, the authors review the findings of program evaluations and discuss alternatives to residential placement, such as part-time and community-based treatment.

The volume includes a list of resources that can help professionals and parents locating professional organizations, interest groups, publications and assessment materials. In addition, the volume is of interest to students, researchers and scholars in clinical/counseling psychology, developmental psychology, nursing, behavioral psychology and social work.

Children in Europe

Sandy Ruxton

London: NCH-Action for Children
ISBN 0-900-984-538 (paperback)

Based on a wide range of sources, Children in Europe draws out key themes for policy and practice across the European Union. By settling these in an appropriate legal and national context, it establishes clear agendas for the future. Descriptions of the child welfare systems in all member states and a guide to the institutions and legislative processes within the European Union are given, as well as detailed information about such items as family trends, family policy, caring for children, poverty and social exclusion, education, health, homelessness, youth justice, residential and foster care, adoption, disability, violence to children, migrants, refugees and race, child labour and civil rights.

Accessible and informative, *Children in Europe* constitutes essential reading for policy makers, scientists, practitioners and anyone interested in the well-being of children.

Environmental psychology
A psycho-social introduction
Mirilia Bonnes & Gianfranco Secchiaroli
1995, Sage,
Thousands Oaks-London-New Delhi
ISBN 0-8039-7905-7 (hardback)
ISBN 0-8039-7906-1 (paperback)

This book provides a clear and comprehensive introduction to an important area of applied psychology. In the first part the authors review the history of environmental psychology, highlighting in particular its interdisciplinary nature. They trace its roots through architecture, ecology and geography, and examine the continuing relationships of these subjects to the psychological tradition. The book then moves through the key contemporary lines of research in environmental psychology, contrasting models from perception and cognition, such as those of Gibson and Brunswick, with major psychological approaches, as represented by Lewin, Barker and others. This broad-ranging work concludes with a critical analysis of the most promising areas of research and practice in the field.

An invaluable introduction to the rapidly expanding field of environmental psychology, this book is essential reading for students and academics in applied psychology, ergonomics and environmental studies.