

Book descriptions

The battered child (5th edition)

Helfer, M. E., Kempe, R. S. & R. D. Krugman (Eds.)

1997, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

672p. ISBN 0 226 32627 6

The fifth edition of Kempe's seminal work on child abuse *The battered child* has been extensively revised and renewed. The editors claim that it is about 40 percent larger than its predecessor. Containing contributions of all relevant aspects in the field of child maltreatment, the book is a standard work for all practitioners, researchers and policy-makers dealing with the problem.

Preventing family violence

Browne, K. & Herbert, M.

1997, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

365p. ISBN 0 471 92771 6

In *Preventing family violence* various manifestations and aspects of violence in families are discussed: spouse maltreatment, child abuse and neglect, sibling maltreatment, parent maltreatment, elder abuse and neglect, and intergenerational transmission of violence. Further, in most chapters, attention is devoted to issues of screening, early intervention in high-risk families, and primary prevention.

Throughout the book recommendations are given for policymakers concerning prediction and prevention. The costs that ignoring recommendations based on research would produce for society are discussed in the last chapter, together with approaches for testing the effectiveness of screening and prevention programs. *Preventing family violence* is a very readable book and a well-documented introduction to the field for researchers as well as for practitioners.

In the first part child maltreatment is related to some important human contexts: history, culture, socioeconomic life, law and psychodynamic factors. Taking into account these various contexts, child maltreatment has to be considered as a changeable human construct rather than as a fixed reality. Knowledge of the contextual perspectives may help people to cope with their own daily context and with the emotions child maltreatment raises in contemporary society.

Part two deals with the assessment of child abuse. It covers the main part of the book (14 contributions). Diagnostic issues related to all forms of maltreatment (physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and psychological maltreatment) are discussed. Three contributions focus on general aspects of assessment: communication between families and physicians, assessment of child abuse by Child Protective Services, and family assessment. In the next contributions attention is given to the assessment of specific forms of maltreatment. Detailed information is provided on the pathology and medical evaluation of physical abuse as well as on the examination of the sexually

Book descriptions

abused child. Further topics include child neglect, failure to thrive, psychological maltreatment, Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy, and unusual forms of abuse, for instance food fadism, child labor and child pornography.

The third part contains contributions on the intervention and treatment of child maltreatment. Traditionally, interventions are conducted either by the judicial system (police, court) or by professional disciplines (physicians, therapists). An integrative approach to individual cases of child maltreatment is not yet possible, since knowledge on the etiology and the long-term outcomes of interventions is still very limited. Furthermore, it is very difficult to generalize recommendations about approaches since both the judicial and the health system may differ greatly among countries. The alternative approach offered by the Confidential Doctor Centers in Belgium and the Netherlands seems promising, but as the editors contend, comparative empirical data are necessary to confirm this intuition.

The final part of the book deals with prevention. The length of this part sharply contrasts that of the other parts (four contributions). The editors admit that too little attention is given to strategies for primary and secondary prevention. This does not mean that prevention is neglected nor that it doesn't work. Instead, the different contributors stress the necessity to work out prevention programs and interventions in the domain of neglect, physical abuse and sexual abuse. They show that at least some programs provide some positive outcomes in some contexts and conclude with a note of optimism for the future.

It is not easy to make an evaluation of a classic on child maltreatment that is considered by some as the 'Bible' (see cover of the current edition). A book like this is overwhelming (30 contributions!), although its clear structure and layout

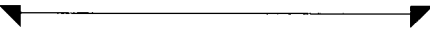
help to find the forest between the trees. It is comprehensive, dealing with all forms of maltreatment, with issues of assessment, treatment, prevention and contextual elements. Most contributions are of high scientific quality. Indeed, *The battered child* remains a standard work for different groups of professionals. Nevertheless, we noted some shortcomings and limitations that may be informative for future readers.

At first, it is useful to know that the book is mainly intended for clinicians (physicians, therapists), rather than for researchers (in contrast to a recent handbook edited by Lutzker, 1998). Moreover, the medical perspective takes a prominent place, particularly in the contributions on assessment which offer ample illustrations of the medical and physical sequelae of child physical and sexual abuse, concrete guidelines for physicians conducting the examinations and attention for the diagnostic specificity of medical symptomatology and issues of differential diagnosis. Relatively less attention is given to the diagnosis of psychological sequelae nor to psychosocial trauma, except in the chapter on psychological maltreatment and throughout the discussions on the intergenerational transmission of abuse. This makes that the book will probably be more useful for physicians and medical professionals (e.g. nurses) than for therapists or social workers.

Second, a few topics are somewhat underrepresented, if not completely absent. In particular, we expected more contributions on the screening and prediction of child abuse in relation to diagnostic ('risk assessment'), ethical and preventative issues. Throughout the book a lot of isolated information on risk factors of child abuse is given. No integrative summary, including an overview of existing screening procedures, is presented, however. This would have been interesting for researchers as well as for policymakers in order to develop screening procedures and to plan future preventive efforts.

Literature

Lutzker, J. R. (Ed.) (1998). *Handbook of child abuse research and treatment*. New York: Plenum Press.



**Handbook of child abuse research
and treatment**

J. R. Lutzker (Ed.)

1998, New York: Plenum Press.

596p. ISBN 0 306 45659 1

This comprehensive handbook deals with research and treatment issues of child maltreatment. Its main aims are to give state-of-the-art reviews of current knowledge of etiology and of ways to treat, minimize and prevent harm done to children by adults. These aims are not easy to realize, due to the great number of empirical studies on child maltreatment that has been produced during the last three decades and to the complex and multiterminated nature of the phenomenon. Indeed, child maltreatment is associated with many other issues, for instance family and interpersonal violence, traumatic disorder, stress, parenting, antisocial behavior, delinquency, attachment, intergenerational transmission, and so forth. Besides, there are assessment, cultural and ethical issues. The editor successfully integrated most of these issues in this handbook by offering outstanding review chapters and concrete illustrations of treatment and prevention programs.

The book contains six parts. Part one consists of three chapters, one on etiological theories in intrafamilial child maltreatment, one on legal perspectives, and one on the empirical assessment of parenting adequacy. Together, these chapters make up a well-documented overview, introducing the major challenges and controversies in this

area. Part two deals with assessment and research issues. Assessment issues in child abuse evaluations and methodological problems in child maltreatment research are addressed, as well as methods to implement and evaluate intervention programs. One chapter focuses on the opportunities for integrating research and treatment. Part three consists of 11 chapters, all addressing treatment aspects. A number of programs are discussed throughout this part. The heterogeneity of the programs that are presented is impressive and points to the wide scope of child maltreatment and to the manifold ways to offer help to high-risk families or individuals. Discussions are targeted on different risk groups (e.g. adolescent mothers, parents with intellectual disabilities, underprivileged parents, maltreated youngsters), as well as on different approaches (e.g. community-based, in-home) and models (e.g. ecobehavioral, holistic). Child sexual abuse is focused in part four. One chapter provides a general overview of assessment, research and treatment issues, whereas in another chapter the usefulness, feasibility, and outcomes of school-based child sexual abuse prevention programs are questioned. In part five, ethical issues related to child maltreatment are addressed. The first chapter in this part discusses some aspects and implications from early educational interventions in impoverished families. The second chapter provides guidelines about ethical decision-making which may be helpful for professionals and policymakers. Finally, in part six, the editor tries to outline the evolution of child maltreatment research in the twenty-first century. At first, he summarizes the presented reviews by stressing the laudable job researchers in this area have performed during the last decades.

Reading in this handbook, researchers, clinical practitioners and students may find convincing evidence for the editor's statement that child abuse definitively entered the field of (basic)

Book descriptions

research. This conclusion brings new hope for professionals and policymakers, since organizing preventative efforts to decrease rates of child maltreatment, based on (controlled) empirical studies, will be more economic and allow a more rational division of resources than organizing uncontrolled prevention campaigns, based only on emotional grounds.



Community health, community care, community support

Proceedings of the invitational conference on innovative childhood care and development support programs

Hanrahan, M. & B. Prinsen

1997, Utrecht: Netherlands Institute of care and welfare, MIM-cooperative.

165p.

Early support programs for parents and their young children are capital in this book. It are the proceedings of an international conference on early childhood care and development support programs held in Amsterdam in 1996. Several researchers as well as professional workers submit their knowledge and experience. Hanrahan and Prinsen intend this book to give a survey of the state of the art concerning programs of early support in Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Netherlands and in doing so they hope this book may help towards the development of a dynamic European model of care, targeted at and enhancing services for parents and children in need.

The programs that are discussed throughout the book, are targeted at parents with children from 0 till 24 months. It is about children born into poor living conditions or with a handicap which threat-

en their chances for optimal human growth and development. Neighbour volunteers are supporting these families at risk by home visitation under the guidance of care professionals, such as nurses, psychologists and social workers. They give concrete educational help and information on the child's development to these parents, they pay attention to the parents' personal problems, the family is encouraged to take part in certain activities in the neighbourhood, etc. The focus is on strengthening the family in order on the one hand to give the parent some confidence and control of his own life and on the other hand to help the child in its growth and further development.

Recurring themes are the implementation of innovative support programs, specific target groups, the role of non-professionals, research on this kind of programs and finally strategies of development and dissemination of early childhood care and development support programs.

After an introductory chapter, in which the goals of this book and the original goals of the conference in Amsterdam are given, follow three extensive parts. Part I introduces us to early support programs from four different points of view: the mother's view as volunteer, the professional view, the theoretical and finally the ideological view.

In part II you will find a description of programs in USA, England, Ireland and the Netherlands. In each country attention is given to the program's objectives, the methods that are used, the professionals and the results. We observe that the programs that are discussed have much in common.

In part III a number of common principles and lessons are given that can be found in the programs that are discussed. Thought is given to criteria for evaluation in the field of early support, potential strategies and pitfalls of replicating exist-

ing projects are discussed and finally a number of tendencies are given regarding the development and implementation of these support programs.

This book is a must for whoever is dealing with early care and support for parents and their children in need. On the one hand it gives a survey of the state of the art of early support programs in regard to their contents and presentation as well as to the principles behind them, the advantages they present and their imperfections. On the other hand it is an interesting contribution to the development of a shared theory about early support of young families at risk. In that sense it is, in my opinion, an obvious success. The literature is a practical first step for whoever wants to pursue the matter.



**Out of the darkness
Contemporary perspectives on
family violence**

*Kaufman Kantor, G. & J. L. Jansinski
(Eds.)*

1997, Sage Publications, Thousand
Oaks. 332p. ISBN 0 7619 0775 0

'Out of the darkness' provides a comprehensive and interdisciplinary package of research and theory in the field of family violence. Most of the chapters were presented at the 4th International Family Violence Research Conference in New Hampshire (1995). The book consists four parts. Part one deals with the prevalence of family violence, part two with child abuse and neglect and part three with wife abuse. Finally, in part four ethical and cultural issues in family violence are discussed. In this review we will only focus on the chapters that are specifically related to child abuse and neglect.

In chapter two of part one attention is given to child homicides. Finkelhor presents and discusses homicides rates by age and causes of death of children and youth.

Part two (eight chapters) deals with diverse topics in the field of child abuse and neglect. Three contributions deal with the effects of maltreatment or witnessing marital violence. Becker-Lausen and Mallon-Kraft discuss 'intimacy dysfunction' as a frequent outcome of child maltreatment. 'Intimacy dysfunction' is a theoretical construct underlying the maladaptive outcomes experienced by abuse survivors. The effect of neglect on school performance is studied by Kendall-Tackett and Eckenrode. They found that performance markedly decreased in entering middle school. Margolin and John studied self reported adjustment of boys and girls who witnessed marital aggression. They explored whether the consequences of children's exposure were a direct effect of witnessing or an indirect effect of parenting mediated by marital aggression.

Two contributions deal with sexual abuse. Itzin reviews research and clinical literature on pornography and organised abuse. By means of a case study she elaborates the phenomenology of child victimization by pornography. She concludes that pornography is a part of the continuum of all forms of intrafamilial and extrafamilial abuse. Bernard found evidence for the fact that race and gender influence how black mothers experience the processes of disclosure and discovery of sexual abuse of their children. She argues that child protection professionals should be aware of these influences during their interventions in black families.

Three chapters address issues of assessment. Edwards and Rogers present the TESI (Traumatic Events Screening Inventory), a questionnaire on

Book descriptions

children's exposure to potentially traumatic events. The authors report the results of a small pilot study, testing the use of the TESI. Straus and Hamby discuss the theoretical rationale, the subscales and scoring methods, the application and the available data on psychometric qualities of the CTSPC. The CTSPC is a revision of the Conflict Tactics Scale for measuring the parent-child relationship. Finally, Taussig and Litrownik discuss problems in current classification schema for abused children. They attempted to explore whether protective-issue children (children at risk) should be classified as substantiated cases and tested this hypothesis on a small group of subjects.

We may conclude that 'Out of the darkness' contains interesting and high-quality chapters, providing important and various contributions to theory, methodology, assessment, interventions and ethics in the field of family violence. The book may be useful for researchers, practitioners, students and policymakers.

Child abuse

New directions in prevention and treatment across the lifespan

Wolfe, D.A., McMahon, R.J. & R.D. Peters
1997, Thousand Oaks/London:
Sage Publications

Child Abuse brings together several experts in treatment and prevention of child physical abuse and sexual abuse. It provides insights into the current perspectives on causes and treatment of both forms of abuse as well as into the current practices of early intervention and prevention. Part I zooms in on child physical abuse. Topics that are discussed are the long term effects of physical abuse on the child's development and its functioning as

an adult, recent outcomes concerning child physical abuse offender characteristics, research of the effects on children who witness violence in the family, treatment of parents who physically abuse their children and early prevention. Part II presents recent findings related more specifically to treatment and prevention of child sexual abuse. New approaches in the therapy for sexually abused children as well as for adults abused as child, are disclosed. Violence prevention programs are dwelt on and finally a chapter is devoted to the importance of training children to appear in court as witnesses.

Neglected Children

Dubowitz, Howard (Editor)

1999 Thousand Oaks: Sage
Publications

320 p. ISBN 0 7619 1842 6

Neglected children conveniently captures much of what is known about child neglect and offers recommendations for future research.

Although child neglect is the most common form of abuse, the extant research literature has mostly ignored this form of child maltreatment. Editor Howard Dubowitz and an outstanding group of leaders in the field of child abuse and neglect (Garbarino, Crittenden, Bonner a.o.) offer perspectives on a range of important issues pertaining to the neglect of children.

Child neglect is the first book to focus on this most common type of child maltreatment, presenting a comprehensive and critical portrait of the phenomenon of neglect based on theory, research and clinical practices.

This extensive work includes the following topics:

- causes and contributing factors;

- definitions and measurement research cultural issues;
- short- and long-term outcomes;
- evaluation and risk assessment;
- prevention and intervention;
- prenatal substance abuse;
- fatal neglect;
- policy issues.

Researchers, clinicians students, and policymakers in the fields of social work, child and family welfare, child maltreatment, interpersonal violence, family studies and public health will find this broad view of the subject essential to addressing the complex and pervasive underpinnings of child neglect.


Rethinking Orphanages for the 21st Century

McKenzie, Richard B. (Editor)

1999 Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications
327 p. ISBN 0 7619 1444 7

With welfare reform at the top of the U.S Congress agenda, the orphanage debate has resurfaced. The current child welfare system, is obviously flawed, operating to the detriment of tens of thousands of children.


Foster care intended to act as a temporary solution, has become inadequate permanent care. While adoption is a solution for some children, many children are difficult to place or legally unavailable for permanent placement.

Editor Richard B. McKenzie contends that the resurgence of private orphanages of children's homes will become a favorable option for those children.

This book reviews the policy reforms necessary for the homes to become reliable solutions for

many of the nation's disadvantaged and abused children. This volume comprise the most contemporary work in the area, and maintains continuity and cohesiveness as it explores a variety of topics, including judicial issues, child maltreatment, the history of orphanages, regulation and funding, and solutions to reform.

McKenzie, who grew up in an orphanages in the 1950s, also includes the first and only large-scale survey of orphanage alumni, involving 1600 respondents.


Adjustment of Adolescents

Scott, R & Scott, W.A.

1998 London: Routledge
166 p. ISBN 0 415 18533 3

Does culture affect adolescent adjustment? Do family influences have similar effects in Berlin and Hong Kong?

Are predictors of adolescent adjustment the same throughout the world? Can adolescents be successful interpersonally, but be unable to cope at school?

Based on original research carried out in Canberra, Winnipeg, Phoenix, Berlin, Hong Kong, Osaka and Taipei, this book examines adolescent adjustment to school, family and friends across cultures.

Ruth and William Scott focus on social influences from family, friends and culture as the impinge on the adolescent's personality, attitudinal, demographic and family characteristics. The authors examine the predictors of adjustment of adolescents from different social environments to varying situations, and provide valuable insights into the methodologies of cross-cultural study.