Book Review

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The purpose of this exceptionally well written book is to provide evidence-based ways to assess and treat children’s behavioural and emotional difficulties which are frequently encountered in clinical settings. The book is aimed at a wide range of healthcare practitioners working in child psychiatry, child psychology, psychiatric nursing, educational psychology and paediatrics. Academics and lecturers delivering postgraduate courses and researchers with specialist interest in abnormal child development will also benefit from owning a copy of this book which will hold currency for years to come. What this third edition offers is a decade and a half of advances in assessment and treatment of developmental psychopathology.

The contents page provides a very good overview of the substantive content of the book; an excellent basis for knowing when to dip and out as the clinical situation demands. The organisation of the book draws the reader in from the basic foundations including the risk and assessment of childhood psychopathology (Part 1), to managing common childhood problems (Part 2) and finally to managing stressful life events (Part 3), the book becoming increasingly more in-depth and complex. The structure of each chapter is not identical, but key themes include subject identification and classification, characteristics, assessment, treatment and case study examples. A good range of assessment instruments are included in the appendices which will be of use to researchers and clinicians.

The reference list runs to 65 pages, which is a large proportion of the total page numbers, indicative of extensive background research required the authors’ to develop the book. The magnitude of previous research studies cited in the book gives a strong sense of authority to claims made. However, a critical reading reveals no mention of the criteria for acceptance of previous research studies. A fourth edition could remedy this by the addition of a brief chapter on how the literature was sourced and what inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to evaluate the validity, robustness and worthiness of previous research for inclusion in the book. The book is designed for the American market so readers outside of the USA should be mindful of the many differences in terminology, culture, ethnicity, statistics, and legislative differences between states and between the USA and the UK. Caution should therefore be exercised in transferring some of the content to the UK context. The only limitations I can see include a dearth of visual materials which could make this a hard read for some readers, and the font size is
rather small, so for the reader who may have reading limitations or visual challenges, there may be some difficulty in accessing the book.

The book is of great importance and significance to the many disciplines where child development and adjustment is concerned. I will certainly recommend the book to researchers and practitioners in childhood development, masters and doctoral level researchers, practitioners and lecturers on the Professional Doctorates in Counselling Psychology and Health and Wellbeing in my institution.