Mental Health of Children and Adolescents with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: A Framework for Professional Practice

Edited by David Dossetor, Donna White and Lesley Whatson

About the book

Children and adolescents with intellectual and developmental disabilities are at high risk of co-morbid emotional, behavioural, and psychiatric problems that may further reduce their functional abilities. For the clinicians who support them and their families, meeting the needs of children and adolescents with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health problems is challenging.

In this book, clinicians who work with young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health problems will find a comprehensive framework for how their complex developmental, emotional and behavioural needs might best be addressed. Relevant of biological, developmental, family, educational, social, and cultural factors are integrated. The evolution of developmental sequence is seen as vital to understanding the mental health problems of children and adolescents with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This view informs multi-dimensional assessment of behaviour, and addresses conceptual confusion in defining behaviour problems, developmental disorders (including developmental psychiatric disorders such as ADHD and autism spectrum disorders), mental disorders, and serious mental illnesses. Evidence-based interventions to promote skill development and mental health in young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are described. A model for how interdisciplinary and multi-agency collaboration and co-ordination might be facilitated is outlined. Parents’ perspectives are also presented. Fundamentally, though, this is a book by clinicians, for clinicians.

All clinicians and other professionals who work to improve mental health outcomes and quality of life more generally for young people who have intellectual and developmental disabilities – paediatricians, child psychiatrists, psychologists, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, social workers, behaviour clinicians, counselors, teachers, agency managers, among others – will find this book invaluable.

About the editors

David Dossetor is Area Director of Mental Health at the Children’s Hospital at Westmead, Clinical Associate Professor at University of Sydney and a child psychiatrist; Donna White is a speech pathologist and Senior Clinical Consultant, Statewide Behaviour Intervention Service, Aging Disability & Home Care, NSW; Lesley Whatson is a Special Educator and Team Co-ordinator, Statewide Behaviour Intervention Service, Aging Disability & Home Care, NSW.

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