Video: HoNOSCA: Health of the Nation Outcome Scales for Children and Adolescents. Video Workshop

This training video workshop for the HoNOSCA Health of the Nation Outcome Scales for children and adolescents has in general been well thought out. There is a pack along with the video that contains a trainer’s guide, glossaries for use with the score sheet, and several score sheets. There is also a brief letter to the training organiser explaining the purpose of the HoNOSCA video workshop and what the objectives are. In my view it would have been helpful if the letter had included the content of the video in outline.

The objectives are that, having watched the video, the team member should have:

- a good understanding of HoNOSCA
- a clear appreciation of how it can be used
- whether it could be used in the particular service
- have a good enough understanding to rate a case already known confidently
- have a standard against which ratings of new staff could be measured
- provide information that would answer questions
- obtain further materials
- gain feedback about the training.

In general, the video does meet these objectives. The two cases presented are well done and structured to highlight key points.

Specific shortcomings, however, of the video and the pack are:

1. The background music is unnecessary and at times quite irritating. I do not think it improves the quality of the video but rather detracts from it as it can be heard right through the interviews. A little music at the beginning and end would be acceptable.

2. The pack does not contain the Rater’s Pack that is mentioned in the Trainer’s Guide. In my view, when something like a video workshop is being produced it is useful to have other relevant materials in the pack. The assumption given is that the Rater’s Pack is important for the trainer; hence, it should be in the pack.

In summary, this video workshop is likely to be a cost effective means of providing training in the use of HoNOSCA. Whether HoNOSCA will be selected as the most appropriate minimum data set for monitoring clinical outcome is a separate issue. The video workshop itself may not be sufficient for training on the score sheets. This is a comment made by team members who watched the video. For example, the families presented were models of well-functioning middle-class families and hence relatively easy to rate. They will not be typical of many clinical populations seen. Hence it is important to make it clear as part of the guidance to the trainer that the video workshop may need to be seen as an introduction to the use of HoNOSCA. Further training would be necessary within the team in an interactive fashion on other cases known to the team, perhaps with the trainer or a senior clinician observing and then discussing the rating with the team member.

Anula Nkapota
South London & Maudsley NHS Trust

Teaching with Confidence: A Guide to Enhancing Teacher Self-esteem
D. Lawrence

Between the covers of this relatively slim volume, Dennis Lawrence analyses the cumulative effects of stresses and strains occurring in education nowadays, which erode self-confidence and contribute to feelings of disquiet and inadequacy in teachers and the people with whom they work. Drawing on his extensive experience in education in both UK and Australia, he sets out ‘to present a mainly practical programme for teachers to embark systematically on enhancing their self-esteem’ and thereby improve their effectiveness.

He writes in a clear, easy and measured style that encourages the reader to reflect critically on sensitive areas and issues, familiar to all practitioners in education sooner or later in their careers. By asking themselves searching questions about their perceptions and personality traits they present the readers with material for reframing their interpretations of their functioning for their own good and the benefit of their pupils.

He draws upon a series of theoretical frameworks, from Jung and Erickson to Rogers, Maslow and Bandura, in support of the strategies he recommends. Ranging through self-examination and assessment of confidence and emotionality, style of communication, perceptions of powerlessness, and increasing the capacity for managing unavoidable stresses, he focuses on the here and now advocating the power of the self as motivator. He provides not only the outline of the 7-day self-esteem enhancement programme he runs successfully in schools in England and Australia, but also a ‘useful summary of the history and development of Self Concept theory’ …for those readers… ‘who may wish to know more about the theoretical framework to the practical strategies outlined.’

I was pleased by Dr Lawrence’s level headedness in addressing the relationship between low self-esteem in teacher and pupil and its consequences, and also his empathy with members of a profession besieged by seemingly endless changes in administrative demands.

At the end of each of the eight chapters he provides a summary of the main points, preceded by a number of questions and supplemented by an appropriate activity, with a short list of references for those who wish to read in greater depth. All in all, I felt that this book has a successful format, condensing a lot of useful ideas into a few pages. A copy should be available in every school staff room.

I must confess to longstanding respect for Dr Lawrence since first reading the paper he published in the early 1970s entitled, ‘Improving Reading Through Counselling’ and finding his ideas eminently replicable in my own work with children who were struggling to acquire literacy skills.

Although its title suggests that teachers are the book’s main target, in my opinion its
principles could be equally applied to many other professions beset by seemingly impossible expectations.

Margaret R. Robson
Newcastle-upon-Tyne

[Margaret Robson died early February 2001; an appreciation appears in Issue 21 of The Bridge.]

The Welfare of the Child. The Principle and the Law
K. O’Halloran

This is no mere analysis of the welfare checklist contained in the Children Act 1989. The author, who describes himself as a social worker, lawyer and now academic, explores a wide range of provisions concerning children and how the question of welfare of the child relates to them.

The book contains a useful overview alongside some rather contentious statements. For example, on p. 89 the author states, “The structures and processes of the legal system remain essentially adversarial allowing it to retain its traditional reliance upon precedents, contest and adjudication as the preferred means of conducting business. The continuity of these imbedded traditional hallmarks raises the question as to whether the present legal system is appropriately responding to the requirements of the welfare principles.” Populist view this may be but no evidence is provided for the conclusion nor any alternative methods of seeking to settle difficult cases.

A brief explanation of the role of a Guardian ad Litem is also misleading for the unwary readers, as is an introduction to the function of adoption. “Its traditional legal function of ‘providing homes for children who need them’ with third party applicants is dying out”, is a rather dismissive summary of an important legal provision.

For a person looking to explore the range of areas in which welfare is in issue the book is useful but it should be treated with caution.

Richard White
London

The Handbook of Child and Adolescent Clinical Psychology. A Contextual Approach
A. Carr

This book is an impressive single author text that covers the subject comprehensively in an accessible and readable format. The book is divided into six sections. The first covers ‘frameworks for practice’. There is a useful chapter on normal development, which provides a concise and readable introduction to the subject. There follow chapters on classification, the consultation process and report writing. Sections 2, 3 and 4 cover problems at infancy, middle-childhood and adolescence respectively. The subject of child abuse is given a separate section and the book closes with a section on adjustment to major life transitions.

Individual chapters focus on common presenting problems. Each chapter then opens with a case study followed by sections on classification, epidemiology and clinical features. Biological, psychodynamic and systemic explanations are considered and guidelines are given for intervention. The text is based on empirical research evidence and recommendations are made for best practice. The author acknowledges that the text is somewhat under-referenced. It is therefore very much a practical textbook but the reader is referred to review articles and research papers for more in-depth study.

This book is an impressive achievement. The author sets out to justify the use of the word ‘contextual’ in the title. The author’s intention was to take a broad approach to the subject matter and to relate clinical problems to appropriate theories and research findings. Thus reference is made, inter alia, to systems theories, biological findings and psychodynamic approaches where appropriate. The author’s aim, to offer useful solutions for youngsters’ difficulties in the light of a number of different theoretical perspectives, is admirably achieved.

To take, as an example, the chapter on ‘Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders’: what is refreshing about the early part of the chapter is that the full range of aetiological theories is described.

It is useful to see classical and in some cases out-dated theories described alongside more recent developments. The use of case material will be particularly helpful to those in training. Interventions and management strategies are well described.

The text in this book is clearly written and easy to read. This book will be essential for child and adolescent clinical psychologists and valuable to many other professionals working with this age group.

Richard Taylor
Institute of Psychiatry, London

Never Too Young to Know. Death in Children’s Lives
P. R. Silverman

This book is written in two different styles. The first half is more academic and the second half consists largely of clinical vignettes and the comments on the themes that emerge for the author. I found the second half more meaningful. In the first half, the author gives a good account of the development in thinking about children’s understanding and adjustment to death of loved ones. She elaborates appropriately systemic perspectives. However, while acknowledging the difficulty in writing about a psychological process that is diversified by individual adaptation, the author’s style makes this either too particular (relying on what individuals have said, for example) or too general and pseudo-academic. There are too many references used to validate the author’s opinion or generalisations that are in effect some other expert’s opinion, but which are treated as fact. The author’s own work is not empirically based and no outcomes of the interventions are presented. Surprisingly, there is no reference to modern attachment theory. Disappointingly there is no attempt to discriminate what treatment approaches work for whom.

Although the clinical vignettes are of interest, this book is unlikely to add substantially to the knowledge base of specialist child psychologists and psychiatrists working in the field.

Tony Kaplan
Service for Adolescents & Families in Enfield
Ethical Practice and the Abuse of Power in Social Responsibility
H. Payne & B. Littlechild (Eds.)

This is a difficult book to review because its intentions are so good and much of it is well worth reading, yet the chapters are uneven. The aim is to consider, from a variety of professional and service-user viewpoints, the need to avoid unfair and abusive practice towards children and adults within the field of social care, to improve training and inter disciplinary communication and to achieve outcome studies. All of these are admirable aims which, like motherhood and apple pie, are not likely to be disagreed with by anyone working in the field. It is for readers to decide whether this book adds to the debate and it is recommended as part of that debate.

Most of the writers are in and around the south-east of England and each writes, professional and service-user, from a passionate personal viewpoint. This makes the book very readable but also leaves one without an editorial overview other than the above-mentioned outline of excellent recommendations.

Some of the experiences of users and indeed of witnesses and other contributors to the family justice system read as though the experiences are raw, painful and undigested. I recommend the chapter by Amphlett, the founder of Parents Against Injustice, because, written from a 15 year perspective, it is able to take account of changes within the family justice system, recent recommendations for modernising Social Services put forward by the Department of Health, and the need for a Social Services Council to uphold standards and practice.

All in all, an interesting read that catches the tension between impassioned reliving of recent experience and tough-minded debate about service provision within the field of social care.

Jean Harris Hendriks
Traumatic Stress Clinic, London

Creative Therapy 2: Working with Parents
K. Ollier & A. Hobday

How to establish and maintain a fruitful working partnership with the parents (or carers) of a referred child patient is one of the dilemmas for any professional new to working in a Child Mental Health setting. A positive relationship with parents has been found to be linked to good outcome. Like its predecessor, Creative therapy activities with children and adolescents, by the same authors, this handbook will be widely useful, particularly to the less experienced therapist. Thought provoking ideas about the process of such work and some of the ethical problems that might arise are explored. Suggestions are made for initiating, recording and evaluating pieces of work using family therapy techniques based on cognitive behavioural principles. Working with parents promotes the idea that parents have to be supported and educated in achieving positive interactions with their children if the benefits of therapy are to be maintained into the future.

Anastasia Widdicombe
London

The ADHD Handbook. A Guide for Parents and Professionals
A. Munden & J. Arcelus

This book provides a sensible, readable and coherent account of mainstream thinking about ADHD and its management in the UK. The preface gives a clear, concise, historical background and sets the scene well by including the experiences of many children and parents in trying to cope before a diagnosis of ADHD is reached and the treatment instituted.

Chapters cover a description of ADHD, diagnostic criteria, the differential diagnosis, evolutionary and biological explanations, aetiology, and how the diagnosis is made. Further chapters progress to discuss treatment, both medication and psychological interventions, implications for education, how Social Services and voluntary agencies can help, long term outlook for children with ADHD and finally a chapter on ADHD in adults. Appendices include a list of assessment instruments, useful contacts and support organisations, book lists and a list of web sites.

Although the book proclaims that it is UK oriented, there are several surprising omissions from the book list and references. There is no mention of Sandberg’s monograph or of Taylor’s guide for parents. While the Journal of the American Academy practice parameters (Dulcan, 1997) are cited, no mention is made of the European Guidelines (1998) which, if not published, were widely known to be in the development stage. Even more surprising is the omission of Sonuga-Barke’s Delay Aversion Theory. In general, the discussion of management is well balanced. However, most well-informed clinicians would surely be recommending cognitive behavioural therapy rather than psychodynamic therapy for emotional disorders and would be somewhat reserved in recommending polypharmacy for depressed adolescents with ADHD.

In spite of these shortcomings and one or two other points about which one might quibble, this book is to be recommended for parents. It contains much useful, general information for professionals and is a good introductory, easy read for those professionals who encounter children with ADHD in their work, such as teachers, health visitors and social workers. Those providing specialist services may find the general information helpful but will find this readable introduction to ADHD needs supplementing.

Vetra Bailey
London

Reference

Issues in Foster Care: Policy, Practice and Research
G. Kelly & R. Gilligan (Eds.)

Though all but one of the contributors to this edited volume come from the north and south of Ireland, the sources are spread much more widely, especially to Britain and North America. Like most edited publications what is included and what is left out is arbitrary, but these editors seem to have made a good choice of themes for inclusion. There are chapters on such topics as foster care outcomes, fostering by relatives, resilience in children, leaving care, and therapeutic interventions.
Defiant Teens. A Clinician’s Manual for Assessment and Family Intervention
R. A. Barkley, G. H. Edwards & A. L. Robin

This book purports to be a clinician’s manual for assessment and family intervention with defiant adolescents. The chapter on assessment is sensible but rather ‘scientific’, advocating the use of questionnaires and diagnostic interviews in a somewhat rigid manner. The psychometric properties of the instruments are given, but nothing is said about listing the wider clinical history of precise parenting practices, family structure and beliefs, and so on.

The intervention manual comprises two parts. The first eight sessions are an application of behaviour based methods for younger children adapted to adolescence. Thus they include positive attention, praise, and rewards, plus grounding. To this element is added an adolescent programme developed by Arthur Robin and Sharon Foster. They include school advocacy, problem solving and communication skills, and dealing with unreasonable beliefs. There are parent hand-outs for every stage. Each step is described in four or five pages, which sometimes is not enough to give a flavour of how the sessions should proceed. In particular, there is no discussion of specific issues such as encouraging adolescents with home work, staying out late, drug use, sexual promiscuity, and peer relationships.

In summary, this book gives a very helpful scientific justification for intervention, but the actual manual part, while helpful, is rather thin. The authors have clearly had a great deal of experience in this field, and I would welcome a book entirely devoted to a manual of intervention methods.

Stephen Scott
Institute of Psychiatry, London

Through the Eyes of a Child. EMDR with Children
R. H. Tinker & S. A. Wilson

This is the first detailed text to explore the use with children of this new clinical tool, Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing. It has opened up a new direction in treatment for children. Written in a flowing, insightful and empathic style, with a very clear conceptual framework, it is packed full of innovative thinking, discussion of the latest research, and sensitive clinical case analysis including actual transcripts. It is an excellent read for anyone interested in learning more about the subject and this treatment tool with children.

Whilst the book does provide information about the ‘accelerated information processing’ (Shapiro, 1995) of EMDR, the concepts and terminology, and also delineates the EMDR protocol’s application to children, it does not (and quite rightly) attempt to train the technique. EMDR is a very powerful and also potentially dangerous clinical tool and requires specialised training.

This book is an invaluable resource and manual of good practice and guidelines for those who are trained in EMDR. I strongly recommend it to all EMDR trained therapists working with children. The pragmatic information on the application of this tool with children is helpful and answers many of the questions that arise and suggests a variety of applications to meet the needs of traumatised children from the age of 2 years. It includes how to set targets, when to start EMDR and, importantly, when not to use it, how to predict treatment outcomes and troubleshooting. It describes the need to keep the child feeling safe in the therapeutic relationship and ‘safe place’ and other techniques are developed to keep the child empowered to achieve mastery of their own difficulties.

Attention is drawn to the importance of different developmental stages, informed consent, and establishing therapeutic alliance with children and their families prior to treatment. It explains how EMDR needs to be integrated into a child’s comprehensive treatment plan. A central premise of the book is that by paying careful attention to the characteristics of the trauma(s) that the child has endured, it is possible to predict length of treatment and treatment outcome using EMDR.

A cogent case is presented for a developmental-contextual approach focusing on the child’s developmental level and the context in which the child’s symptoms arose. A typology of trauma is suggested. There is discussion of how developmental trajectories may become significantly distorted by long-term untreated trauma and recent research is cited, indicating that substantial changes in the developing brain may be occurring from early onset of severe traumatisation.

The authors describe how successful treatment with EMDR can lead to dramatic, constructive and positive changes for children and how even the younger children can develop astonishingly perceptive and mature insights during the processing. The child in processing typically seems to experience change in the emotions first, which then leads to shifts and realignments of their cognition and behaviours.

This book is of substantial importance, opening up this new treatment tool for constructive discussion and future avenues for research and debate. It is to be recommended and hopefully will encourage many to seek specialised training in EMDR. A minor frustration is the presentation of the reference section with the author’s name leading into the reference.
text without separation, making rapid extraction difficult.

Joanne Morris-Smith
Camberley, Surrey

Reference

Childhood Disorders
P. C. Kendall

This series aims to ‘overcome the problems faced by the traditional textbook in conveying what psychological disorders are really like’. This means that there are lots of case descriptions to introduce the children (the subject of this book) and the type of situations that often lead to referrals. These are followed up in the individual chapters by hypotheses regarding the aetiology of problems and strategies for remediation. The book is aimed at students, as the title implies, and sets out to stimulate their search for knowledge rather than simply provide descriptions and answers. The first chapter, therefore, lists some of the questions that professionals should be asking when children present with their problems, and the final chapter extends this to further questions and written exercises.

The chapters cover firstly an explanation and outline of various models of childhood disorders, then the main disorders (a chapter each) ranging from conduct disorders to tics and elimination disorders. Each chapter includes sections on phenomenology and classification, causes and treatment. Each disorder has a box outlining the DSM criteria.

Overall, Philip Kendall provides good, clear discussions and appraisal of the disorders and relevant issues. However, the volume is slim and the questions, case studies and descriptions take up a not insubstantial amount of room. The series is designed to appeal to those who want to go deeper into the subject than a traditional textbook allows—but those with that wish in mind will need to search somewhat further.

Helen Likierman
London

The Anti-Bullying Handbook
K. Sullivan

Recent studies indicate that the problem of bullying in New Zealand schools is significant and increasing. Keith Sullivan has produced an important resource to combat this problem. His book is up-to-date and draws on recent research and practice in the field. Since a central argument in his book is that bullying affects individuals, school classes, families, the school ethos, and the wider community, he urges us all to take responsibility for owning the problem and for viewing bullying in its social context. The book is full of down-to-earth, practical guidance for teachers and other professionals to help them understand the origins of the problem and to help them to create safer classrooms and to mediate in children’s disputes.

The section on interventions will be of particular interest to all those who are involved in peer support, though it would have been helpful to refer to the 1999 special issue of the *Journal of Adolescence* on peer-led interventions for an up-to-date review. He has chapters on befriending, counselling and mediation, the No Blame Approach, Circle of Friends, the P.E.A.C.E. Pack (the acronym stands for preparation, education, action, coping and evaluation), and the Pikas Method of Shared Concern. A distinctively New Zealand section focuses on Kia Kaha, which means literally ‘be strong’, a method for combating physical and sexual abuse, drug dependency and bullying through an active partnership between schools and the police.

Although Keith Sullivan does not provide a detailed evaluation of each method, some useful references are given for the practitioner who wishes to review research-based evaluation of a particular method.

Helen Cowie
University of Surrey, Roehampton

Improving School Behaviour
B. Watkins & P. Wagner

Written mainly for teachers, this is a welcome variation on an old theme. It addresses problem behaviour at the level of the school, the classroom and the individual. The style is clear and direct, drawing on extensive research and the authors’ own experience in working with teachers. They show how school policy and classroom practice can be deviance provocative or deviance insulative. There are constructive suggestions for school-based assessment, including a useful Diagnostic Behaviour Questionnaire. I would have welcomed more discussion of the interactions between the official or national curriculum, the hidden curriculum and classroom practice, but this book would be a useful addition to school and educational psychology service libraries.

David Galloway
University of Durham

Books by Members

K. N. Dwivedi (Ed.)
*Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Children and Adolescents*

J. Hill & B. Maughan (Eds.)
*Conduct Disorders in Childhood and Adolescence*

H. Remschmidt (Ed.)
*Schizophrenia in Children and Adolescents*

R. Sanders
*The Management of Child Protection Services. Context and Change*

P. L. Harris
*The Work of the Imagination*

Erratum
In the February issue (vol. 6, no. 1) the names of two reviewers were inadvertently omitted. *ADHD: Research, Practice and Opinion* was reviewed by Morris Zwi, Richmond Royal Hospital, and the review of *Dyslexia and Reading: A Neuropsychological Approach* was by Jamie Ward, University College, London.

Joanne Morris-Smith
Camberley, Surrey