

Child & Adolescent Mental Health: A Practical, All-in-One Guide

Edited by Jess P. Shatkin, MD

W.W. Norton & Company, 2015

512 pages, \$28.95, ISBN 978-0-393-71060-1

★★★★★

★★★★★ *outstanding*
★★★★ *excellent*
★★★ *good*
★★ *fair*
★ *poor*

Reviewed by: ERIC R. WILLIAMS, MD

Having written questions for the Psychiatry Resident-in-Training Exam (PRITE) and for the FOCUS Psychiatry Review for the past 11 years, I've read through a lot of resource materials, and am always looking for something new. Dr Shatkin's book came along, and I decided to put it through the paces of the PRITE, and use it to prepare a presentation to adolescent psychiatrists on attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and disruptive behavior disorders. Did this truly turn out to be an "all-in-one" guide? It depends on who's using it.

The introduction starts off with a history of mental illness and psychoanalytic theory, then seems to present topics randomly, including "Neurobiology of Attachment," "Risk and Resilience," and "Adolescence and Risk Taking," each of which is 2 to 4 pages in length and written on a level suitable for medical students, but with enough detail to give the gist of the subject. I will use some of the information for teaching, but I have a feeling that I will forget that "that nice section on racial barriers to care" is in this book, because the table of contents simply says "Introduction." Next is a short chapter on "Prevention," written on the same level; it provides enough detail to create a good PRITE question for a beginning resident to have to think about, but it would probably be pretty simple for a senior resident, and certainly a fellow.

The book then goes into the "meat" of its content, that is, specific mental illnesses, and the presentation, etiology, epidemiology, clinical course, diagnosis, and treatment for each. Each chapter includes a plethora of references, and occasional charts and graphs, which complemented and extended the written material extremely well. For example, I included the flowchart protocol for the cardiac evaluation of children on stimulants, which I had not found in any other commonly-used source,

in my review lecture, and the table entitled "Symptom Crossover Between ADHD and Bipolar Disorder" should be a pop-up in every electronic medical record whenever the diagnosis of bipolar disorder is being made in a child.

The treatment sections are probably the strongest feature, but they vary in detail throughout the book. For example, in the chapter on disruptive behavior disorders, the reader learns that multi-systemic therapy is the treatment of choice for conduct problems, but you will not be able to really explain it to anyone, whereas the section on cognitive-behavioral therapy is so detailed that you will be able to tell your patients what you will be doing and why well enough to convince them to sign up for the next 16 weeks of therapy. You will also know how to start and dose the medications (that actually work) for ADHD.

A major strength of this book is the writing style. The book reads like an annotated transcript of a didactic lecture delivered by a highly trained professor who makes sure that you understand what is being said before moving on. I would have no problem giving sections of this book to parents to read, or to schoolteachers during an in-service presentation. (I probably would not give them the treatment sections, as they can get necessarily technical.)

So to answer the question posed at the beginning, "Did this truly turn out to be an 'all-in-one' guide?"—

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the answer is ... yes, for a trainee, pediatrician, or general psychiatrist, but probably not for a child and adolescent psychiatrist. If I were an attending on, say, an anxiety disorders unit, I would have the students and residents read the anxiety chapter before their first day, then expect them to supplement with more detailed readings on the specific anxiety diagnoses of their patients. If I were a general psychiatrist or a pediatrician, I would use this book to make sure I was

starting off with a solid, evidence-based treatment, and to refresh myself on the etiology, clinical course, and so on. This volume could also be useful for the United States Medical Licensing Examination, and child portions of the general boards and general Maintenance of Certification exam, but if you're going to take the child and adolescent test, you'll need more. I will recommend that our residency program and clinic purchase a copy.