

CHILD ABUSE

Intervention and Treatment
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reviewed by

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Publishing Sciences Group, Inc. Acton, Massachusetts, 1975.
(Australiān distributor Butterworths)

This book is a most useful contribution to this subject. Written by a group of experts, they readily demonstrate their practical experience with families who have abused children. By bringing together the thoughts and experience of 22 authors — social workers, doctors, nurses, parents and lawyers — who approach the subject of child abuse from different stand points, the many facets of this subject are discussed. In addition, in all discussions there is a great sensitivity to the feelings not only of the families involved, but also of the workers trying to help them. Nevertheless, the book does not lose sight of its goals — the protection of children from abuse, and the rehabilitation of families in which abuse may occur.

The book is divided into eight parts, the first five dealing with case-finding and its management. Most commonly the initial treatment is in a hospital setting, later management involving community-based resources. The importance of the initial contact with these families by medical officers, nurses and social workers is stressed, as this paves the way to future progress.

Other agencies who already know the family should be included in discussions so that the most appropriate treatment plan can be arranged. Hospital social workers also

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have the task of liaising between the hospital team and the community-based agencies who will continue the treatment of the family. Often the treatment plan involves a time of separation of the child from his family for short or long periods of time. It is essential that the problems of separation be recognized and appropriate help offered to the parents, the child, siblings and/or foster parents. The use of the court should be seen as a positive step and a vital component of a continuum of service. The best plan for a particular family needs to be the goal of both social workers and lawyers. This would involve separate counsel for parents and children.



“A Growing Problem?”

The need for multi-disciplinary consultations before a treatment plan is made is also emphasised. The nurse caring for the child may be the first person to recognize the signs of abuse in a child. She may, through her contact with the parents, be able to support and guide them, and also as a member of the therapeutic team add useful observations on the child's development, parent-child relationships and parental behaviour. The child psychiatrist's role is seen as consultant to all members of the team, discussing and interpreting many of the difficulties encountered during the treatment of these families.

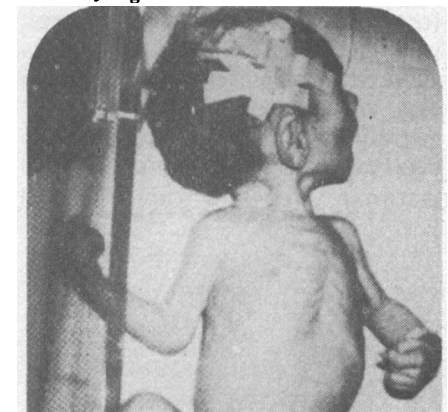
The last three parts of the book deal with community resources and the law. Various types of treatment which have been attempted within the community — day care centres, parent groups and counselling, crisis intervention centres, parents anonymous — are detailed, noting not only the benefits to be obtained from such approaches, but also the difficulties.

The Chapter on The Law details the present unrealistic expectations of the legal system to prevent child abuse, and stresses that to change the law is not enough — new approaches are necessary. A central registry is criticized as it tends to stigmatize a family, without

necessarily providing the services to help these families — its role and function must be carefully scrutinized. The last section on Communication by means of Children's Advocates is a necessary reminder of the need for co-ordination of services.

This book is excellent reading for all those involved in the care of children.

Abuse by neglect



CHILDREN AND PARENTS IN A CHANGING WORLD

IXth CONGRESS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR CHILD PSYCHIATRY
AND ALLIED PROFESSIONS

Professionals in therapy, child care, health and education will form a large contingent for the IXth International Congress of the IAC-PAP to be held in Melbourne on the 19th — 26th August, 1978.

This will be a unique opportunity to see and hear internally-renowned workers in Australia. At the last Congress, in Philadelphia, participants included Anna Freud, Bruno Bettelheim, Peter Blos, Rudolf Ekstein, Erik Erikson, Fritz Redl, Serge Lebovici, James Anthony, Leon Eisenberg, Richard Jenkins, Stella Chess and Julius Richmond. It is expected that the forthcoming Congress will be equally exciting.

This is the first time that such a Congress will have been held in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Association was formed to promote the study, treatment, care and prevention of mental and emotional disorders and deficiencies of children, adolescents and their families in practice and in research through effective collaboration among child psychiatrists and the allied professions of psychology, social work, paediatrics, public health, nursing, education, social sciences and other relevant professions.

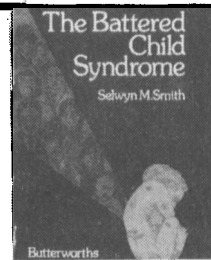
These aims are achieved through the International Congresses held every four years, and by Study Groups which work during the four-year intervals on projects to be presented at the Congresses. It is hoped that the multidisciplinary collaboration stimulated by these projects will continue long after the Congresses have passed.

A multidisciplinary Congress Organizing Committee has been meeting regularly, and planning is well advanced for the 1978 Congress. The Committee is currently concerned with the formation of Study Groups in Melbourne and throughout Australia and New Zealand. Study Group Leaders have been co-opted who are interested in the areas such as family dynamics, early mother-child interaction in migrant groups, geographic isolation, learning and language disorders, and training of health workers. Resource persons and consultants are being approached, and further Study Group Leaders enlisted.

The Congress Organizing Committee plans to review and foster current research in Australia, and act as a clearing house and integrating body for study groups and professional workers throughout Australia and New Zealand. Some funds are being made available for this purpose.

All clinical and research workers in Australia who have projects underway or plan projects of relevance to the aims of the IAC-PAP, are urged to contact the Congress Organizing Committee. Attempts will be made to put workers in touch with other Professionals working in the same or related fields, and to encourage collaborative work to be presented at the Congress, or at pre-Congress or post-Congress meetings currently being planned.

FURTHER INFORMATION —
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For all those who deal with baby battering. This comprehensive book critically reviews the extensive literature and traces in detail society's attempts to manage the problem. Based on a research study conducted by the author and his research team of the psychiatric, psychological and social aspects of baby battering, it provides greater depth in its special study than has previously been described. The author's recommendations are the result of a fresh and pragmatic approach to the problem based in his special experience of its scope, its socio-economic and radical implications. Guidelines are presented for the prevention of ill-treatment, the after-care of the child and the treatment of offenders.

Contents:

Maltreatment of Children: An Historical Perspective — Modern Period of Medical Recognition — Clinical Manifestations of the Battered Child Syndrome — Demographic Characteristics — Incidence — Psychiatric Aspects: A Review of the Literature — Treatment Aspects — Court Procedure — Medical Reporting of Child Abuse: The American Experience — Battered Children and their Parents: A Controlled Study — Clinical Characteristics of the Children — Case Reports and Clinical Illustrations — Psychiatric Characteristics of the Parents — Social Characteristics — Child-rearing Practices and Difficulties Experienced with the Child — Management Aspects and Characteristics of Identified Perpetrators — Interpretation of the Findings — Discussion — Conclusion — Appendices — Glossary — References — Index.