



Book Review

Handbook of child and adolescent psychology treatment modules, 1st edition. Farrell LJ, Murrilhy RC, and Essau CA, Editors (Academic Press, Elsevier, UK) 2023. 383 pages. Price: Not mentioned
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To begin with, it is important to understand the difference between a textbook, a handbook and a manual. Many other terminologies are used to qualify a piece of work. In simple terms, a handbook is a small book of facts or useful information, usually about a particular subject. It is also called a *vade mecum* (Latin, "go with me") or pocket reference. This book on child and adolescent psychology is not a handbook in its entirety; however is a useful resource. In fact, the editors specifically say in the preface that manuals 'fail to address the often-complex comorbidity of youth mental health disorders'.

The editors have significantly used two qualifiers to describe this handbook – personalized care in behaviour and emotion and practical resources for the Mental health professional. The handbook, however, starts with a somewhat perplexing discrepancy between the title (which includes both the child and the adolescent) and the introduction (an overview of transdiagnostic, modular approaches to youth psychotherapy). Without prejudice to any other definitions made by member States, the United Nations defines 'youth' as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 yr. In an era where early adverse childhood experiences and infant mental health are finding increasing currency, the Part I of the book, addresses only youth rather than the entire age range.

The book is divided into four parts with twenty chapters. Part I, the introduction, has a lone chapter. As stated earlier, it covers only youth mental health with a specific emphasis on modular psychotherapies. Youth mental health is undoubtedly a matter of concern, but the introduction fails to give the reader a frame of reference

for younger age groups. Part II (emotional disorders) and part III (behavioural problems) cover the rest of the fifteen chapters. While it is unclear why the term 'disorder' is used for part II and 'problems' for part III, both are sectioned into an initial overview of disorders, including their treatment, and a second section covering clinician guidelines and case examples. The final four chapters in part IV intend to cover contextual issues where anxiety, neurodevelopmental comorbidity, and stigma are addressed.

This 'handbook' is most certainly useful and recommended as a practical resource for mental health professionals. The first sections of parts II and III are in textbook style. The second section constitutes the richness of the offering. The only issue in the second section on clinician guidelines and case examples is that the chapters veer between disorders and techniques. Further, the individual chapters are written in different styles. It would have been useful for the editors to instruct the authors to follow a defined format. For a reader, the logic and flow would have been more accessible from a 'handbook' perspective.

Finally, part IV does not do justice to the complex contextual issues plaguing children and adolescents. Contextual issues go far beyond anxiety, neurodevelopmental comorbidity, and stigma. What is strikingly missing is the trauma of loss and abuse, children from vulnerable circumstances, adverse childhood experiences, attachment injuries, and post-pandemic impacts, to name a few. The book has a distinct Global North flavour, and for a reader from the Global South, particularly from LMIC regions, there would be some lack of immediacy and identification.

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