Rutter’s Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

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FIFTH EDITION
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Preface to the Fifth Edition

In most respects, this Fifth Edition follows the tradition laid down by previous editions. However, it is different in several key respects. Most obviously, there has been a major increase in the number of editors. We wished to make the editorial team both international and interdisciplinary because the authorship has been both for quite some time. Most especially, we wanted to expand the range of expertise covered by the editors in order that we could have rigorous detailed peer review of all chapters. In this edition, each and every chapter (including those by editors) has had detailed critique from at least three (usually four or five) editors. As a result, all chapters have been revised to deal with editorial criticisms and suggestions. This means that chapters in this volume were peer reviewed with the same detailed rigor as would be the case for any high-standard scientific journal.

Throughout the various editions of the book, there has been a committed attempt to integrate scientific and clinical perspectives. In this edition, however, we have made a number of substantial changes in order to do this in a much more thorough fashion. The first section of the book, comprising 18 chapters, deals with conceptual approaches. The purpose of these chapters was not to provide an encyclopedic summary of what is known on different areas of science or different methods of interventions but rather to convey a lively picture of the concepts, principles and approaches in each case and to indicate why each was important and relevant for clinical practice. Some of the topics were covered in previous editions but several are new to this edition. Thus, there are chapters on how epidemiological/longitudinal methods may be used both to study causal hypotheses and to plan services. There is a chapter on what clinicians need to know about statistical methods and issues, another chapter deals with the field of health economics and another on what can be learned from structural and functional imaging. Other chapters include development and psychopathology, temperament and personality, basic psychopharmacology, psychological treatments, clinical neuropsychology and brain development. The opening chapter in this conceptual section deals with developments in child and adolescent psychiatry over the last 50 years. Previous editions have included chapters on history but this time we thought it appropriate to try to bring things up to date. Inevitably, in dealing with very recent history, we are having to discuss developments that are too new to have stood the test of time but we have sought to highlight what seemed to us some of the important landmarks. As before, there are chapters on classification and diagnosis, children’s testimony and legal issues in the care and treatment of children with mental health problems and on culture, ethnicity and psychopathology. With respect to classification, there is a new chapter dealing with the concept of neurodevelopmental disorders that has come into increased prominence in recent times.

There is a short section with four chapters on clinical assessment in which the new approach has been focusing on the particular way in which structured techniques (with respect to interviews, questionnaires and psychometrics) can be applied in the clinical context. As before, there is a chapter on physical examination and medical investigations.

The next section of 11 chapters concerns influences on psychopathology. Most of these have parallels in previous editions but, this time, more attention has been paid to providing an understanding of the ways in which the possible influences might work and on testing for mediating effects. The section also includes a new chapter on psychopathology in refugee and asylum seeking children, as this is a group that has come to increasing attention in recent years.

The aim of all the chapters up to now has been an understanding of mechanisms rather than a detailing of effects in individual disorders, because we thought these were better covered in the separate chapters on clinical syndromes. However, in order to ensure that the chapters on specific disorders did, indeed, provide an up to date account of relevant findings, all authors were asked to pay particular attention to evidence on genetic influences, on imaging findings, on developmental features and on treatment methods – because for all of these there have been major advances since the last edition. The coverage of different clinical syndromes is fairly similar to that in previous editions, although it will be obvious that the information provided has moved on in important ways, but there is a new chapter on psychopathy (because its application to childhood seems to be of increasing interest) and on behavioral problems in infancy and in preschool children.

The final section of the book deals with a range of different approaches to treatment. In some respects, there were parallel, comparable chapters in previous editions but there are several innovations. Thus, community-wide and targeted interventions now have separate chapters and more attention is paid to some of the principles in these types of prevention. The chapter on physical and pharmacological treatments is complementary to that on basic psychopharmacology in that it looks at the ways in which clinicians need to think about