

Reviews

Safeguarding Children and Young People:

A guide to integrated practice

Steven Walker and Christina Thurston

Lyme Regis, Russell House, 2006, 170pp

ISBN: 9781903855904 (pbk), £21.95

Walker and Thurston provide a study guide dealing with the complex legislation, procedures and practice considerations surrounding child protection issues. They draw on a range of research and have condensed key topics into nine chapters that highlight information, which will be of some relevance to any practitioner involved in considering the needs of children and young people whose safety is a cause for concern.

Inexperienced practitioners may find this book provides them with a succinct introduction to a number of issues, including:

- Primary prevention
- Reasons for abuse
- Developmental theories and resources
- The process of protection
- Social inclusion and cultural competence

However, they and others would need to do much further reading and to experience appropriately supervised and reflective practice in order to develop confident and competent practice.

The format of the book reflects a style that will be familiar to trainers and learners alike. The authors urge readers not only to read but also to engage with the text and to use 'activities' throughout the guide to demonstrate that their learning has developed.

Other practical activities include completing a learning profile.

Use this checklist to review your learning having studied this guide. Compare it with your learning profile completed before you began. (p.136)

As with any guidebook most readers will only access the information on which they

wish to focus. It is unlikely that an experienced professional would work through this book from cover to cover completing all the various activities and tick boxes that are provided.

Within the pages of the book the reader will find references to the 'damning Laming inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié (DoH, 2003)' (p.9), which highlighted the changes that professionals need to consider in order to protect children. The authors suggest that communication between agencies is the 'most important' and in chapter 4 suggest some informal ways that this might be achieved; for example, 'start informal breakfast clubs' (p.58).

Some topics are given greater prominence and attention, for example inputs on primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary prevention are condensed into only four pages in Chapter 2 whereas 'Assessment and Risk Management' is dealt with in 13 pages and covers the Common Assessment Framework (CAF); Development theories (Erikson, Freud, Bowlby and Piaget); Attachment behaviour and patterns (secure and autonomous, avoidant and ambivalent-preoccupied-entangled); and *The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need 2000*. As with any study guide that tries to give a broad picture it is left to the reader to move from the general to the specific.

The authors argue in Chapter 6 that the process of protection starts with the building of a reliable evidence base for intervention. They return to this theme in the final chapter,

Therefore planning to end contact should commence at the beginning of contact when solid baseline data can be established upon which you and the family can measure progress or lack of it towards clear outcomes. (p.132)

They give input on the stages of the safeguarding process with reference to referral, investigation and initial assessment, the child protection conference and reviews. This input is underpinned with references to legislation and case examples. The final chapter re-addresses this theme and examines how closure can be achieved based on a clear evaluation of whether targets have been attained and needs met.

Whilst this approach has some attractions in providing a 'neat ending' (p.123), it does rather open up once again the debate as to whether social work is an art or a science, and the conflict that workers find themselves in when faced with complex situations that do not fit in the box.

An investigation into how young people can be supported in their transition into adult services is attempted in chapter 7. This chapter examines the problem of supporting young people's development into 'mature citizens' (p.99) whilst society is prejudiced against them for their natural risk taking behaviour 'on a continuum, from staying out late at night, to getting into fights right through to committing murder or trying taking your own life' (p.97).

A useful *guide* to 'Social Inclusion and Cultural Competence' is included in chapter 8 and challenges the reader to respond to the question,

What could you do personally to translate policy guidance into effective practice with black and ethnic minority families? (p.112, Activity 8.2)

Walker and Thurston have demonstrated in this volume both the vastness of the knowledge base that needs to underpin work with children and young people who are a cause for concern, and the need for all practitioners to continue their professional development.

I believe that this book provides a useful tool for workers engaged with children, young people and their families in a variety of social care settings. Its brief outline of theories and legislation can provide a starting point for further study using the impressive bibliography. Trainers and educators may also find material and activities in these pages to supplement their own presentations and learning aids. I particularly found that the contents page allowed the book to be used as much a reference book as a study guide and therefore would recommend this book to experienced and inexperienced practitioners alike.

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Evaluation in Dementia Care
Edited by Anthea Innes and Louise McCabe
London, Jessica Kingsley, 2007; 272pp
ISBN 978-1-84310-429-2 (pbk), £19,99

The title gives the impression that this book may be a study about monitoring and inspections but it is far from this. I found it to be a comprehensive and thorough work about ways to improve the lives of older people living with dementia. The editors, Anthea Innes and Louise McCabe, present an overview of the literature on how projects are evaluated. This covers work written in the 1980s as well as more recent publications. Reasons for evaluating dementia care are explained from the perspective of stakeholders as well as the rationale behind an evaluation. The editors point out that the book 'is not a how to do it guide'. It does not explain the whole of the evaluation process but demonstrates how to approach evaluating a variety of dementia care projects.

The book is divided into three parts with each part being broken down further into chapters. Part 1 considers the contexts in which dementia care can be evaluated and aspects of the political and sociological backgrounds that are necessary in order to appreciate change or improvement in the field of health and social care.

The first chapter serves as an essential guide to aid readers to make a selection for further relevant reading. The chapter begins with a definition of evaluation and an

examination of different possible research designs. The style and purpose of each chapter is explained along with brief details of the different designs that authors used to carry out their evaluations.

Chapter two covers the themes of conflict arising out of internal versus external evaluation. Although the aim of any evaluation must be to improve the support for older people living with dementia the impetus for change can come from either internal or external sources. Some of the projects described included evaluators who had either been selected from within or outside of the organisation. Evaluators faced difficult decisions about the reporting of information. Whose interests did they serve? Could they measure objectively? How did they reconcile this with the demands of the various bodies that had an interest in the results of these studies? Cantley suggests that these issues are resource issues and goes on to provide an excellent section about the difficulties in obtaining 'the experimental ideal'. She lists ways that students can design and develop research projects and how practitioners can develop effective programmes. There is a useful section on ethical issues and the list of references is comprehensive.

Part Two contains 6 chapters and covers the practicalities and reflections on dementia care in a wide range of settings. This section also gives an insight into practice in the USA, Sweden, Norway, France, Scotland and Ireland. However in all chapters there is a constant reference to the importance of respecting the dignity as well as the voice of the person living with dementia. Many interesting ideas and themes explored.

Alison Bowers from Stirling University gives a detailed discussion about how the New Technologies and Tele care in particular can benefit the lives of people living with dementia. She warns that any research needs to understand the model of care where the technology is being used before a realistic evaluation can be measured.

In chapter 6, Helle Wijk from Sweden describes evaluations of several studies where changes to the physical surroundings have had positive outcomes for the quality of life for people living with dementia. Wijk suggests that although it is challenging to evaluate the effects of changes to the environment it is essential to obtain the views of all personnel involved from the beginning, ranging from family members to ventilation engineers.

Chapter 7 written by authors Faith Gibson from Belfast and Barbara Haight and Yvonne Michel from South Carolina describe an evaluation of an intervention using Life Story books with people living in a Care Home in Northern Ireland. The research team evaluated the intervention by the use of a series of 6 pre and post tests measuring cognition, communication, depression, mood, independence, and behaviour.

Using a statistical analysis of the scores from these measures, the authors claimed that there was a significant improvement in the wellbeing of the participants. Although the authors pointed out that this approach only claimed to capture short term change within individuals

Part 3 contains four chapters about the future challenges in evaluating dementia care. Many helpful suggestions about ways of including the wishes of 'service users', an awareness of ethical issues and the consideration of the dignity of the person living with dementia are given prominence. There are many warnings about the ease with which

well being, personal relationships and the views of all people living with dementia can be overlooked. This is especially true when resources are limited. Overall the messages are persuasive and hopeful.

Chapter 13 describes some useful international statistics and compares the known figures of older people living with dementia in a range of developed and under developed countries. Consideration is given to what percentage of the national budget is spent on specialist care. The message although a stark one indicates that when resources are scarce as in the author's country, Lithuania, it is the most vulnerable that are at risk and that families are left unsupported. This can be true in all countries to greater or lesser degrees.

The editors conclude in Chapter 14 by a summing up all the issues raised throughout the book. The importance of good evaluations are stressed and in what ways the results can be used to 'drive the processes of change in the right direction'.

The whole tone of the book echoes Person Centred Care and reflects the work of John Killick and Tom Kitwood. Therefore it is a reassuring book to have and a valuable resource for anyone embarking on a study of dementia care or designing a research programme in evaluation.

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Dynamic Security
The democratic therapeutic community in prison
Edited by Michael Parker
London, Jessica Kingsley, 2007, 288pp
ISBN 978-1-84310-385-1 (pbk) £25.00

Newell and Healey define the concept of a therapeutic community within a custodial environment in this collection as being '... a prison that [houses] offenders deemed to be in need of some form of psycho-therapeutic intervention.' (p. 63). Given that the prison population has far higher rates of mental illness than the general population, particularly in the diagnostic groups of neurosis and personality disorder (p.14), it would appear that there is a proven need for therapeutic communities within the Prison Service estate.

This collection of essays is primarily concerned with the position, place and processes of the 'Therapeutic Community' (TC) within the Prison estate of England and Wales. The strength of this book is that it is written by people who are and have been for many years actively involved in the TCs as workers, researchers and prisoners. The contributors are Prison Service practitioners (governors, psychiatrists, psychologists, group analysts and directors/managers of therapy), academics from a range of disciplines (forensic psychiatry, and criminology), and men and women prisoners. The book is divided into six sections:

Theory: Origins of Criminal Behaviour; History of the Therapeutic Community in Prison; Method and Practice; Psychodynamic Aspects: Inside Forensic Therapy; Managing the Therapeutic Community; and Audit and Experience.

There are three chapters in the section on the origins of criminal behaviour. Murray, Cheliotis and Maruna provide a thorough overview of the social, criminogenic factors related to crime and offending behaviour. Jim Ormsby reviews 'Psychiatric Factors in Criminality' and Jo Day considers 'Psychological Theories of Criminality'. These chapters provide the more specific disciplinary context for discussing the therapeutic work of the TCs.

Having set the intellectual context of the TCs, the book moves on to consider the historical origins of therapeutic communities in prison. It considers both the British and North American contexts and also describes the development of TCs for both male and female prisoners.

In 'Method and Practice' the contributors discuss 'assessing risk and need'; 'supervision of forensic group therapy' and "Through-care, After-care: What happens after therapy?".

There are six chapters in the section entitled 'Psychodynamic aspects: inside forensic therapy. They consider work with specific groups of people: young offenders; drug users; violent offenders; life sentence prisoners and sex offenders.

In the penultimate section of the book, the focus is on managing the TC. The chapters in this section provide vivid accounts of four aspects of prison management – overall management of a therapeutic establishment, the management of therapy within an establishment, the relationship of the TC to organisations outside the prison and the problems of managing the balance between security and therapeutic needs of a prison.

The final section of the book ('Audit and experience') provides two contrasting accounts. Danny Clark and Jan Lees outline the process for ensuring a high quality of therapeutic provision across the TCs (accreditation), whilst the chapter that considers 'Therapy from the inside' provides prisoners' accounts of participating in a therapeutic community – given the nature of therapeutic communities this chapter is an essential part of this book.

In the current context of massive overcrowding in prisons, low morale within prison staff of England and Wales and draconian financial cuts, this book is a welcome contribution to discussions about prison as a human(e) environment. It recognises that security and 'treatment' (in a wide range of interpretations of this word) do not have to be considered to be competing demands on the prison resources. They can, in fact, contribute positively to each other. I conclude this review by concurring with the words of John Gunn, Emeritus Professor of Forensic Psychiatry who wrote in the Forward to the book '... I hope that this book will be read by a wide audience that includes politicians with purse-strings as well as those of us who are interested in the reduction of crime by scientific and therapeutic means.' (p.10).

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Social Work: Voices from the inside

Vivienne Cree and Ann Davis

London, Routledge, 2007,

ISBN 9780415356824 (hbk) £70.00 / 9780415356831 (pbk) £18.99 / 9780203002834 (e-book)

Cree and Davis have provided a valuable addition to the literature using a grounded qualitative methodology that gives us a fascinating snapshot of social work 'from the bottom'.

The text provides six specific chapters examining practice with children and families, in criminal justice, mental health, residential child care, and with disabled people and older people. These core chapters are sandwiched between an introductory chapter and a concluding chapter examining 'lessons for the future'.

The book utilises a narrative approach – drawing on 'interviews with 59 service users, carers and practitioners across the UK' (Cree and Davis, 2007, p.9). Consistent with this approach the core chapters allow the participants to speak for themselves – no analysis is provided by the authors until the final chapter.

The chapters have a basically shared structure, but with headings specific to each topic. Following a scene setting introduction, a pen picture of each contributing interviewee is provided. There then follows specific material relating to each topic, followed by an examination of 'What Helps?', of 'Becoming a Social Worker' with social workers describing their work, and concluding with 'Lessons for the Future'.

For the purpose of this review I will examine one chapter in some detail – that referring to work with children and families. The current policy context is examined briefly over two pages, before moving on to provide brief pen pictures of 5 service users and 9 practitioners. The chapter then moves on to give a voice to the service users experiences of parenting. This section provides a series of long quotes which bring to life real experiences of social work. The content would not surprise any practitioner – it is the usual catalogue of human misery and resilience, but with many positive views of social work practice. The chapter then asks 'What Helps?' Here is a vivid mix of the positive and the negative, useful as it provides a voice to the service user, resonant with the 'client speaks' tradition. We then move on the professional perspective of becoming a social worker, grounded for many in their childhood experiences, and then on to describing their work. Here again is a familiar, but fascinating picture, of a real fulfilment in being a social worker, but with frustration around paperwork and organisational issues. The chapter concludes with workers expressing a mixed package of hopes and fears about the impact of organisational and legislative change. The other core chapters each have their own character – but share a basic structure and many of the themes outlined above.

The concluding chapter is concerned with 'Lessons for the future'. Cree and Davis argue that there are unequivocal messages from service users - they want to be listened too, respected and seen within their wider context: 'They want emotional and material support to enable them to lead independent lives and manage crises and difficulties' (Cree and Davis, 2007, p.148). Practitioners express their motivation around social

justice and wanting to 'help people'. They enjoy working with people and building relationships. The chapter goes on to outline the basics of a 'good social work' – which involves responsiveness, building relationships, being person-centred, providing emotional and practical support, being holistic, balancing rights, risks and protection, being evidence-based, future-orientated and there for the long term. It then explores what the good organisational context and what works and what does not work. The book ends with an up-lifting and optimistic note from a care leaver who is about to become a social worker.

This is a useful and interesting book. It is a valuable addition to the literature and will be of interest to students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It would also be invaluable to lay people wanting to understand social work or who are thinking about entering the social work profession.

I have just one reservation: I would have liked much more analysis and reflection from the authors – a reflective overview could have been added to each chapter, which would have added to the depth of the book.

Overall this is a useful and interesting book and a worthy addition to a wide-range of reading lists. This publication has a particularly helpful contribution to make to the current debates about 'workforce reform'.

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Competence in Social Work Practice:
A practical guide for students and professionals (2nd Edition)

Edited by Kieran O'Hagan

London, Jessica Kingsley, 2007, 256pp

ISBN: 9781843104858 (pbk) £18.99

This book is aimed at all those involved in the assessment of competence in a practice learning environment from both a teaching and learning perspective. It is a well-written, easy to read comprehensive guide to the application of the key roles and outcomes required to evidence competence in social work across a wide range of practice settings. The design of the book makes it a useful tool to dip in and out of on a chapter-by-chapter basis depending on the setting students and teachers find themselves in. In addition students are able to access comprehensive theoretical knowledge and skill discussion relevant to the area of work discussed in each chapter e.g. the issues around risk analysis (Kelly p 152- 171)), thus enabling students to make the link between theory and practice. Of particular interest is the inclusions of examples of outcomes in non-mainstream settings

such as Margaret Fawcett's excellent chapter on mediation (p.31-52).

The book opens by examining the concept of competence-based education and training and in particular the '... task of assessing and measuring what individuals do in a variety of workplaces' (O'Hagan p.14) It begins by looking briefly at the background and development of competence based training including discussion of what or how social workers should learn making comparisons between the old controversial CCETSW paper 30 and the new national occupational standards. The ensuing critique of the competence based method of assessment provides a significant challenge to those working in social work education and training.

There then follows, written by specialist in their field (e.g. John Gibson, Beverly Burke, Gerry Heery, John McLaughlin, Dorota Iwaniec), a series of chapters aimed at examining in detail how competence in practice may be achieved in a variety of settings including: Mediation, Residential Child Care, Social Work Ethics, Child Abuse Referrals, Protecting Adults with Learning Disabilities, Criminal Justice, Risk Analysis, Health Care, Working with Families, Mental Health Social Work and Child Care Legislation, Policy and Theory.

Most of the chapters follow the same format, which is useful not only for navigating your way around the book, but also for ensuring the content is easily transferable to other practice learning environments outside of the main stream of social work e.g. advocacy projects, drop in centres etc. The chapters include:

- An introduction
- Information about the work setting/agency and the role of the student
- A case study/case scenario
- The role to be played by the student in the situation, for example, group facilitator, co worker
- Some background knowledge requirements (e.g. relevant legislation, policy documents)
- Student preparation for the interaction including the use of supervision
- Detailed discussion of application of the relevant key roles and outcomes
- The students perspective including case notes, reflection use of supervision.

Including a chapter on integrated competence and interprofessional practice aimed at students and practice teachers involved in dual awards would have been helpful and some sort of conclusion written by the editor would have been the icing on the cake. However this does not detract from the fact this is an extremely helpful tool for anyone seeking to evidence competence in other arenas such as continuing professional development.

The books usefulness to students is immediately obvious; however it would also be invaluable to new practice teachers taking a student for the first time or practice teachers struggling to get to grips with the key roles and outcomes. Its focus on the role of the practice teacher in supporting the student illustrated by detailed case studies helps the practice teacher to allocate and structure work appropriately so as to maximise the

student's opportunity to evidence the key roles and outcomes and ultimately demonstrate competence.

In addition this book would assist new academic tutors supporting students through the theoretical concepts related to competence and assist them in their marking of academic work related to key roles and outcomes. Not necessarily aimed at but in my view, also a useful tool for social work lecturers putting together practice learning documentation and designing assessments to enable students to demonstrate competence.

Finally I believe the real strength of this book is that the contributors have achieved their aim of '... producing a narrative that combined continuous reference to the new standards with compelling accounts of students striving to attain them'. I would recommend this book as one to keep not only for anyone involved in student teaching and learning in practice, but also to assist any practitioner across all of the health and social care disciplines in compiling a portfolio demonstrating continued professional development.

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