BOOK REVIEWS


This book is well-written, clearly organized medical primer that attempts to explain a wide variety of developmental disabilities. The authors, Batshaw and Perret, present the information in such a way that makes it easy to understand medical terms and concepts related to different developmental disabilities.

The beginning portion of this book discusses heredity and diagnostic techniques used to detect abnormalities before birth. Normal fetal development, the birth process, and neonatal and early childhood development are also covered. The reader then becomes acquainted with functions and dysfunctions of various organ systems of the body such as the central nervous system, bones and muscles, the digestive system, vision, and hearing. Particular attention is given to nutritional requirements and special feeding problems of handicapped children. In-depth descriptions of various handicapping conditions are also included in this section. With each handicap a case history is given to help illustrate the disability. Among the disabilities discussed are: cerebral palsy, epilepsy, hyperactivity, learning disabilities, hearing problems, blindness, speech and language development and disorders, mental retardation, and autism.

The final portion of the book is dedicated to caring for and coping with a handicapped child. It raises some ethical questions faced by professionals and parents in caring for such a child, such as genetic screening, prenatal diagnosis, therapeutic abortion, withholding treatment, sterilization, and institutionalization.

This book could be a valuable resource text to physical, occupational, hearing, and speech therapists, special education teachers, and social workers who work with developmentally disabled children and their families. Parents of handicapped children could also benefit from this book since it does discuss in detail a variety of developmental disabilities, possible causes, treatments, and prognoses. Also included are resources for handicapped children.

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Since “children are not just scaled-down versions of adults” (p 84), this volume presents a comprehensive treatment philosophy for limb-deficient children that recognizes and addresses developmental needs specific to children. Based on the clinical experience of the Child Amputee Prosthetics Project (CAPP) at the University of California, Los Angeles, over the past 25 years, the book offers an overview of all aspects of health care intervention for children from birth to age 18 years with congenital or acquired amputations.

Although this publication is not specifically named as a “second edition,” it represents a revision of an earlier text of the same title edited by Berton Blakeslee and published in 1963. This revised edition reflects numerous advances made since 1963, particularly with regard to the orthopedic management of limb-deficient children and the development of new prosthetic components. However, much of the information on functional skills training, with or without the use of prostheses, which is thoroughly illustrated and described in the first edition, has been condensed and deleted, in many cases, in this most recent edition.

The first section of the book includes chapters on medical and orthopedic management, the etiology and classification of limb deficiencies, and the principles of prosthetic design and prescription. The chapter on classification systems for congenital limb deficiencies, with specific definitions of terms, is particularly useful as a review of the multiple systems in use. Procedural details included in three chapters devoted to orthopedic management are quite technical, but the focus on problems and surgical considerations unique to children deserves attention. The chapters on prosthetics offer up-to-date information on the advantages and disadvantages of various prosthetic components available to children based on years of observation at CAPP and...
describe specially designed units developed through their research and testing.

The second section, "treatment by age," describes therapeutic intervention for limb-deficient children from a developmental perspective. Chapters are arranged according to developmental age levels from birth through adolescence and early adulthood. Within each developmental stage, expected achievements for each pattern of limb deficiency are discussed. However, the emphasis is on the individual patient, and the authors strongly advise therapists to wait for each child to demonstrate readiness, in terms of social, motor, and psychological development, before attempting to advance his or her treatment program.

Typical goals for therapy are outlined in each chapter based on the developmental level and degree of limb deficiency. Recommendations for the appropriate therapeutic environment, approach, and methods are stated in general terms. Specific suggestions are given for teaching various types of prosthetic control, such as control of an activated terminal device or of the dual control cable system. However, the authors stress the value of teaching the child-patient and parents a problem-solving approach to the acquisition of functional skills. In keeping with this philosophy, no specific instructions or sequential procedures are offered regarding the teaching of self-care or other functional activities.

True to the editors' stated purpose, this book presents a multidisciplinary framework and a philosophy of treatment for limb-deficient children in a thorough, sensitive manner. Efforts have obviously been made to avoid a "cookbook" format that describes step-by-step instructions that can be misused by untrained personnel. Information is presented on an intermediate-to-advanced level for professionals who wish to supplement a basic understanding of amputee treatment approaches specifically as applied to children. The first section of the book is highly technical and assumes some previous understanding of standard terminology describing procedures and equipment. The second section advocates the problem-solving approach so strongly that it also relies on some degree of previous experience with prosthetic training from which to proceed.

As such, this book is highly recommended for the occupational therapist with previous experience treating limb-deficient persons of any age who is seeking additional resources specific to children. The development approach emphasizes the need to pursue other more basic resources as well as use his or her efforts to prepare themselves to work with this population.

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Hand Surgery Review is the resource for the health professional who has wished for instantaneous access to the vast mental bibliography of a professor of hand surgery. Combining the expertise of their respective disciplines, authors Meals (orthopedics) and Lesavoy (plastic surgery) have produced a reference guide to a 30-year accumulation of journal literature. From the most widely read English language journals, which publish papers on surgery of the hand (AJOT included), the authors have compiled a 1,531-entry annotated bibliography. The anatomic boundaries in the index are soft tissue distal to the elbow joint and bony tissue distal to the radio-carpal joint. More proximal maladies such as brachial plexus injury and tetraplegic reconstruction are also addressed since they often have a great impact on hand function.

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