

## CHAPTER 16: CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS CLINICAL ISSUES

### 16.1 THE DIAGNOSIS & PREVALENCE OF CHILDHOOD PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS: SOME GENERAL ISSUES

- What are the problems involved in attempting to assess a child's psychological problems in the context of the child as a developing organism?
- How do clinicians infer psychopathological internal states in children from overt behaviour?
- How does a clinician decide what behaviour is normal for a particular age?
- How will differences in cultural norms affect whether a child's behaviour is viewed as psychopathological or not?
- How important is it for clinicians to identify and treat a childhood psychological problem as early as possible?

### 16.2 DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

- When diagnosing ADHD, how does a clinician decide whether hyperactivity or inattention is significantly greater than the norm for the child's developmental age?
- How would the clinician establish a diagnosis of ADHD in children under the age of 5-years?
- What are the implications of more boys than girls being referred for the treatment of ADHD?
- How does the clinician establish whether symptoms of conduct disorder are protective rather than symptomatic of dysfunction?

### 16.3 CHILDHOOD & ADOLESCENT ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

- What are the clinical implications of comorbid childhood anxiety and depression?
- Life events that mean relatively little to an adult may be viewed as extremely stressful by a child. What are the clinical implications of this?
- How might living with illness during childhood affect childhood anxiety?
- How can the identification of childhood depression be improved?
- How do the symptoms of childhood depression change with age, and what implications does this have for diagnosis and treatment?

### 16.4 THE TREATMENT OF CHILDHOOD & ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

- How is the treatment of childhood psychological problems affected by the fact that the child is a psychologically and physically developing organism and that may be experiencing concurrent educational, social and familial difficulties?
- On what basis would the clinician decide to include family interventions in a treatment programme for childhood psychological problems?
- Should the prescription of SSRIs and SNRIs to children below the age of 18 be banned because of the risk of suicidal behaviour?