

## CHAPTER 16: CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

### KEY TERMS

#### **Adolescent-onset conduct disorder**

A sub-type of conduct disorder defined by the appearance of conduct disorder symptoms only after the age of 10 years.

#### **Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)**

A persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is at a significantly higher rate than would be expected for a child at his or her developmental stage.

#### **Attention deficits**

See Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

#### **Behaviour management techniques**

Treatment methods that can be used in a range of environments and can even be taught to parents as an aid to controlling and responding to their children in the home.

#### **Bell-and-battery technique**

A widely used classical conditioning method for treating nocturnal enuresis.

#### **CBT**

See Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.

#### **Cerebellum**

The part of the brain at the back of the skull that coordinates muscular activity.

#### **Childhood-onset fluency disorder (stuttering)**

A problem with the fluency and time-patterning of speech which involves frequent repetitions or prolongations of sounds, pauses within words, pauses in speech, word substitutions, words produced with an excess of physical tension, and monosyllabic word repetitions.

#### **Conduct disorder (CD)**

A pattern of behaviour during childhood in which the child exhibits a range of behavioural problems, including fighting, lying, running away from home, vandalism and truancy.

#### **Developmental psychopathology**

An area of research concerned with mapping how early childhood experiences may act as risk factors for later diagnosable psychological disorders. It also attempts to describe the pathways by which early experiences may generate adult psychological problems.

#### **Executive functions**

Cognitive skills that involve problem-solving, planning and engaging in goal-directed behaviour.

#### **Externalising disorders**

Disorders based on outward-directed behaviour problems such as aggressiveness, hyperactivity, non-compliance or impulsiveness.

#### **Generalised anxiety disorder**

A pervasive condition in which the sufferer experiences continual apprehension and anxiety about future events, and this leads to chronic and pathological worrying about those events.

**Hostile attributional bias**

The tendency of individuals to interpret not only ambiguous cues as signalling hostility, but also many cues that are generated with benign intentions.

**Hyperactivity**

A higher than normal level of activity.

**Impulsivity**

The act of reacting to a situation without considering the consequences.

**Internalising disorders**

Disorders represented by more inward-looking and withdrawn behaviours, and may represent the experience of depression, anxiety, and active attempts to socially withdraw.

**Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)**

A disorder characterized either by obsessions (intrusive and recurring thoughts that the individual finds disturbing and uncontrollable) or by compulsions (ritualized behaviour patterns that the individual feels driven to perform in order to prevent some negative outcome happening).

**Oppositional defiant disorder (ODD)**

A mild form of disruptive behaviour disorders reserved for children who do not meet the full criteria for conduct disorder.

**Parent management training**

Therapeutic intervention which attempts to teach parents to modify their responses to their children so that acceptable rather than antisocial behaviours are reinforced and this is used especially with the families of children diagnosed with conduct disorder

**Pathological worrying**

Difficulty controlling worrying.

**Pessimistic inferential style**

The attribution of negative events to stable, global causes.

**Play therapy**

A range of play-based therapeutic and assessment techniques that can be used with younger children who are less able to communicate and express their feelings.

**Ritalin (methylphenidate)**

A stimulant medication that is used to treat ADHD.

**Separation anxiety**

A childhood anxiety problem involving an intense fear of being separated from parents or carers.

**Social phobia**

A severe and persistent fear of social or performance situations.

**Specific phobias**

An excessive, unreasonable, persistent fear triggered by a specific object or situation.

**Systematic desensitisation**

A behaviour therapy based on classical conditioning used in the treatment of phobias and anxiety disorders, during which the client overcomes their fears through gradual and systematic exposure.

**Systemic family therapy**

A family intervention technique based on the view that childhood problems result from inappropriate family structure and organization. The therapist is concerned with the boundaries between parents and children, and the ways in which they communicate.

**Theory of Mind (TOM)**

The ability to understand one's own and other people's mental states.

**Time-out (TO)**

A means of reducing disruptive behaviours, including aggressiveness, destruction of property and non-compliance in the classroom, by removing the child from the situation and directing him or her, for example, to sit in a specific time-out chair for periods of between 5 and 15 minutes.

**Tourette's syndrome**

A disorder in which motor and vocal tics occur frequently throughout the day for at least 1 year.