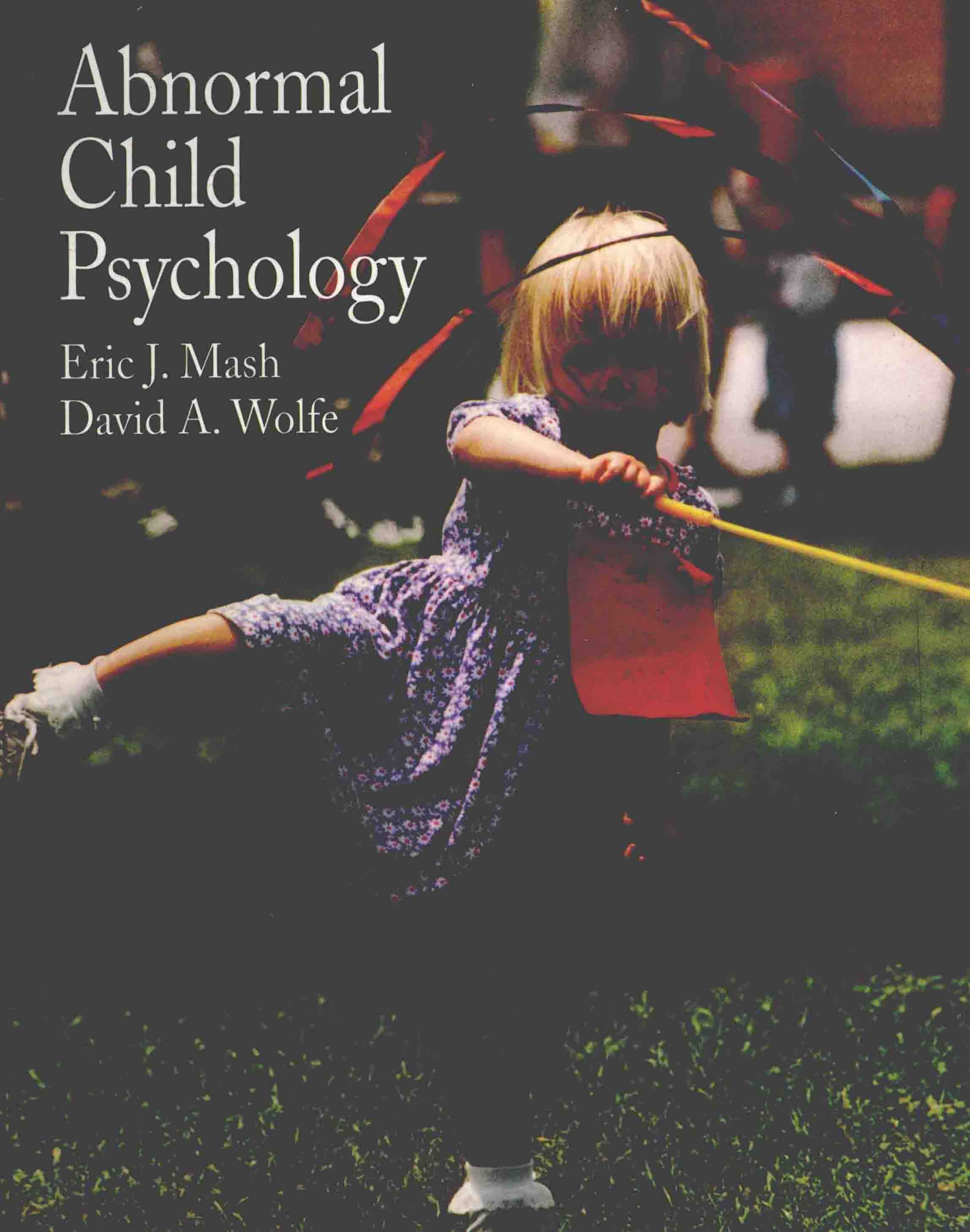


Abnormal Child Psychology

Eric J. Mash
David A. Wolfe



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In loving memory of my parents,
Abe and Mary Mash
E. J. M.

To my father, Darrell Kenneth Wolfe,
for inspiring my desire to write;
and to my mother, Eleanor Gray Wolfe,
for her gift of compassion
D. A. W.

About the Authors



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ERIC J. MASH completed his undergraduate studies at City University of New York, and his graduate work in Philadelphia and Florida. He earned his Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Florida State University in 1970. After completing his residency in clinical child psychology at the Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland, Oregon, he joined the faculty at the University of Calgary where he is currently a Professor in the Department of Psychology. He is a Fellow of the American and Canadian Psychological Associations and has served as an editorial board member and consultant for numerous scientific and professional journals and grant agencies at the local and federal levels. Eric's research interests are in abnormal child psychology, child and family assessment, child psychotherapy, and child development, and he has published many books and journal articles on these topics. He has studied interaction patterns in families with children with attention-deficit disorder and conduct problems, and in families in which children have been physically abused. Eric enjoys teaching undergraduate courses in abnormal child psychology, behavior modification, and child development, and graduate courses in clinical psychology including child psychopathology, child assessment, and child psychotherapy. When he is not working, Eric enjoys exploring the Canadian Rockies and walking on the beaches of Oregon with his wife Heather and dog Sadie.



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DAVID A. WOLFE completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Rochester in New York, and his graduate work at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida. After completing his residency in clinical psychology at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in 1980, he joined the faculty at the University of Western Ontario in London, Canada, where he is currently Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry. He is a founding member of the Center for Research on Violence Against Women and Children, and a fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA). He served as President of Division 37 (Child, Youth, and Family Services) of the APA and is an editorial board member of several scientific and professional journals and funding agencies.

David has broad research and clinical interests in abnormal child psychology, with a special focus on child abuse, domestic violence, and developmental psychopathology. He has authored numerous articles on these topics, especially in relation to the impact of early childhood trauma on later development in childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood. He is currently studying ways to prevent violence in relationships with adolescents. He enjoys teaching undergraduate courses in abnormal child psychology, child assessment and psychotherapy, and community psychology.

For joy and recreation, David spends his time with his wife and three children at their cottage on Georgian Bay, where they enjoy skiing, hiking, and sailing.

Preface

The past decade has produced extraordinary advances in understanding the special issues pertaining to abnormal child psychology. Today we have a much better ability to distinguish among different disorders, which has given rise to increased recognition of poorly understood or undetected problems like learning disorders, depression, teen suicide, eating disorders, conduct disorders, problems stemming from chronic health problems, abuse and neglect, and many others. Similarly, the field is more aware of the ways in which children's and adolescents' psychological disorders are distinguishable from those of adults, and how important it is to maintain a strong developmental perspective.

In a relatively short time, the study of abnormal child psychology has moved well beyond the individual child and family to consider the roles of community, social, and cultural influences in an integrative, developmentally sensitive manner. Similarly, those of us working in this field are more attuned to the many struggles faced by children with psychological disorders and their families, as well as the demands and costs such problems place on the mental health, education, medical, and juvenile justice systems.

These rapid advances and demands have helped the field of abnormal child psychology to become clearly distinctive, yet vitally important to related disciplines and mental health issues. Such growth and maturity, of course, deserve comprehensive, up-to-date, and interesting coverage. In designing this textbook, we began with a firm commitment to empirical findings and scientific methods, wishing to highlight current advances and identify questions that are in need of further research study. We also sought to present such information in a stimulating, engaging fashion that cultivates student interest.

This textbook was written to the same standard for

disorders of childhood that is typically reached in general abnormal psychology textbooks on adult disorders. We emphasize the multidimensional, reciprocal nature of children's and youths' expression of problem behavior, within a developmental framework. A guiding principle is to provide a balance among developmental, clinical/diagnostic, and experimental approaches to child and adolescent psychopathology, with a clear and visible emphasis on the special issues pertaining to children and youth.

EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND ORGANIZATION

The textbook is organized into a logical, five-part framework to facilitate an understanding of the disorders and mastery of the material. Following the introductory chapters, the contents can be readily assigned in any order that suits the goals and preferences of the instructor:

- I. Understanding Abnormal Child Psychology (definitions, theories, clinical description, research, assessment and treatment issues);
- II. Behavioral Disorders (ADHD and conduct problems);
- III. Emotional Disorders (anxiety and mood disorders);
- IV. Developmental and Learning Disorders (mental retardation, autism, childhood-onset schizophrenia, and communication and learning disorders);
- V. Problems Related to Physical and Mental Health (health-related disorders, eating disorders, and child abuse and neglect).

Key terms introduced in each chapter are listed at the chapter's end and defined in a separate Glossary to help students grasp important terminology.

A FOCUS ON THE CHILD, NOT JUST THE DISORDERS

We believe that one of the best ways to introduce students to a particular problem of childhood or adolescence is to describe a real child. Clinical descriptions, written in an accessible, engaging fashion, help students understand a child's problem in context and provide a framework from which to explore the complete nature of the disorder. We introduce case examples of children with disorders in each chapter, from our own clinical files and from those of colleagues. We then refer to these children when describing the course of the disorder, which provides the student with a well-rounded picture of the child in the context of his or her family, peers, and community. For example, in Chapter 1 we discuss the case of Georgina, a 10-year-old girl suffering from obsessive-compulsive disorder, to highlight important features of child and adolescent disorders and how we go about finding the multiple causes of such problems.

In addition to clinical case material, we use extracts, quotes, and photos throughout each chapter so that the student never loses focus on the real challenges faced by children with disorders and their families. First-person accounts and case descriptions enrich the reader's understanding of the daily lives of children with problems, and allow for a more realistic portrayal of individual strengths and limitations.

A COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATIVE APPROACH

To reflect the expansion of this field, causes and effects of various childhood disorders are explained from an integrative perspective that acknowledges biological, psychological, and social influences and their interdependence. This strategy was further guided by a consideration of developmental processes that shape the expression of each disorder. The broader family, cultural, and social settings affecting development are also important considerations for understanding child disorders, and one that is a critical feature of this text.

We use both categorical and dimensional approaches in describing disorders, for each method offers unique and important definitions and viewpoints. Each topic area is defined using DSM-IV criteria, accompanied by clinical descriptions, examples, and empirically derived dimensions. The clinical features of each disorder are described in a manner that allows students to gain a firm grasp of the basic dimensions and expression of the disorder across the lifespan. We use DSM-IV criteria as the core working definition for each major disorder

because these criteria are widely used in research and clinical practices. DSM-IV criteria have become increasingly sensitive to child and adolescent disorders and are more operationally defined and empirically supported than in previous editions. Since children referred for psychological services often show symptoms that overlap into more than one diagnostic category, each chapter discusses comorbidities and developmental norms that help inform diagnostic decisions.

DEVELOPMENTAL PATHWAYS AND ADULT OUTCOMES

Abnormal child psychology has traditionally been taught with an emphasis on children's deficits and specific disorders, with less attention given to their strengths and weaknesses across different dimensions of development and behavior. To redress this oversight and to provide greater balance to the particular problems associated with the disorder, we approach each disorder from the perspective of the whole child. DSM-IV criteria, therefore, are accompanied by an added emphasis on the strengths of the individual and environmental circumstances that influence the developmental course. Moreover, the developmental course of each disorder is followed through adolescence into adulthood, highlighting the special issues pertaining to younger and older age groups and the risk and protective factors affecting developmental pathways. In this regard we examine developmental continuities and discontinuities, and attempt to understand why some children with problems continue to experience difficulties as adolescents and adults, whereas others do not.

CHILD MALTREATMENT AND RELATIONSHIP-BASED DISORDERS

A distinguishing feature of this textbook is its expansion and emphasis on several of the more recent and important areas of child psychopathology that do not easily fit into a deficits model or categorical approach. These problems are sometimes referred to as relationship-based disorders, because they illustrate the transactional nature of children's behavior in the context of significant relationships. Along with a recognition of the importance of biological dispositions in guiding development and behavior, we discuss the strong connection between children's behavior patterns and the availability of a suitable childrearing environment. Students are made aware of how children's overt symptoms can be adaptive in particular settings or with caregiving relationships that

are atypical or abusive, and how traditional diagnostic labels may thus be unhelpful.

INTEGRATION OF TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

Treatment and prevention approaches are integral parts of understanding a particular disorder. Applying knowledge of the clinical features and developmental courses of childhood disorders to benefit children with these problems and their families always intrigues students and helps them make greater sense of the material. Therefore, we emphasize current approaches to treatment and prevention in each chapter, where such information can be tailored to the particular childhood problem. Consistent with current health system demands for accountability, we emphasize interventions for which there is some empirical support.

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One of the most rewarding aspects of this project has been the willingness and commitment on the part of many to share their knowledge and abilities. With great pleasure and appreciation we wish to acknowledge individuals who have in one way or another contributed to its completion.

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Eric J. Mash

David A. Wolfe

REVIEWERS

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