



# Promoting Child and Adolescent Mental Health



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#### Production Credits

Publisher: William Brottmitter  
Executive Editor: Cathy L. Esperti  
Editorial Assistant: Agnes Burt  
Editorial Assistant: Kayla Dos Santos  
Associate Director of Production: Julie Champagne  
Bolduc  
Production Assistant: Stephanie Rineman  
Senior Marketing Manager: Andrea DeFronzo  
VP, Manufacturing and Inventory Control:  
Therese Connell

Composition: Lapid, Inc.  
Cover Design: Theresa Day  
Rights & Photo Research Assistant: Joseph Veiga  
Cover and Title Page Images: (yellow image) © yxiwert/  
Shutterstock, Inc.; (purple image) © Creatas/  
Thinkstock  
Printing and Binding: Edwards Brothers Malloy  
Cover Printing: Edwards Brothers Malloy

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Fertman, Carl I., 1950- author.

Promoting child and adolescent mental health / by Carl I. Fertman, Myrna M. Delgado, and Susan L. Tarasevich.  
p. ; cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4496-5899-1 — ISBN 1-4496-5899-7

I. Delgado, Myrna M., author. II. Tarasevich, Susan L., author. III. Title.

[DNLN: 1. Community Mental Health Services—organization & administration—United States.  
2. Adolescent—United States. 3. Adolescent Psychology—methods—United States. 4. Child—United  
States. 5. Child Psychology—methods—United States. 6. Health Promotion—methods—United States.  
7. School Health Services—United States. WM 30.6]

362.19689—dc23

6048

2012048917

Printed in the United States of America

17 16 15 14 13 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# Dedication

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*For my parents, Frances and Lester Fertman, with gratitude and love.*

—Carl I. Fertman

*For Felicita Alvarez Rivera, Doris Cristina Cortijo, Edith S. Shilling,  
Celia S. Lipovsky, and Helen A. McLain who taught me about giving,  
loving, working, and caring for others.*

—Myrna M. Delgado

*To Theo Allyn Finnie for her unconditional love, support, encouragement,  
and unwavering faith in me.*

—Susan L. Tarasevich

## Preface

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Opportunities to promote mental health of children and adolescents are abundant. Promoting youth mental health helps young people lead socially and economically productive lives. The goal of *Promoting Child and Adolescent Mental Health* is to provide a comprehensive introduction to mental health promotion programs by combining theory and practice. Each of the 12 chapters in this text corresponds to a key step identified through research and practice to promote the mental health of youth. Throughout *Promoting Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, text and resources are drawn from the real-world experiences of professionals working in schools and feature course materials currently used in schools and human service agencies.

Each chapter of this textbook is designed to engage students in thought, discussion, and action, and direct the student to achieve a specific mental health outcome or an improvement in the overall mental health status of youth. Using clear, relatable language and evidence-based methods, we emphasize the development of individual responsibility through active involvement with diverse communities, by focusing on the practical application of programs for youth mental health promotion. Where possible, we use examples about real programs, communities, and organizations that relate to common elements of life, as well as practical questions and a conversational tone to engage the reader in a personal way. Throughout the text we provide students with useful tools as they seek additional information to expand their knowledge about the variety of mental health-related organizations for promoting adolescent mental health programs, including: action-based tips for promoting child and adolescent mental health, extensive information on networking with educational and human services professionals to develop a larger framework of support for children and adolescents, and information on referrals, teams, partnerships, and collaborations.

Special pedagogical features included in each chapter explore ideas, test recommended approaches, and develop knowledge and competencies that will



inform students' youth mental health promotion efforts. These features include the following:

- ❖ **Learning Objectives** at the beginning of each chapter highlight the central concepts covered in the chapter as well as how they apply in real-world settings.
- ❖ **Scenarios** at the beginning of each chapter are real-world vignettes that inspire critical thinking and promote further discussions and thought on the practical aspects of working in schools and communities to promote youth mental health.
- ❖ **For Practice and Discussion Questions** at the end of each chapter provide activities for both the classroom and community and are designed to engage students in discussion and application of the knowledge and competencies described in that chapter. They can be assigned as individual or group activities to promote teamwork, leadership, and professional growth. Activities include developing a professional resume or portfolio, as well as visiting a local neighborhood or community organization for a strong real-world experience.
- ❖ **Bolded Key Terms** appear throughout the text and are defined in a comprehensive glossary. A Key Terms list is found at the end of each chapter for additional review.

## To the Instructor

The accompanying Instructor's Resources are a valuable resource to help instructors spend more time teaching and less time planning:

- ❖ PowerPoint lecture outlines,
- ❖ Test Bank, and
- ❖ Instructor's Manual.

## A Special Note from the Authors to the Student

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The need to promote the mental health of children and adolescents is all around us. Staff in schools, colleges, day care centers, government offices, centers of worship, health clinics, community centers, youth organizations, and local health departments are all thinking about how to improve the lives and productivity of children and adolescents where they live, learn, worship, and play. If you are working or planning to work in education, public health, counseling, social work, community health, psychology, medicine, or nursing, you are probably going to be involved with promoting the mental health of youth at some time. In the process, you will use your clinical and professional expertise as well as academic training to develop and implement a plan to improve the mental health of children and adolescents as well as reduce the risk of youth having mental health problems. You will most likely be part of a team that is organizing a mental health promotion program. At first, the concept of a program to improve or promote the mental health of youth may sound a little intimidating. Ultimately, it becomes clear that although the idea of a mental health promotion program is appealing and seems worthwhile, turning the idea into reality demands work and expertise. In other words, it is easy to say that something should be done or needs to be done. It is very different to know how to design and implement a program to actually achieve a specific mental health outcome or an improvement in the overall mental health status of youth. It is a complex process.

*Promoting Child and Adolescent Mental Health* examines how to address the mental health problems and concerns of youth. We hope that the guidance and resources in this book leave you feeling empowered to make a difference in the lives of young people. We wish you success as you apply your knowledge, tools, and skills in your schools and communities. We hope that this book helps guide and inspire a healthier world for all children and adolescents.

# Acknowledgments

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*Promoting Child and Adolescent Mental Health* has been a team effort. We thank the multitude of students preparing for careers in education, public health, counseling, social work, community health, psychology, medicine, and nursing whose input identified the need for and shaped the content of this book. We recognize the staff of the Maximizing Adolescent Potentials Program in the University of Pittsburgh School of Education for their support and effort on behalf of the text. Additionally, we are grateful to the Prevention Education staff of the Addiction Medicine Service line of Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center for their encouragement and good example. We thank the staffs of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, as well as schools and community agencies in Pittsburgh and the surrounding communities for their support and insights. Additionally appreciated are members of the Pennsylvania Association of Student Assistance Professionals and Pennsylvania Commonwealth Approved Student Assistance Program Trainers who support our work and advocate every day for mental health promoting schools and communities. We recognize the Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance Services, a collaborative venture between the Pennsylvania Departments of Public Welfare, Education, and Drug and Alcohol Programs to promote child and adolescent mental health. We thank for their input and support the school and community professionals with whom we have had contact over the years, working to promote the mental health of children and adolescents across Pennsylvania, as well as throughout New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Illinois, Tennessee, Florida, Texas, California, and Washington. Acknowledged and thanked is Erin Hasinger for her editing and preparation of the figures, tables, and manuscript.

We are grateful to Cathy Esperti, executive editor, and editorial assistants Agnes Burt and Kayla Dos Santos. Senior marketing managers Andrea DeFronzo and Jennifer Stiles were great sources of support and guidance. Stephanie Rineman, production assistant, was meticulous in her care of the manuscript.



## Acknowledgments

We thank the variety of colleagues whose encouragement and honest critique helped us reach our goal.

- ❖ Howard Adelman, University of California
- ❖ Laura Campbell, SUNY Cortland
- ❖ Kendra P. DeLoach, University of South Carolina
- ❖ Steven Evans, University of Ohio
- ❖ Melissa George, University of South Carolina
- ❖ Annette Giovanazzi, Baldwin-Whitehall School District.
- ❖ Patricia L. McDiarmid, Springfield College
- ❖ Michael McGaughey, Sr., Titusville Area School District
- ❖ Elizabeth Mellin, Pennsylvania State University
- ❖ Connell O'Brien, Pennsylvania Community Providers Association
- ❖ David Osher, American Institutes for Research
- ❖ Betty Rothbart, New York City Schools
- ❖ Sean Slade, ASCD
- ❖ Linda Taylor, University of California
- ❖ Mark D. Weist, University of South Carolina

Finally, appreciated and acknowledged are the hundreds of children, adolescents, and their families who shared their stories, time, thoughts, and feelings with us, all of which made this book a reality. Every day young people learn, live, worship, and play in their schools, communities, and families to achieve personal goals with enthusiasm, energy, and excellence.

Thank you.

Carl I. Fertman, *Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

Myrna M. Delgado, *Harrisburg, Pennsylvania*

Susan L. Tarasevich, *Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

## About the Authors

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