

**The Sexually Abused Child and His Family: Assessment and Treatment**, by Jean-Yves Hayez and Emmanuelle de Becker.

This is a book on the sexually abused child and his family, still a topical subject. The problems professional carers are faced with are numerous and complex, clinical practice and research on this variety of maltreatment being at a relatively early stage. Both franco-phone professionals and the involved public eagerly expect to learn more from clinicians with experience in the care of abused children, from their families, and from those who perpetuate sexual abuse.

This book was written by two Belgian child psychiatrists who present their clinical experience, their approach, goals, and results. The authors point out how difficult and complex the work is. They call for a sensitive approach and respect for the involved individuals.

There are two parts to this book. One deals with evaluation, definition of sexual abuse, the psychic structure of abusers, with family coping, and consequences of abuse for the child. In this part, the emphasis is on data collection. The second part deals with the authors' approach. Different programs are described, either individual or group discussions with those involved. Legal authorities do not intervene systematically unless the family is uncooperative at the outset or during the course of treatment. This book deals with unanswered questions on sexual abuse, as seen by the authors as part of their teaching. There is a risk, however, that the answers could be used as a collection of recipes to be applied, systematically, to all cases. In fact, each case is different and consideration of individual needs and responses is essential.

References to psychoanalytical theories are minimal, which is regretted. Analytic thinking helps in an understanding of sexual abuse, its impact on children according to age and development stage, the natural evolution of conflicts and emotions associated, and giving a direction of intensive intervention.

In summary, we are grateful towards our Belgian colleagues for this important contribution to the ongoing international effort of clinical development and research.

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**Diagnostic Imaging of Child Abuse** (2nd ed.), edited by Paul K. Kleinman, 1998.

The first edition of *Diagnostic Imaging of Child Abuse* (1987) has been the most authoritative work on the subject of physical abuse in childhood. This second edition has been updated and considerably expanded and is now the major text in this specialist field.

The first section considers skeletal trauma in detail and there are excellent radiographic images, many correlated with high definition post mortem radiographs and with histological specimens. This section looks at specific injuries and their mechanisms of causation and one chapter is devoted to dating fractures. There are extensive references to published works and this major compilation will be invaluable to any clinician required to attend court for cases of child abuse. This section has also considerably expanded the differential diagnosis of disorders which may simulate abuse. There are specific chapters concerning the diagnosis of osteogenesis imperfecta and accidental and obstetric trauma. The highly controversial and vexatious diagnosis of "temporary brittle bone disease," sometimes offered in a court of law by the defense, is also discussed.

The second section recognizes an increased awareness of the range and extent of visceral injuries sustained as a result of abuse and cross sectional imaging modalities, such as computer tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) play an important part in their diagnosis. This section also evaluates head trauma and describes the increasing importance of new imaging techniques, especially for the investigation of intracranial injury using cranial ultrasound and MRI.

This section ends with an important chapter on miscellaneous forms of abuse and neglect. The practicing pediatrician should be aware of the association between chronic disabilities such as cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, and osteogenesis imperfecta and physical abuse. Unusual manifestations of physical injury are illustrated and there are discussions on Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy and sexual abuse.

The third section deals with child abuse and the law both from a radiologist's view point and that of a child abuse attorney. Although this is directly related to jurisprudence in the United States, the procedures,