

stand the pressures law enforcement officers experience when they are required to assist citizens during mental health crises. The authors provide an excellent discussion of the topics that should be addressed by law enforcement administrators who want to develop protocols that improve police competence and effectiveness during mental health emergencies, including collaborative partnerships with mental health agencies.

## The Mental Health Needs of Young Offenders: Forging Paths Toward Reintegration and Rehabilitation

Edited by Carol L. Kessler and Louis James Kraus. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 464 pp. \$69.00.

Reviewed by Babatunde A. Adetunji, MD, MA, MS

Empirical findings have shown that justice-involved youths have diagnosable and treatable mental disorders. Despite this, youth mental health services are usually among the early services to be jettisoned by budget-conscious agencies. Is this the right policy? Does this practice reduce youth recidivism in a cost-effective manner? The answers to these questions are found, along with the available evidence, in *The Mental Health Needs of Young Offenders: Forging Paths Toward Reintegration and Rehabilitation*, edited by Carol L. Kessler and Louis James Kraus.

The book is divided into 20 readable chapters. The first chapter provides a basic overview, while Chapter 2 uses epidemiological findings to identify specific psychiatric disorders that have been diagnosed in youths in juvenile detention. The authors review major psychiatric morbidities that affect juvenile offenders; prevalence rates are characterized by ethnicity and age. Also, the authors describe the limitations of studies in this area and discuss the implications of these shortcomings for youth and juvenile justice.

Chapters 5 and 11 are important with regard to court-ordered evaluations. Chapter 5 describes how

to assess a child's competence to stand trial, including developmental considerations and areas of focus. Chapter 11 examines the role of science in juvenile death penalty litigation. The chapters delve into legal concepts such as *Miranda* rights and evolving standards of decency, as well as cognitive and legal culpability. Although it is ideal for juvenile court mental health evaluations to be performed by child- and adolescent-trained forensic psychiatrists and psychologists, the dearth of such professionals often shifts responsibility to general psychiatrists, forensic psychiatrists, and forensic psychologists.

While the authors of Chapters 7, 8, and 9 discuss the problems of substance abuse, suicide, and juvenile sex offenders, Kayla Pope and Christopher R. Thomas use Chapter 6 to propose a comprehensive biopsychosocial approach to the etiology of antisocial behavior across the developmental spectrum. They flesh out the interactions among biological variables, including genetics, environmental toxins, and neurochemicals; psychological variables such as attachment, temperament, and academic performance; and social factors such as parenting, child abuse, and peer relationships. They use epidemiological findings and cluster analysis to develop future policies and research.

In Chapter 10, "Educational Needs of Youth in the Juvenile Justice System," the authors use evidence-based data to highlight challenges faced by juvenile justice facilities that strive to meet educational service provisions. The authors offer constructive and practical suggestions to improve educational services for youths involved in the justice system. Chapters 13, 14, and 15 contain discussions about mental health screening and the importance of neuropsychological testing in youth. The tests may identify deficits in executive function skills and other areas that could enhance youth outcomes by fostering development of individually targeted interventions.

My favorite part of the book is Chapter 16, which examines the use of evidence-based treatments for justice-involved youths. Through adept discussion and the use of a table (Table 16.1), Eric Trupin delves into various types of treatment. He describes the theoretical framework, goals, strategies, and outcomes of each treatment modality. For example, readers may appreciate that diversion programs prevent stigmatization, reduce recidivism, and save substantial cost. Trupin reviews alternative approaches to the punitive model of

crime control and drives home the essence of the chapter with specific case scenarios.

The role of ethics, which is reviewed in Chapter 19, may be taken for granted by forensically trained individuals, as this is a major focus of forensic training. However, clinicians with no forensic training should be aware of the ethics-related pitfalls involved when they serve in the dual role of evaluator and treating clinician.

As a general and forensic psychiatrist, my main criticism of the book involves Chapter 15, which deals with the use of psychotropic medications in juvenile delinquents. The evidence presented in Table 15.1 would be more balanced if the limitations of the studies were briefly discussed. For example, about 25 of the listed studies were underpowered, with samples of fewer than 30 youths. Also, some of the studies were open-label and retrospective. The inherent methodological limitations were not given due consideration by the authors.

Overall, the editors and expert contributors have written a textbook that is concise, yet comprehensive, in a difficult subject area. The book, which contains numerous figures and tables, is richly referenced and will help readers appreciate the challenges and complexities involved in the field of juvenile justice. It should be on the shelves of all general and forensic psychiatrists and psychologists, as well as all professionals who work in the justice system.

## **Learning Forensic Assessment: International Perspectives on Forensic Mental Health**

Edited by Rebecca Jackson. New York: Routledge, Taylor, and Francis Group, 2008. 632 pp. \$45.00.

Reviewed by Robert L. Sadoff, MD

This comprehensively edited text is designed for forensic psychologists and students of forensic psychology. The chapters are all authored by respected academic forensic psychologists, some with law degrees. Although the book focuses primarily on conducting psychological assessments in civil and criminal cases, legal topics common to forensic psychology and forensic psychiatry are examined throughout.

Rebecca Jackson divided the book's contents into professional and practice subject matter. Part I contains three chapters on training, reviewing forensic literature, and ethics in forensic training and practice. Jackson dedicates the second part of the book to forensic psychological evaluations of adults. Discussions about adjudicative competency, evaluations for civil commitment of sex offenders, competency to be executed, and violence risk assessments are included, along with a chapter entitled "Insanity Evaluations."

Part III involves assessments of youth in the juvenile justice system and primarily focuses on delinquent youth. The chapter reviews juvenile competency, transferring juveniles to criminal court, adolescent psychopathy, and risk assessment for violence in adolescents.

The fourth part of the book describes civil forensic assessments, which include child custody, disability, personal injury, and civil commitment evaluations. The final section is on communicating findings through report writing and testifying in court.

The chapters are well written, well edited, comprehensive, and have numerous appropriate citations. This is a very fine book for the beginning forensic psychologist and a refresher course for the practicing forensic psychologist.

The book also is a helpful resource for forensic psychiatrists. We work closely with forensic psychologists and must know the bases of forensic psychological assessment, report writing, and testimony. Forensic psychiatrists also should be aware of the boundaries of forensic psychological practice, in an effort to promote the collaborative process. Too often, there is a demonstrable split between the two professions that need not occur. Working together helps attorneys in criminal and civil cases, and is much more effective and comprehensive than a single professional assessment. I count on my forensic psychologist colleagues to complement my evaluation and to assist significantly with developing personality dynamics through forensic psychological testing and by examining evaluatees to determine the presence and extent of organic brain damage, especially in serious criminal matters and personal injury cases.

From the standpoint of broadening the education of forensic psychiatrists to incorporate the teachings, experiences, and clinical expertise of the forensic psychologist, this book is extremely valuable. However,