BOOK REVIEWS


This book is well-written, clearly organized medical primer that attempts to explain a wide variety of developmental disabilities. The authors, Batshaw and Perret, present the information in such a way that makes it easy to understand medical terms and concepts related to different developmental disabilities.

The beginning portion of this book discusses heredity and diagnostic techniques used to detect abnormalities before birth. Normal fetal development, the birth process, and neonatal and early childhood development are also covered. The reader then becomes acquainted with functions and dysfunctions of various organ systems of the body such as the central nervous system, bones and muscles, the digestive system, vision, and hearing. Particular attention is given to nutritional requirements and special feeding problems of handicapped children. In-depth descriptions of various handicapping conditions are also included in this section. With each handicap a case history is given to help illustrate the disability. Among the disabilities discussed are: cerebral palsy, epilepsy, hyperactivity, learning disabilities, hearing problems, blindness, speech and language development and disorders, mental retardation, and autism.

The final portion of the book is dedicated to caring for and coping with a handicapped child. It raises some ethical questions faced by professionals and parents in caring for such a child, such as genetic screening, prenatal diagnosis, therapeutic abortion, withholding treatment, sterilization, and institutionalization.

This book could be a valuable resource text to physical, occupational, hearing, and speech therapists, special education teachers, and social workers who work with developmentally disabled children and their families. Parents of handicapped children could also benefit from this book since it does discuss in detail a variety of developmental disabilities, possible causes, treatments, and prognoses. Also included are resources for handicapped children.

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Since “children are not just scaled-down versions of adults” (p 84), this volume presents a comprehensive treatment philosophy for limb-deficient children that recognizes and addresses developmental needs specific to children. Based on the clinical experience of the Child Amputee Prosthetics Project (CAPP) at the University of California, Los Angeles, over the past 25 years, the book offers an overview of all aspects of health care intervention for children from birth to age 18 years with congenital or acquired amputations.

Although this publication is not specifically named as a “second edition,” it represents a revision of an earlier text of the same title edited by Berton Blakeslee and published in 1963. This revised edition reflects numerous advances made since 1963, particularly with regard to the orthopedic management of limb-deficient children and the development of new prosthetic components. However, much of the information on functional skills training, with or without the use of prostheses, is thoroughly illustrated and described in the first edition, has been condensed and deleted, in many cases, in this most recent edition.

The first section of the book includes chapters on medical and orthopedic management, the etiology and classification of limb deficiencies, and the principles of prosthetic design and prescription. The chapter on classification systems for congenital limb deficiencies, with specific definitions of terms, is particularly useful as a review of the multiple systems in use. Procedural details included in three chapters devoted to orthopedic management are quite technical, but the focus on problems and surgical considerations unique to children deserves attention. The chapters on prosthetics offer up-to-date information on the advantages and disadvantages of various prosthetic components available to children based on years of observation at CAPP and

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