Parental Psychiatric Disorder

Distressed Parents and Their Families

Third edition
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Edited by

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Contents

List of contributors viii
Preface xi

Section 1 – Fundamental issues
1 Towards the development of a conceptual framework 1
Andrea Reupert, Darryl Maybery, and Joanne Nicholson

2 What we want from mental health professionals: “telling it like it is” 16
Sandra Bilsborrow

3 Parental mental illness: estimating prevalence to inform policy and practice 20
Darryl Maybery, Joanne Nicholson, and Andrea Reupert

4 The effect of parents’ psychiatric disorder on children’s attachment: theory and cases 29
Patricia McKinsey Crittenden, Andrea Landini, and Kasia Kozlowska

5 Assessing the economic costs of parental mental illness 42
Cathrine Mihalopoulos

6 Stigma and families where a parent has a mental illness 51
Andrea Reupert and Darryl Maybery

Section 2 – Comprehensive assessment
7 Assessment and formulation of parenting 61
Ruth O’Shaughnessy, Ruth Butterworth, and Michael Göpfert

8 Assessment of parents for the court 74
Iyabo Fatimilehin, Ruth Butterworth, Ruth O’Shaughnessy, and Michael Göpfert

9 Thinking about children of parents with mental illnesses as a form of intergenerational dialog and practice 85
Brenda M. Gladstone

10 Parental diagnosis and children’s outcomes 96
Floor van Santvoort, Karin T. M. van Doesum, and Andrea Reupert

Section 3 – Specific disorders: the impact on children, parenting, and family relationships
11 Schizophrenia and motherhood 107
Mary V. Seeman

12 The impact of parental depression on children 117
Tracy R. G. Gladstone, William R. Beardslee, and Anne Diehl

13 Parents with anxiety disorders 127
Cathy Creswell, Peter J. Cooper, and Lynne Murray

14 Children of parents who abuse alcohol and other drugs 138
Shulamith Lala Ashenberg Straussner and Christine Huff Fewell
Section 4 – Child, parent, and family interventions

19 Helping children understand their parent’s mental illness 201
   Andrea Reupert, Rose Cuff, and Darryl Maybery

20 Psychopharmacology and motherhood 210
   Mary V. Seeman

21 Enhancing depressed mothers’ sensitivity 223
   Karin T. M. van Doesum, Clemens M. H. Hosman, and Laura E. Kersten-Alvarez

22 Working with parents who have a psychiatric disorder 238
   Tytti Solantaus, Andrea Reupert, and Darryl Maybery

23 Grandparents as primary caregivers 248
   Vicki Cowling, Mary V. Seeman, and Michael Göpfert

Section 5 – Building workforce, organizational, and community capacity

26 Parental psychiatric disorder: translating The Family Model into practice change 277
   Adrian Falkov

27 E-learning professional development resources for families where a parent has a mental illness 288
   Andrea Reupert, Darryl Maybery, and Bradley Morgan

28 How can we make the psychiatric workforce more family focused? 301
   Darryl Maybery, Kim Foster, Melinda Goodyear, Anne Grant, Patraporn Tungpuntom, Bjørg Eva Skogøy, and Robert Lees

29 A personal recovery model for parents with mental health problems 312
   Darryl Maybery, Graham Meadows, John Clark, Keith Sutton, Andrea Reupert, and Joanne Nicholson

30 Helping parents with mental illness: the value of professional partnerships fighting de facto bias in the American courts 324
   Katherine S. Nemens and Daniel Foster
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 Preventing unnecessary loss of child custody 333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary V. Seeman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Shifting the intervention paradigm from individuals to families living with parental mental illness 343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Biebel, Joanne Nicholson, and Toni Wolf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 The policy context and change for families living with parental mental illness 354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joanne Nicholson, Andrea Reupert, Anne Grant, Robert Lees, Darryl Maybery, Elaine Mordoch, Bjørg Eva Skogøy, Kristin Anne Stavnes, and Marie Diggins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 Are we there yet? Developing a conceptual framework for understanding families where a parent has a mental illness 365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darryl Maybery, Andrea Reupert, Joanne Nicholson, Michael Göpfert, and Mary V. Seeman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index 371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Preface

Mental illness is a family affair. When someone has a mental illness, his or her family are all affected, in particular the children in the family. While the adverse impact of parental mental illness on children is well documented, these outcomes are not inevitable. The aim of this book is to bring together leading researchers and practitioners to present their work in relation to families where a parent has a mental illness. Using various theoretical frameworks as a lens to understand the mechanisms of risk and adaptation in these families, the book examines the impact of different parental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, anxiety, depression, and personality disorder, on children and family relationships. The reciprocal nature of these family relationships is also appraised where caring for children and being in a family affect parents’ well-being. Several innovative interventions are outlined which target children, parents, and families, including grandparents. While an evidence base for many interventions is still emerging, these chapters provide some guidance for practitioners in supporting families. Critical areas for further research and practice development are highlighted. In recognition that interventions are best delivered where there is strong organizational and community support, the book also presents implementation research where strategies that promote workforce and policy development are identified.

There have been many changes since the second edition, in terms of research but also practice and policy in different parts of the world. Only one chapter remains from the second edition, three chapters have been updated, and there are now thirty new chapters and author teams. These new chapters reflect the need for a theoretical framework to guide research and practice in this area. A culture-inclusive, developmental perspective and a recovery orientation run throughout this edition, which maintains the tradition of authentic clinical narratives and a focus on practice implications.