

# Book Review: A Clinical Handbook in Adolescent Medicine: A Guide for Health Professionals who work with Adolescents and Young Adults.

Steinbeck, K. and Kohn, M. Eds. (2013). *A Clinical Handbook in Adolescent Medicine: A Guide for Health Professionals who work with Adolescents and Young Adults*. World Scientific, Singapore.

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When a child is born to new parents, there is so much hope, joy and happiness that the family are overcome with positive emotions. And then the baby wakes up; the adrenalin wears off. The sleepless nights begin and the hard task of parenting ensues. How many times the new parent wishes that this little, cute, wiggly being could have come with a manual. Adolescence then hits, with powerful confusion, agony, and more sleepless nights, this time filled with worry.

Worry no more! An Australian manual has been written for the confused brethren interacting with teenagers that are randomly searching google with questions like 'what is a normal adolescent?' to 'why does my teenager self-harm?'. *A Clinical Handbook in Adolescent Medicine: A guide for health professionals who work with adolescents and young adults* has been written as a manual to help support those that interact with this age group. The 2013 handbook edited by Kate Steinbeck and Michael Kohn starts with a nice description of what is normal in adolescent physical development, the adolescent brain and normal adolescent psychosocial development. This is followed by covering general issues around working with this group such as confidentiality, communicating with parents and carers and issues in education.

The handbook then delves into more intricate issues beginning with health related topics such as drugs, chronic illness, injury, rural and remote health, transition in care, incarcerated care for adolescents, obesity, physical activity and sports medicine, sexuality, dying and the importance of resilience. There is then a shift into disability including deafness, intellectual disability and mental health disorders. The mental health disorders become more specific such as eating disorders, depression and anxiety, psychotic disorders, sleep disorders, and ADHD.

Health issues are then represented with chapters on immunisation, respiratory disorders, diabetes, bone health, neurological disorders. Other health issues include cancer and its effects, genetics, cardiovascular risks, urology, renal medicine and allergic disorders. It was refreshing to see chapters on common adolescent problems including; dermatological problems, haematological problems, cardiology problems, rheumatological problems and common gynaecological problems.

Although this handbook cannot cover everything within the domain of adolescent health, with 52 chapters the editors have covered multiple health and psychosocial areas which helps the reader to understand more about adolescent medicine. Within chapters are also a plethora of issues and disorders that are helpful in answering questions about this group.

Chapter 22, *The Adolescent and Young Adult with Intellectual Disability and Complex Health Needs* includes short discussions of legal rights and advocacy, infancy and childhood, growth and development, Spina Bifida, Cerebral Palsy, associated health conditions and management issues. There is also some discussion around quality of life, progressive health and Down syndrome. There is a short case study and many examples of health conditions. The authors of this chapter Helen Somerville and Cameron Ly discuss complex needs in a summarised chapter.

Chapter 30 is contributed by our own David Dossetor and Rameswaran Vannitambay whom discuss *Mental Health in Young People with Intellectual Disability and Autism*. It is a nice overview with prevalence, aetiology, and most of the chapter dedicated to mental health in the ID population touching on associated health needs, communication problems, challenging behaviour, diagnosis, prevalence and specific mental health diagnosis such as depression, anxiety, psychoses, impulse control and organic mental health disorders. It concludes with barriers to mental health care and some notes of models of care.

If you work or interact with adolescents, this handbook with a very high contribution from various health professionals, doctors and esteemed colleagues, might answer a few of your baffling questions.

#### **Further Reading:**

Kang, M., Skinner, S.R., Sanci, L.A. and Sawyer, S.M. Eds. (2013). *Youth Health and Adolescent Medicine*. IP Communications: Melbourne

