

SECTION MENTAL HEALTH IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

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Over the past few decades, there has been growing concern in the social sciences, anthropological sciences, psychology and medicine about issues related to emotional and behavioral maladjustment that may manifest itself in children, adolescents, and their families, even from birth. The current epistemological evidence shows an alarming rise in conflictual situations, health issues, and disorders afflicting children around the world, especially those who live in high-risk psychosocial conditions. This increase has, inevitably, generated a greater demand for specialized services, which implies a change in the traditional role and training of the interdisciplinary teams that work in the field of child and adolescent mental health. This new orientation is based on the following tenets: Offering participants in the field a space where they can, through education, acquire, perfect, and bring up to date their knowledge of child and adolescent mental health and public and socio-sanitary health as considered from a biopsychosocial perspective. (Child and adolescent mental health is implied in this text when it makes reference to this integrative approach that can only be assumed and applied by an interdisciplinary team.)

The **specific objectives** are:

- To perform accurate semiological studies of children and adolescents and their semiological contexts (immediate and intermediate).
- To identify their various issues and to address and resolve them, focusing on an appropriate and/or timely (sound) therapy, within a theoretical conceptual framework that is clinically integrated, up-to-date, and evidence-based. This therapy should focus on normal development and potential outcomes that may express themselves as disorders in children, adolescents, and their families acting in a setting that is an intersection of various factors (biological, psychological, sociological, cultural-historical, and anthropological).
- To identify the emergency and to encourage the planning out of an approach to it, selecting appropriate therapy modality, perfecting workable technico-diagnostic skills, implementing a course of therapy, and guiding it to a successful conclusion through the participation of an interdisciplinary team that knows how to respond in accordance with the symptoms present in a given context.
- To be familiar with the legal aspects of the procedures carried out — properly compiling records and medical, psychological, environmental reports — and

the duties and obligations involved in the care of children or adolescents (human rights).

- To be familiar with the aspects of public health having to do with the care of children and adolescents.
- To conduct research connected with this medical specialty and to develop methodological techniques for the design and implementation of basic or applied research in the field of child and adolescent mental health.
- To carry out and coordinate teaching activities having different modalities: workshops, debates, talks
- To identify, become familiar with, and promote preventive measures to improve mental health in accordance with socio-economic level, context (in community, educational, hospital, governmental, and institutional settings in high-risk populations) and in accordance with specific issues present during childhood and adolescence and in the local epidemiological context.
- To provide training in order to orient parents, teachers, and professionals involved in child and adolescent mental health so that they might become acquainted with a variety of issues (or conflictive situations), which would result in a satisfactory adherence to the treatments indicated.
- To train others in the use of various techniques for the early detection and management of various mental health issues.
- To create an interdisciplinary network that is extremely therapeutically efficient.
- To evaluate the impact of the environment on the development of mental health pathologies.
- To design bioethical criteria connecting new paradigmatic challenges with technical and scientific breakthroughs.
- To base all the actions described above on principles that advocate for human rights and support practices that encourage equality and social inclusion as they apply to age or membership in any cultural group or community.