

Module 8

Evidence-Based Psychosocial Interventions for Childhood Problems

Learning Goals

1. Describe evidence-based practice (EBP) as a process and a philosophy of closing gaps between research and practice and minimizing harm.
2. Deconstruct diagnoses of childhood psychiatric “disorders,” and propose alternative ways to view childhood problems.
3. Describe effects of traumatic experiences on children’s development and self-regulation.
4. Evaluate appropriate psychosocial interventions for various childhood problems based on research evidence.

Questions for Practice, Supervision and Administration

1. Select a case from your current practice and “deconstruct” the DSM psychiatric diagnosis:
 - a. What feelings and behaviors led to the diagnosis?
 - b. Are any of those feelings and behaviors common to other diagnoses?
 - c. Summarize the evidence bearing on the *validity* and *reliability* of this diagnosis.
 - d. Independently of the symptoms, how would one identify the condition named by the diagnosis? In other words, is there any objective test to determine the presence of the “disorder,” independent of the DSM criteria? How does this bear on the validity of the diagnosis?
 - e. Does the diagnosis add to your understanding of the client’s problem, or is it merely another way to name the problem? If the former, state precisely how. If the latter, is it incorrectly used as etiological explanation?
 - f. Choose three (3) cases from your caseload, and attempt the following thought experiment: Imagine that there were no diagnostic systems in existence, and you had to describe your client’s problem(s) to another practitioner, and to another layperson, in three sentences or less. Reviewing each of your descriptions, identify whether and how they differ from the list of symptoms making up the criteria for the client’s DSM diagnosis.

