

Resource Review

Internet resources on the mental health and psychosocial care for children and adolescents. Peter Ventevogel

The internet is an enormously rich source of information, but its richness can also be its weakness. How do you find what you need? How do you know that what you find can be trusted? In this contribution, we will present a selection of some internet resources on psychosocial and mental health aspects for children and adolescents that we have found to be useful for work in post-conflict settings in low and middle-income countries.

IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support
<http://psp.drk.dk/sw30190.asp>

This is a useful site with information and links of over more than 20 organizations working in the field of psychosocial assistance in post conflict settings. It provides information on the activities of these organizations and gives the opportunity to download key documents ranging from manuals to policy papers. Among the many interesting documents to be found here are:

Working with children in unstable situations. Principles and Concepts to Guide Psychosocial Responses. UNICEF, 2003 (84 pages) <http://psp.drk.dk/graphics/2003referencecenter/Doc-man/Documents/mapping/UNICEF/WorkingGuide.PM6.2.pdf>

The document above is prepared by the Refugee Studies Centre of the University of Oxford as an introduction for humanitarian workers to psychosocial interventions. It pro-

vides examples of how these principles have been turned into concrete action. It also forms an excellent introduction to concepts guiding psychosocial work.

Training Handbook on Psychosocial Counselling for Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances. Mark Jordans (ed.). Kathmandu: UNICEF. <http://psp.drk.dk/graphics/2003referencecenter/Docman/Documents/mapping/HealthNet%20TPO/Training.Manual.pdf>

This is a practical handbook for training counsellors and psychosocial assistants who work with children. The handbook contains different modules about the general principles of counselling and about specific counselling skills, including lesson plans and activities for the sessions.

Inter-Agency Guiding Principles for Psychosocial Care and Protection of Tsunami Affected Children
<http://psp.drk.dk/graphics/2003referencecenter/Doc-man/Documents/mapping/UNICEF/Psychosocial.Guiding.Principles.Tsunami.2.pdf>

A paper of only three pages, yet one that aptly documents the principles for psychosocial interventions in disaster situations, based on the experiences of different organizations during the tsunami of 2004. Its no-nonsense approach makes it essential reading for any one who considers implementing psychosocial interventions after a natural disaster or a complex emergency.

Social healing in war-affected and displaced children. Jo Boyden <http://www.asylumsupport.info/publications/rsc/healing.htm>

This is a critical review article on the ideas and assumptions underlying conventional perspectives on psychosocial health of children in war-torn areas. The article assesses the implications of recent social science research for a revised view of child-centred emergency interventions.

Psychosocial Care & Protection of Children in Emergencies: A Field Guide. Laura Arntson and Christine Knudsen (2004), Save the Children <http://www.savethechildren.org/publications/technical-resources/emergencies-protection/PSYCHOSOCIALCONTENTS.pdf>

This book is part of the *Children and War Field Guide* series compiled by Save the Children (SC), and is intended to provide comprehensive, hands-on guidance for programming. It contains six volumes. The volume on *'Psychosocial care and support'* is a useful tool for developing strategies in response to the psychosocial needs of children in conflict settings.

Health and Human Rights Info

<http://www.hhri.org>

This website contains links to practical information and material on psychological and psychosocial aspects of health and human rights. The database has a special section on children, with numerous links to useful resources.

World Health Organization (WHO)

(<http://www.who.int/mental.health/resources/child/en/index.html>)

The website of the WHO includes information on mental health issues related to children and adolescents. On this site you can download the *Atlas for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Resources* (2005). This document is a systematic attempt to collect information from various countries on existing services and resources. Unfortunately, the *Atlas* only

contains substantial data for less than half of the 192 countries that are member states of WHO. The lack of information is sadly a consequence of the lack of any child mental health services in a large number of countries. This is symptomatic of the challenges facing those interested in promoting child mental health and providing for those needing services. Nevertheless, it could provide a good starting point for those who wish to develop policies for child and adolescent mental health services in their country.

A draft WHO document (2005) on the principles of psychosocial and mental health care for children and adolescents in conflict settings can be found on:

<http://psp.drk.dk/graphics/2003referencecenter/Docman/Documents/IDisaster-general/psychosocial.care.for.children.WHO.pdf>

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund)

<http://www.unicef.org/publications/index.pubs.subject.html>

The publication section of UNICEF has a wealth of information. In particular, the subsection on 'child protection' has useful reference materials such as the annual reports (the State of the World's Children) and manuals such as *'Helping Children Cope with the Stresses of War' (A Manual for Parents and Teachers)* and *'Child protection information sheets'*.

Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict

<http://www.un.org/children/conflict/english/home6.html>

This website is from the special representative of the UN Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict. Here you can find the complete 1996 report of Graca Machel on *'The Impact of War on Children'*.

This famous report laid the foundation for the children and armed conflict agenda.

Mental health care for children and adolescents worldwide: a review (2005) H. Remschmidt & M. Belfer. World Psychiatry 4 (3) 147-153.

www.wpanet.org

This is a review article by two leading child psychiatrists in world psychiatry, on the freely accessible scientific journal of the World Psychiatric Association. It documents the magnitude and the epidemiology of mental health problems in children and adolescents. It contains a basis for planning of services, in each of the various regions of the world, as well the principles and strategies of intervention for mental health disorders in children and adolescents, and the role of international organizations and advocacy groups.

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/childmenu.cfm>

The NIMH is the official research body of the US Department of Health and Human Services. Part of the website is devoted to child mental health and contains brief and

clear fact sheets in English about childhood mental disorders such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autism, bipolar disorder, depression, eating disorders and childhood-onset schizophrenia. You can also find leaflets about psychotropic medication for children. A useful brochure is '*Treatment of Children with Mental Disorders*', a booklet with answers to frequently asked questions about the treatment of mental disorders in children. It includes a medications chart.

Some other useful information including fact sheets and links can also be found on the website of SAMHSA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the US government: <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/child/childhealth.asp>

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