
Introduction

Immigrant children and adolescents face many complex stressors—they must leave familiar people and routines, adjust to new social and academic norms, and navigate intersecting cultures. Although migration is rapidly increasing worldwide, and the risks to psychological health are clear, we know relatively little about best practices for conducting psychotherapy with immigrant youth. *Psychotherapy for Immigrant Youth* is an effort to advance the treatment of problems, while building capacity and fostering resilience. This book describes the complex life experiences and psychological symptoms experienced by immigrant youth and takes an ecological-contextual approach to providing treatment. Symptoms and treatment delivery are intertwined with setting, and this book considers medical, community, and school environments, as well as the contexts of receiving countries and low-resource settings, for service delivery. This book also addresses the complex and interconnected services required by immigrant families and their children—including housing and relocation, legal, and medication, and the ways that providers of psychotherapy can integrate these needs with their own services.

Psychotherapy for Immigrant Youth is intended for practitioners, researchers, and students who study and work with immigrant children and adolescents across multiple settings. Professionals in the fields of psychiatry, psychology, social work, public health, and education will benefit from the book's practical and interdisciplinary approach. Each chapter provides an overview of related empirical work, applies a critical lens to the limitations of current knowledge, and provides suggestions for future directions and detailed case examples to illustrate issues and therapeutic techniques.

This book is a collection of chapters ordered into four parts that address themes essential to understanding different aspects of providing psychotherapy for immigrant youth.

The first part includes an analysis of the psychosocial stressors faced by immigrant youth. The chapter, *Immigrant Youth Life Stressors* (Anna Staudenmeyer, Erynn E. Macciomei, Margareth del Cid, Sita Patel) introduces the complex life stressors faced by immigrant youth, across the trajectory of pre-migration, through migration, and after settlement. This chapter clarifies the niche of psychotherapy for immigrant youth by contextualizing the special circumstances of cross-cultural mental health and social/legal circumstances faced by the population.

The second part provides a comprehensive review and concise discussion of contemporary, evidence-based psychotherapies for immigrant youth. Each chapter highlights a specific form of treatment modality. The chapter, *Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Immigrant Youth: The Essentials* (Micaela A. Thordarson, Marisa Keller, Paul Sullivan, Sandra Trafalis, Robert D. Friedberg) provides an overview of core principles and techniques of cognitive behavior therapy as they relate to immigrant youth. The chapter, *Family Systems: Separation, Intergenerational Conflict, Family Therapy, and Other Issues* (Maryam Kia-Keating, Diana Capous, Linda Juang, Guadalupe Bacio) focuses on the school setting and best practices for services delivered in school settings. The chapter, *School-Based Intervention* (Alisa B. Miller, Colleen B. Bixby, and B. Heidi Ellis) provides a review of the literature on school-based interventions with specific attention to services for immigrant youth. It includes case examples of programs with good outcomes and effective interventions. The chapter, *Trauma and Acculturative Stress* (John Rettger, Hilit Kletter, Victor Carrion) focuses on trauma, by first distinguishing between chronic stressors and acute trauma, then discussing frequent traumatic experiences faced by immigrant youth, and reviewing current evidence-based treatment approaches for traumatized immigrant youth.

The third part explores treatment modalities complementary to psychotherapy for immigrant youth. The chapter, *Combined Psychotherapy with Psychopharmacology* (Yasmin Owusu) discusses challenges and considerations for the provision of psychiatric medication, including cultural and familial factors. The chapter, *Information Systems and Technology* (Eduardo Bunge, Megan K. Jones, Benjamin Dickter, Rosaura Perales, Andrea Spear) focuses on the family, including family-level stressors and resiliency.

The fourth part provides a discussion of using psychotherapy for immigrant youth in specific settings and some of the contextual challenges that may arise. The chapter, *Treating Forcibly Displaced Young People: Global Challenges in Mental Health Care* (Ruth Reed, Rebecca Tyrer, and Mina Fazel) explains the multiple, complex social systems that immigrant youth often require services for, including legal, medical, and educational. The chapter, *Social Systems: Interface with Legal, Immigration, and Case Management, etc.* (James Livingston Marilee Ruebsamen, David E. Reed, Fazia Eltareb) presents current practices related to integrating technology into psychotherapy.

The book closes with an Appendix that functions as a critical comment on the challenges and limits of the applicability of Western brands of psychotherapy for non-Western individuals. This critical consideration is titled, *Cultural Perspectives in the Context of Western Psychological Mindsets: The Need for Cultural Sensitivity in the Mental Health of Immigrants* (Daryn Reicherter & Rania Awaad).

Psychotherapy for Immigrant Youth can be useful to practitioners section by section, chapter by chapter, or as a whole. The editors intended to create a volume that would inform and update the evidence base and also spark inquiry toward the

questions and challenges that remain. Each chapter is a stand-alone review with original and informative new ideas. Each section binds together several specific ideas into a theme. The book, in total, intends to both inform and challenge the science and art of mental health practice for this vulnerable population.

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