

Preface

Many children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) have serious health concerns that affect their learning, socialization, and quality of life. In recent years, there has been increased research attention toward treating individuals who have disease symptoms and chronic medical problems. Another vital concern is reducing health-risk factors and preventing onset of illnesses and other afflictions. Notably, the disciplines of applied behavior analysis (ABA) and more generally behavioral psychology have contributed greatly to health care for people with IDD. Behavioral methods are used in combination with traditional medicine and sometimes as a sole treatment agent. While early behavioral medicine applications were reported in the professional literature, there have been many new developments in theory, practice, and research.

This book addresses the contribution of behavioral psychology, applied behavior analysis, behavioral medicine, and cognitive-behavioral treatment to health issues among people who have IDD. It is intended as a contemporary synopsis and review of evidence-based procedures that have been extensively researched and translated into effective practices by multidisciplinary health-care providers. From the perspective of tertiary prevention, chapters are included for treating health problems such as food refusal, sleep disorders, body-focused (tissue-damaging) repetitive behaviors, and rumination. A second emphasis of the book is on reducing risk factors that impose health concerns, for example, non-compliance with medical routines, maintaining personal hygiene, and substance abuse. Considering primary prevention, the book covers areas such as encouraging healthy lifestyles and increasing exercise—physical activity. In addition to highlighting these symptom-directed, risk reduction, and primary prevention interventions, chapters address consultation and training models for working successfully with physicians, nurses, parents, direct care practitioners, and ancillary healthcare professionals. In summary, my twofold purpose for the book has been to aggregate the most contemporary research on behavioral prevention and intervention for health issues among people with IDD, and to provide a research-to-practice translation so that practitioners can learn about and adopt the most effective and evidence-based methods.

I am most grateful to Springer Publishing for supporting the book, in particular Senior Editor for Behavioral Sciences, Judy Jones, and her outstanding editorial and production teams. Dr. Nirbhay N. Singh, a friend and most esteemed colleague, also helped me fashion the book. I wish to thank James M. Sperry, President–CEO of Clinical Solutions, Inc., and North East Educational and Developmental Support Center, for giving me the opportunity to join his organization of exemplary, respectful, and dedicated professionals—how wonderful to move on! Among many settings and locations that set the occasion for and reinforce my book writing and editing, I acknowledge Border Café, Burlington Mall, Carlisle Cranberry Bog, Dunkin’ Donuts, Middlesex School, and Tufts University. In the end, the support, guidance, and humor of my wife, Dr. Tracy Evans Luiselli, and our children Gabrielle and Thomas, make it possible to keep everything in focus and to stay on a mindful path.

James K. Luiselli

Behavioral Health Promotion and Intervention in
Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Luiselli, J.K. (Ed.)

2016, XII, 260 p. 3 illus., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-27295-5