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Adolescence and Health. Edited by J. Coleman, L. B. Hendry and M. Kloep. (Pp. 256; £19.99; ISBN 0470092076.) John Wiley & Sons Ltd. 2007.

I like this book. It's one of those books that feels good when you first pick it up. It has a welcoming feel and that is maintained through the chapters in the style of writing and the layout. The text has an open style and is generously supported by tables, illustrations, pictures and so forth.

The area covered is of course important to me professionally in my capacity as a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, but it should be to all of us, as the deteriorating health and well-being of our children and adolescents should be a clarion call to act.

This book helps consider many of the problems faced and does it in the way that the earlier accompanying text of John Coleman and Leo Hendry, *The Nature of Adolescence* (1999), also managed to achieve. There is a lightness and infomativeness about it all that is refreshing, yet educational, engaging yet not too intense or overwhelming in detail.

There are 11 chapters in all covering just over 200 pages. The topics range from 'Young people: Physical Health, Exercise and Recreation' to, 'Getting It Right in Health Services for Young People', 'Chronic Illness and Disability' to 'Health Promotion and Health Education'. In fact the editors achieve coverage across wide problem areas and on to proposed solutions with critical appraisal of the information built in throughout.

I could well imagine adolescents undertaking college or school projects finding this a useful and easily accessible text.

But it will also be accessible and useful to a wide variety of other students and indeed as a reference point for specialists too, across a range of the disciplines in contact with youth today; community workers, voluntary sector staff, paediatric and young adult staff, staff in General Practice as well as in specialist mental health such as myself. There is something for everyone!

There is a compelling need to take a, 'whole system' approach to the well-being of young people. The stark and saddening statistic that across 40 measures our adolescents were bottom of the UNICEF (2007) self-reported, 'Well Being' league table in the period 2000–2003 out of 21 OECD industrialized nations affirms this.

This book bridges mental health issues with physical health issues, never separate of course but often kept artificially so. Throughout there is a sense of the

offer of solutions alongside definition of the dilemmas and problems. The text is well referenced and the frequent summary tables and questions and answers to aid learning and assimilation are helpful.

On the slightly less positive side, it was curious to see separate chapters on eating disorders and emotional health. Certainly eating disorders are a serious problem but so are early psychosis or suicidal depression and so forth. I think a 'List of contributors' would be useful.

In conclusion, I will recommend this book to my trainees and indeed senior colleagues. I think it should be useful across disciplines and across the range of service providers; from universal services in primary-care settings to specialist services and other students of adolescent development. It represents a helpful addition for us all; it somehow manages to convey what we often experience when working with troubled adolescents, that mixture of recognition of problems yet the facility for change and growth.

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Genetic Counselling: A Psychological Approach. By C. Evans. (Pp. 204; \$45.00; ISBN 0521672309.) Cambridge University Press. 2006.

'So, what do you do?' I reply I am a genetic counsellor. The face of the enquirer glazes over, they have no idea what that means. From now on I shall refer them to Christine Evans' excellent book. This beautifully constructed work captures the essence of genetic counselling making it an essential read for anyone working in this profession. This book will also inform those health professionals who may be considering a career in clinical genetics. Dr Evans has worked with counsellors and clinicians in a department of Medical Genetics, and her grasp of the intricacies of this speciality is impressive. As she states 'Genetic counselling has emerged to respond to the individual seeking genetic information and has taken up the challenge of how knowledge of the genetic