# Pediatric Neuropsychiatry

# A Case-Based Approach

Aaron J. Hauptman Jay A. Salpekar *Editors* 



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Dedicated to Bruce Hauptman, MD and Jack Pellock, MD who would have enjoyed a book like this

### **Editors' Note**

Thank you for selecting this book. Our intent is to provide a rich intellectual journey through the complex and fascinating world of pediatric neuropsychiatry. The cases that make up this text were chosen in order to instruct and enliven. The authors themselves grapple with facets of diagnosis, treatment, interpretation, and meaning. As is the case in the field generally, the cases presented here are not always tidy, and the outcomes are not uniformly positive or, in some instances, even determined. Always, the authors engage with the significance of neural correlates for behavior, emotion, cognition, and consciousness. Parts of the discourse may seem novel, and some may feel to be well-trodden terrain. Some may represent diagnostic assessment and treatment decisions that feel comfortable. Others may be cutting-edge or address old topics in new ways; and some address considerations with which readers may not always agree. We welcome that inquiry and are content to prioritize probing questions rather than unblemished answers. Through that process, we consider that true medical knowledge may be advanced. This book has been a wonderful experience to write and to edit; we thank you for joining us.

Aaron J. Hauptman Jay A. Salpekar

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#### Introduction

"Wherever the art of medicine is loved, there is a love of humanity."

-Hippocrates

How many times have we each approached colleagues saying, "I saw a really interesting patient today," or "I have never seen anything quite like this..." This is a standard practice for clinicians, as we all reach out to our professional community for explanation, teaching, guidance or the shared sense of fascination about the experiences of the individuals we treat. As neurologists, psychiatrists, and ultimately, as neuropsychiatrists, we take care of individuals whose complicated conditions challenge us to think deeply about how neuroscience, development, and environment connect the mental and physical functions of the brain. Much of the time, our patients bring unique insights into mind-body connectivity that are on the cutting edge of today's clinical knowledge. As such, evidence or even precedent for management of these illnesses is not common in the medical literature. To work in neuropsychiatry is to live at the deeply fascinating, but often uncomfortable, gray line between the mental and the physical, at the forefront of the exploration of consciousness.

Classically, a case conference has always been the way that physicians do medicine. We see patients with complicated conditions and then discuss clinical experiences at national meetings, local grand rounds, or within our departments with colleagues in order to facilitate our own understanding and that of the community. The insights afforded to clinicians in these settings are valuable; each practitioner can apply a unique perspective to challenging cases, and, in the world of neuropsychiatry, most cases are challenging.

In modern times, the opportunities to meet and discuss cases have been significantly constricted given the increased pressure to see as many patients as possible and "manage" versus to think deeply and carefully about larger neuroscientific theories. Movements to routinize care also work against the field, often streamlining procedures in ways that undercut the exploration that is at the heart of neuropsychiatric medicine. Despite financial pressures in the modern era, most researchers and clinicians acknowledge that the intellectual appeal of a neuropsychiatric mode of thinking has never been greater. The contrast today between the growth of factual knowledge available about the brain and the contraction in allotted time to avail oneself of that knowledge represents a conundrum that is unresolved. Now, nearly two decades after the end of the "Decade of the Brain" in the 1990s, exploration into brain anatomy and function has soared. We think about networks and coordinated systems not only fixed anatomical brain structures and the roles of individual neurotransmitters. The knowledge of concussions and degenerative conditions has changed how we think about brain injury and cognitive processing. We have an increased understanding of the fragility of brain parenchyma as well as new appreciation for its tremendous capacity for recovery. We have windows into the vast connectivity of the brain with imaging of white matter tracts in diffusion tensor imaging and electrical dipoles as shown by magnetic encephalograms.

Adult neuropsychiatry is now a well-established field with numerous practitioners and reasonable representation in the medical literature. There are increasingly formalized ways to train practitioners for a career in adult neuropsychiatry including residencies, fellowships, national and international conferences, and medical board examinations. While this is a superb development for the field, clinicians who work with children routinely note how the analogous knowledge base and integrated approach in the pediatric world is much less established. Neuroscience education and clinical emphasis on neurologic comorbidities typically are not prominent components in pediatric and child/adolescent psychiatry training programs.

This is an unfortunate development because studying a pediatric population has inherent advantages when it comes to neuropsychiatry. Young brains are designed for growth, recovery, and resilience. Significant vulnerability exists of course, but repair is possible well beyond what may occur later in the life span. In pediatrics, every case of neuropsychiatric illness is contextualized by brain development. Whereas in adult neuropsychiatry, the insult to the brain is framed by mature substrate, in children, not only is function in the moment affected but the ongoing process of development is jarred from its trajectory as well. As such, we can readily gain insights into brain development by monitoring how symptoms change over time and how treatment may influence that change.

Our aim with this text is to highlight the developing brain with a diverse cohort of children and adolescents with neuropsychiatric illnesses. We include some conditions that are common, bread-and-butter child psychiatry and neurological cases, such as ADHD, epilepsy, and Tourette's syndrome. But we have gone out of our way also to include cases that may be a little bit messy and that frame the expected condition in the context of life stress, comorbid developmental disorders, and other neurologic illness. We tried to organize the cases around similar themes but fully recognize that content overlaps between sections. We also intermix cases of conversion disorder, such as psychogenic non-epileptic events, within the sections on the associated conditions. In pediatrics, conversion symptoms may be subtly nested within the context of comorbid neurological disorders and developmentally tinged emotional stressors. As such, we did not want to isolate conversion from related neurologic symptoms even if the etiologies were varied.

Additionally, we want this text to help fill the knowledge gap that currently exists between adult and pediatric neuropsychiatry. We aspire to provide a sense of how to think through aspects of brain dysfunction by means of the oldest tradition in medicine: case-based learning. By highlighting patients' stories, we hope to provide a broad "case conference" that will generate thought and insight to assist other clinicians facing the daunting and energizing task of deciphering neuropsychiatric illness in children and adolescents. Although the paradigmatic approach utilized in adult neuropsychiatry does not yet have an equivalent in the pediatric realm, there is tremendous interest in its advance, and we hope this type of casebook will contribute toward that goal.

Above all, we want to capture intrigue and express the delight in working as neuropsychiatrists with this age group. Children and adolescents with neuropsychiatric illness are very common yet often struggle in finding professionals adept in diagnosis, treatment, and overall support. We continue to be humbled by this complex field and endeavor to make progress in learning how best to be available for our patients as clinical neuroscientists.

Ultimately, this book is about those patients, telling their stories and, in doing so, teaching us new remarkable insights into brain and behavior relationships. Where possible, our patients and their families have provided personal reflections of their experiences. Their voices, expressing their struggles and successes, are profound reminders of the person-centered nature of this work. We are privileged to have this opportunity and to work alongside our patients in bearing witness into the limitless inner workings of the brain.

Boston, MA, USA Baltimore, MD, USA Aaron J. Hauptman Jay A. Salpekar

#### Part I

# The Frontal Lobes and Coordination of Movement and Thought

#### Introduction

The brain is wider than the sky, For, put them side by side, The one the other will include, With ease, and you beside. Emily Dickinson, 1924

This section focuses on prefrontal cortical (PFC) circuits and their diverse structural and functional connections throughout the brain. Discussion of the frontal lobes, responsible for attention, working memory, executive function, and so much of what defines human emotional and neurocognitive function, quickly gives way to an exploration of subcortical structures such as basal ganglia and limbic regions. The prefrontal cortex doesn't do its work alone, and the section emphasizes the large-scale, circuit-based nature of so many of the functions thought of as "belonging" to the PFC.

These cases focus on frontal-parietal connections in executive function, frontalstriatal-thalamocortical loops in movement, mood and salience detection, and the increasingly appreciated functions of the cerebellum's interaction with other brain regions in cognition and thought processing. Concepts will be introduced crucial to understanding regions of the brain that will come up again and again in subsequent chapters, whether in the discussion of developmental disorders, white-matter connectivity in pediatric multiple sclerosis, the neuropsychiatric aspects of neuroimmunological conditions, epilepsy, or altered mental status.

The first chapter in this section follows three patients with ADHD for decades; their diverse developmental trajectories bring a longitudinal, outcome-driven perspective on a condition often thought of exclusively in its pediatric context. This also provides a broad overview of PFC circuitry and connectivity that scaffolds subsequent discussion of frontal-subcortical and frontal-cerebellar connections. Next is an exploration of traumatic brain injury (TBI) and its potentially devastating effects on mood, personality, and a wide range of emotional and neurocognitive functions. The chapter also places an emphasis on modes of recovery and approaches for management and shows a pathway toward success in the face of ongoing challenges. A review of tics and Tourette syndrome moves into an exploration of the deeper structures of the telencephalon in the management of a particularly complex case. This entry into frontal-subcortical machinery shifts solidly into a discussion of subcortical structures explored through a case of substance-induced hypoxia in which parkinsonism in an adolescent was confused for a mood disorder. The section then moves on to the cerebellum. This brain area, once viewed as being almost exclusively involved in smoothing of movement, is increasingly seen as playing a significant role in emotional and thought processing and is implicated in a broad range of neurological and psychiatric conditions ranging from autism to schizophrenia to affective disorders. The final case addresses the common question of adolescent concussion with psychiatric sequelae, addressing the overarching concern of long term sequelae following multiple episodes of mild traumatic brain injury.



# The Spectrum of Neurobehavioral Outcomes in Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder

Shereen E. Elmaghrabi and Francisco Xavier Castellanos

#### Cases

The following cases illustrate three trajectories of individuals who would have been diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in childhood, had the contemporary diagnosis existed when they were first evaluated. These cases (with details modified to protect confidentiality) were obtained from a prospective, 33-year longitudinal study conducted by Klein et al. investigating the long-term outcomes of childhood hyperactivity [1]. Probands were predominately middle and lower-middle socioeconomic status males aged 6–12 upon entering the study between 1970 and 1978. They were recruited from a psychiatric research clinic in Queens, NY, to which they had been referred for behavioral issues by their respective schools. Follow-up assessments were conducted at mean participant ages of 18, 25, and 41 years.

#### **Case One: Charlie**

Charlie was born full-term at 9 lbs 10 oz. From a young age, he experienced difficulties at school and home. By the second grade, he was in danger of failing several subjects despite receiving individualized instruction. His second grade teacher

S. E. Elmaghrabi

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