



The World of the Autistic Child : Understanding and Treating Autistic Spectrum Disorders

By Ph.D. Bryna Siegel

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For thousands of loving and concerned parents of autistic children, the suspicion that something may be wrong comes long before the clinical diagnosis of autism, PDD (pervasive developmental disorder), or Asperger's syndrome. When rounds of testing and consultations confirm parents' worst fears, their emotional turmoil is matched by an overriding practical concern: What do we do next?

The World of the Autistic Child is by far the most complete and comprehensive book ever written for the parents of autistic children, and for the teachers, child specialists, and other professionals that care for them. Written by Dr. Bryna Siegel, a developmental psychologist and director of a large university clinic for autistic children, it provides help and hope not only for the children, but for their families—the parents, grandparents, siblings, and other caregivers who must come to grips with their own grief and confusion following a diagnosis of autism or other related disorder. Dr. Siegel believes that parents' best defense is to acquire, as early as possible, the knowledge and the parenting skills they will need to work with professionals to help their child fulfill his or her potential. This book, therefore, is about understanding the diagnosis of autism, the available treatments, and how to decide what is best for a particular child with autism or PDD.

Straightforward and sympathetic, Dr. Siegel guides readers through the thicket of symptoms and labels, explaining the crucial importance of intensive early education, and how to find the resources and help that are available. Behavior modification, the development of daily living skills, guidelines for selecting and designing schooling, mainstreaming, the role for traditional academics in educating higher functioning children and young people, building effective parent-teacher relationships, psychoactive medications, and dealing with the possibility of residential placement are all covered. Dr. Siegel teaches parents and professionals to use their own common sense and personal observations in evaluating the many highly publicized but unorthodox and often untested treatments for autism, including the much-touted facilitated communication (F/C), holding therapy, auditory training, "Options" therapy, allergy treatments, and special diets.

Pulling together a wealth of long-needed information on the latest educational

and medical advances, *The World of the Autistic Child* is a superb guide and resource that no one who cares about autistic or developmentally disabled young people will want to be without.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Bryna Siegel has succeeded admirably in the difficult task of writing a book for parents of children with autistic conditions. Her style is clear and easy to understand even when she discusses complicated issues. She has empathy for the emotional and practical stresses and strains that are an inevitable part of caring for an autistic child. She discusses treatments and outcomes with clear-sighted honesty. This is a book that parents and professionals in the field will find invaluable."--Lorna Wing, M.D., Consultant Psychiatrist, The Centre for Social and Communication Disorders

"In this volume, Dr. Siegel combines equal measures of academic expertise, common sense, and empathy for her patients and their families. The result is an authoritative and easily readable book for students, professionals of all disciplines, and parents who are struggling to understand and help those with autism. I recommend Dr. Siegel's book to every student, fellow professional, and family without the slightest hesitation or qualification."--Edward R. Ritvo, M.D., UCLA School of Medicine

"Very well done in its scope and comprehensive. It covers a wide range of treatments and provides current perspective on each. Treatment of diagnosis is thorough. This is an excellent choice for the professional bookcase--be they teacher, therapist, parent or doctor."--Gerald Budzynski, York College of Pennsylvania

Noted in Canadian Child Psychiatry Review

About the Author

Dr. Bryna Siegel has directed the Pervasive Developmental Disorders Clinic and Laboratory at Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute at the University of California, San Francisco for the past six years, and earlier, was one of the founders of the Autism Clinic at Stanford University. She is the author of *The Working Parents Guide to Child Care, What About Me? Growing Up with a Developmentally Disabled Sibling*, and numerous professional publications.

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