

# Part 5

## Working with Children, Families and Communities

Focuses on the complex issues surrounding young Aboriginal people and explores ways for families and communities to deal with these issues. Issues discussed include factors influencing parental and infant mental health, addressing fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and understanding the lives of Aboriginal children and families using case studies. Also discussed are ways of working with behavioural and emotional problems in young people and how to move forward when family violence occurs.



# Chapters

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Factors influencing parental and infant mental health and wellbeing, such as perinatal depression and anxiety are outlined. The significance of infant attachment in the perinatal period, the importance of culture and ways of working with families in this sensitive life stage are described. Assessment tools and issues related to culturally appropriate diagnosis, treatment and prevention of perinatal depression and anxiety and its potential impacts are outlined along with key policies and preventative programs.

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Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and examples of its reported prevalence in the national and international context are highlighted. The burden of FASD and actions that have been taken in Australia to address FASD are examined. Stories of people from rural and remote communities, led to the development of the Life Cycle model. This model has been adapted to address the complexities of FASD in the Aboriginal population.

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Case studies representing the lives of young people in Aboriginal families affected by loss, grief and other traumatic life episodes are presented with the intention of engaging the reader in the life course of young people. Mental health practitioners, teachers, social workers and other community service providers will gain a deeper understanding of the clinical and cultural complexities that need to be addressed when working with children and young people.

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Examines the behavioural and emotional problems and the more common mental health disorders affecting young Aboriginal people who are at high risk of developing such problems. The importance of recognising psychosocial, cultural and environmental factors when assessing and treating young people and the delivery of both universal and culturally responsive prevention and intervention programs to address social and emotional wellbeing are discussed.

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The context in which violence occurs and how it is defined and contextualised in families is explored in order to determine pathways forward for healing of the victim, the offender, their families and the broader kin network. Drawing on the available evidence, several key considerations are presented for the development and implementation of interventions to address this violence in what is often a maze of complexities.