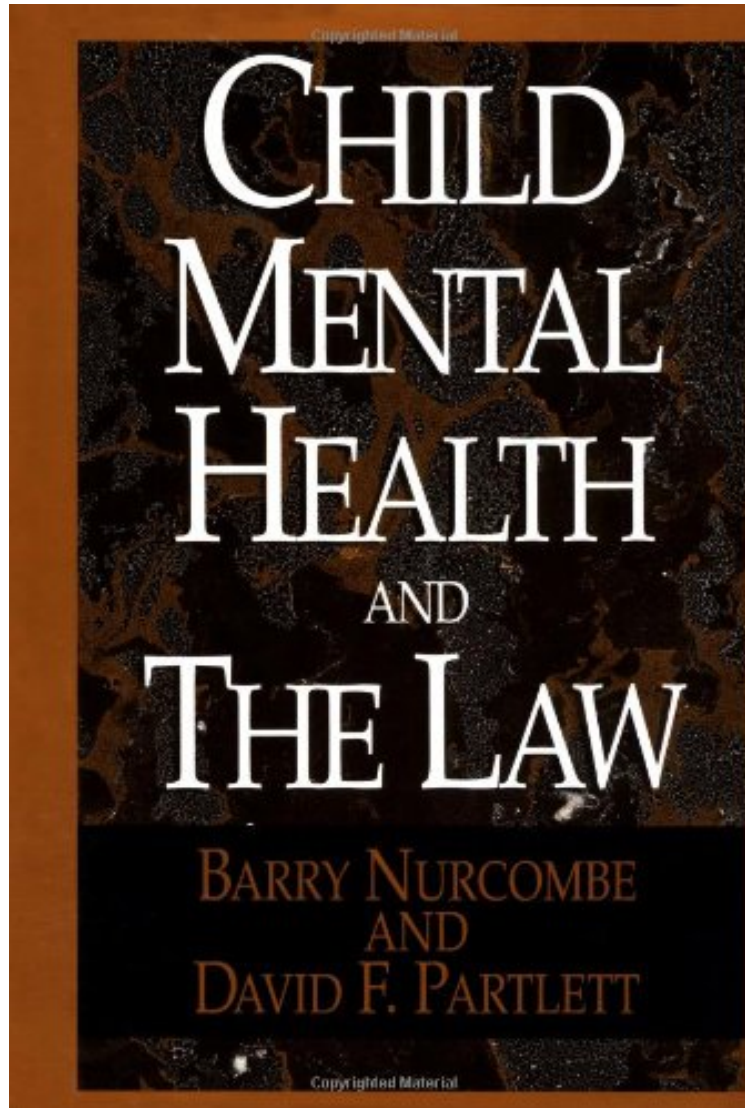


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Child Mental Health and the Law

Barry Nurcombe

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Barry Nurcombe : Child Mental Health and the Law before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Child Mental Health and the Law:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A ConundrumBy Nancy ViensDr. Nurcombe has presented a compassionate, well-thought-out review of the relationship between mental health and the legal system. These two are often at odds with each other, though the ultimate aim is of course to protect both the patient and the public from his/her illness. I have worked with Dr. Nurcombe in Burlington, Vermont USA on the Vermont Infant Studies Project, and am aware of his sensitivity and kind heart. These qualities are evident in all of his work, and though I have not

read other books to compare with this one, I found it most rewarding.

The legal aspects of child mental health have changed in recent years, yet many who deal professionally with disturbed children are ill informed about the rights and responsibilities of minors. *Child Mental Health and the Law* addresses the need for a comprehensive, up-to-date text that describes the evolution of child mental health law and the relevance of the law to the child mental health clinician. Separate chapters deal with the legal issues presented by custody disputes, accusations of abuse and neglect, special education, civil liability suits, juvenile delinquency, and the voluntary and involuntary treatment of minors. Also included are sections on malpractice and the rights of institutionalized children. An appendix contains sample forensic reports and a compilation of landmark cases. The authors, one a psychiatrist and developmental researcher, one a legal scholar, pay special attention to the role of the clinician as expert witness in court cases, and to the relationships (too often poor) between mental health professionals, attorneys, and judges. As the authors show, there has been little effective communication between those who study child development and those who make laws to regulate children's welfare. A thicket of technical and ethical problems confronts those child psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers who, as experts, attempt to make their knowledge available to lawyers and judges. The legal profession, for its part, is too often frustrated in its attempt to interpret research findings and make use of expert testimony. For these professionals, the book provides a clear, jargon-free description of the scientific status of psychology and psychiatry in order to help them in their interpretation of the research findings and expert testimony. The authors conclude by drawing out the implications of current research for legal change and recommending some new directions the law might take. Whether studying child psychiatry, clinical psych