

## Books

### ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN CRISIS

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Millions of adolescent girls today are in a crisis of rage and despair. They disappear through starvation, get pregnant, run away from home, self-mutilate, attempt suicide, and abuse drugs and alcohol. Less severe but equally troubling, many hide weeping in their rooms, bully and endure bullying, feel afraid, lonely, and unloved. Perhaps the most troubling aspect of this crisis is that adults—parents, researchers, teachers, therapists, the very people who care about adolescent girls—have remarkably little insight into just how they feel, how they spend their days, how they are facing this crisis of rage and despair, and what they are doing to cope.

Programs, experts, and interventions abound, with seemingly little impact on the collective distress of adolescent girls. For every success in turning a troubled girl around, there seem to be new, even sadder cases to take its place. As veteran clinician Martha Straus explains, the list of reasons for our failure are complicated and varied, much like the girls themselves: weak, fragmented interventions; overwhelmed institutions with inadequate resources; unaware, busy parents; overcrowded schools; riskier-than-ever experimentation; an increasingly violence-saturated society; marginalization of girls in the press and on the Internet; a backlash against feminism—the list could go on.

With 25 years of clinical experience treating this challenging population—and several more years of personal experience raising her own two teenage daughters—Straus writes from the trenches, delving into the world of adolescent girls, setting the record straight on what’s going on, and providing clinicians and caregivers with better information and real, effective strategies to help.

Adolescent Girls in Crisis begins by exploring what Straus terms “the culture of rage and despair”—the insidious ingredients that can lead to disturbed behavior and feelings, including stress, sadness, anger, aggression, self-doubt, defiance, and anxiety. By examining the adolescent passage, the role of consumerism and the media, developmental stages, and aspects of school and home life, Straus lays the groundwork for the practical interventions presented in the second half of the book. Targeting specific problematic behaviors— affective and anxiety disorders; eating disorders and self-mutilation; attachment and trauma problems; ADHD and oppositional-defiant disorder; sex and conduct disorders, and substance abuse—Straus goes on to provide concrete strategies and treatment methods for helping girls overcome their distress and climb out of crisis. Additional chapters on drug treatment, hospitalizations, and other out-of-home interventions are also covered.

Adolescent girls face more hurdles to healthy, safe development than ever before, with greater-than-ever risks. Though they need us more than ever, taking on the responsibility of helping them is unarguably challenging and frightening. However, as reflected in Straus’s final chapter, “Ten Reasons for Hope,” we are in the midst of important changes in how we understand girls, adolescence, the life course, and the impact of culture. Highly practical and compassionate, *Adolescent Girls in Crisis* guides us in this understanding, showing us how to make effective, lasting changes in lives of our teenage girls.

#### Advance Acclaim

"Martha Straus has done an incomparable service with this seminal work. From describing the social, everyday aspects of contemporary girl life, to exploring the specifics of what actually matters when treating teen girls, to untangling the confusions of modern diagnosis—Straus goes for it all. With clarity and compassion, she writes to clinicians at all levels of sophistication. If you want to know how to understand and handle adolescent girls today, this is the one book you should read."—Ron Taffel, Ph.D., author of *Breaking Through to Teens: Psychotherapy for the New Adolescence*

"*Adolescent Girls in Crisis* is a rare and exemplary text, exploring with compassion and care the complicated choreography and intimate grammar of the clinical relationship during this most delicate and vulnerable of developmental stages. Always respectful of the complexity of the adolescent passage, and without ever losing her humility, humor, and humanity, Straus generously offers a wealth of trenchant insights and practical strategies that enable the reader to clinically intervene with wisdom, sensitivity, and effectiveness."—Brad Sachs, Ph.D., psychologist and author of *When No One Understands: Letters to a Teenager on Life, Loss, and the Hard Road to Adulthood*, and *The Good Enough Teen: Raising Adolescents with Love and Acceptance (Despite How Impossible They Can Be)*

"Whether you are just starting out or are a seasoned clinician, this is a book you won't want out of your sight. Every page sparkles with insights about adolescent girls. Filled with fascinating case material, Straus writes elegantly and vividly about the interior lives of girls and the larger systemic issues that impact them. Like the most gifted teacher, Straus gives us language for asking questions of our most difficult adolescent patients and provides interventions for a broad range of the most vexing clinical problems. If you want to become a wiser, more compassionate therapist for adolescent girls, you will want to read this book, and then refer to it over and over again."—Anne K. Fishel, Ph.D., Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychology, Harvard Medical School, and author, *Treating the Adolescent in Family Therapy*

"This is one of the most informative and well-written books on therapy that I have ever read. Martha Straus knows adolescent girls well, and she comes across as a wise, compassionate therapist and teacher of therapists. Her scope of knowledge and technique is impressive. Would I send my daughter to Martha Straus? In a minute! Would I want to be supervised by her? You bet. The next best thing is to read this terrific book." —William J. Doherty, Ph.D., Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program, University of Minnesota, and author of *Take Back Your Kids*

## NO-TALK THERAPY FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Buy Now

Demonstrating an innovative approach to the treatment of young clients who won't or can't respond to conversation-based therapy, this book explores a special collaboration between no-talk kids and their therapists. Through empathy and respect, games, activities, and an emphasis on individual connection, competence, and creativity, no-talk therapy begins to provide these sullen, enraged and confused kids with the self-esteem, self confidence, and self-awareness to develop a voice of their own.

"This book is a treasure for clinicians working with children and adolescents." —Beverly James, author of Handbook of Attachment-Trauma Problems in Children

## VIOLENCE IN THE LIVES OF ADOLESCENTS

[Buy Now](#)

Why is there so much violence in the lives of adolescents? Why is so little being done about it? What can be done to shape safer lives for them? How can therapists evaluate and treat an adolescent who has been touched by violence? Straus answers these questions and more by establishing the book's theoretical framework as the ecology of violence; therapists can intervene to stop violence on any of four ecological levels—individual, family, community and social policy. Through careful elucidation of adolescent theory and research, enlightening case studies, and treatment process, Straus uses each level to demonstrate how to put what we know, and what works, into action.

"This is one of those rare masterpieces which integrates serious scholarship and scientific theorizing with the best clinical wisdom." —Eli H. Newberger, MD, author of The Men They Will Become.

## ABUSE AND VICTIMIZATION ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN

[Buy Now](#)

This seminal text addresses the problem of family violence from a developmental perspective. Rather than limiting its focus to a specific stage of development, this book encourages professionals and students to consider the effects of violence on victims at all points in the life span from infancy to late adulthood. Within each period, chapters treat normal development, the effects of abuse on development and strategies for change.

"A conspicuously readable, interesting, and well-written account of the field of abuse and victimization with emphasis on specific problems as they develop. This book would be of assistance..to anyone dealing with abuse and victimization in a society where such behaviors are no longer unusual."—American Journal of Psychiatry

