



## The Centre For Child Mental Health

Saturday 22 Sep 2012 - London

### Description

### **HOW DIAGNOSIS HELPS AND HINDERS CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS (Autism, Asperger's, ADHD, Conduct Disorder, Oppositional Defiance, Selective Mutism)**

Parents and teachers can find themselves bewildered as to why a child is behaving in a way that seems so different to that of other children. Some are relieved when they are given a diagnosis. For others it's a bombshell. Whatever the reaction, the worry is that when children are given a diagnosis people stop thinking. With the focus on presenting behaviour, often hidden contributors such as unprocessed trauma or loss, relational stress or relational poverty and their effects on mind and brain are not considered. For example, many children diagnosed with ADHD are actually suffering from PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder), as symptomatology is very similar.

Moreover, research shows that the field is rife with misdiagnosis. Seventy-five percent of children evaluated for conditions such as ADHD and oppositional defiance disorder receive medication on the very first visit to the doctor or appropriate professional. The unfortunate underlying message is: 'You need a pill to manage your feelings'. As a result many children end up on medication when sometimes underlying un mourned grief or relational stress is the main contributing factor. That said, at other times diagnosis is absolutely correct and serves the child very well.

Experts in the field will consider the diagnosis, misdiagnosis, over-diagnosis and under-diagnosis of ADHD, oppositional defiance disorder, selective mutism, developmental trauma, depressive disorders and other key psychiatric categories. **Dr Hanna A. Alonim, founder and director of The Mifne Center, will discuss how early diagnosis is critical in the treatment of autism. She will present diagnosis and screening tools for infants in their first year of life.** Delegates will also have the opportunity to choose from an exciting range of practical workshops where they will learn innovative ways of working with children and young people with specific diagnoses.

### **Benefits from attending this conference**

- Understand the debate around the help and hindrance of child and adolescent diagnoses
- Understand the role of brain as well as mind in common childhood diagnoses
- Learn the most up-to-date research (both brain science and psychology) on the causes of ADHD, autistic spectrum, anxiety and depressive disorders, conduct and oppositional defiance disorders
- In making or questioning a diagnosis, learn how to consider underlying causes as well as presenting behaviours
- Understand the role of relational stress and relational poverty in children/teenagers who present as mentally unwell
- Learn how to raise the awareness of professionals and parents to early signs of alarm and developmental delays

## Speakers

### **Dr Hanna A. Alonim**

Expert in Developmental Disorders of the Autistic Spectrum. Founder and Director of the Mifne Center in Israel since 1987. Head of the Mifne School for Therapists, Bar-Ilan University. Founder of the 'Diagnosis of Infants at Risk' unit, at the Sourasky Medical Center, Tel Aviv. Co-author: *Early Signs of Autism*. Presented papers in Europe, US, Australia, and Africa.

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### **Maggie Johnson**

Consultant Speech and Language Therapist specialising in childhood communication disorders and selective mutism. Co-author: *The Selective Mutism Resource Manual*. Maggie is a key contributor to the primary national strategy for children with special educational needs.

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### **Graham Music**

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist at the Tavistock Clinic and an adult psychotherapist in private practice. Worked in the Tavistock Fostering, Adoption and Kinship Care Team for over ten years. Has managed a range of services concerned with the aftermath of child maltreatment and neglect and has for many years organised community based therapy services, particularly in schools. Organises trainings for therapists in CAMHS, leads on child development in teaching. Teaches and supervises on the Tavistock Child Psychotherapy Training. Publications include *Nurturing Natures*, *Attachment and Children's Emotional, Sociocultural and Brain Development* and *Affect and Emotion*.

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### **Dr Margot Sunderland**

Director of Education and Training at The Centre for Child Mental Health, London. Associate member of The Royal College of Medicine and Child Psychotherapist with over thirty years' experience of working with children and teenagers. Author of over 20 books in the field of child mental health including newly published book *Helping Teenagers with Anger, Alienation & Low Self-Esteem* (editor/contributor) and *What Every Parent Needs to Know: The Incredible Effects of Love, Nurture and Play on your Child's Development* (won First Prize in the British Medical Association Medical Book awards 2007 - Popular Medicine section).