

TREATING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE in FAMILY, GROUP and CLINICAL SETTINGS

CULTURALLY INTELLIGENT PRACTICE FOR
CARIBBEAN AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXTS

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Treating Child Sexual Abuse in Family, Group and Clinical Settings



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Acknowledgements

This is the third and final book in a series of three on child sexual abuse in the Caribbean: the first focused on research, theory and issues; the second described an integrated systems approach to prevention, and this book is all about practice in family, group and clinical settings. The four of us (Jones, Trotman Jemmott, Da Breo and Maharaj) have been working in this field for decades but came together 8 years ago when we had the opportunity to conduct the first comprehensive research into child sexual abuse within the Caribbean. Since then, our working partnership has grown from strength to strength, generating a body of work of which we are very proud. Alongside these three books, we have produced journal articles, developed and piloted interventions, spawned PhD studies, written numerous grant proposals, presented papers at regional and international conferences, contributed to public education campaigns and conducted training sessions across the region, all with the aim of advancing knowledge and skills in preventing gender-based violence and child sexual abuse in particular. Our work has been referenced by researchers and policy makers throughout the Caribbean and internationally too. To our certain knowledge, it has influenced research in Tanzania, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Mali, Barbados, Jamaica, the Maldives, Antigua, Kenya and Colombia.

This all started in 2008 when, together with Sheron Burns, Ijahnya Christian, Jacqueline Sealy Burke, Cisne Pascal and Denise Tannis and led by Adele D. Jones, we conducted the study, 'Perceptions, Attitudes

and Opinions on Child Sexual Abuse in the Eastern Caribbean' (Jones and Trotman Jemmott 2009). Since the publication of our research findings, we have been relentless in making sure that the knowledge produced has been disseminated as widely as possible. In the process, we have met some remarkable women, men and children who have been willing to share their experiences with us. We have also come across many human rights activists in the region and have been humbled by their efforts. One such person is Trinidad-based artist Jaime Lee Loy, whose work has graced the covers of all three books and appears throughout this one and who joins us as a guest author for its final chapter.

We have many people to thank for supporting our work but without the strategic vision of UNICEF (Caribbean Area Office), which commissioned the original research, none of this would have happened. We therefore dedicate this book to UNICEF (Caribbean Area Office) and we thank them for their unending commitment to promoting the rights of children in the region.

Writing this series of books has not been without its emotional costs to us all, and we thank our friends and families for their dedicated support and encouragement. We also thank Dr. Debra Joseph for preparing the diagrams in the book.

Treating Child Sexual Abuse in Family, Group and Clinical Settings: Culturally Intelligent Practice for Caribbean and International Contexts is a book of six parts, each of which addresses specific aspects of the topic. We begin by focusing on the practitioner, although in truth the whole book is for the practitioner. This is the first book of its kind. It was written with Caribbean case studies and based on Caribbean realities, and we have assessed interventions and models of practice from a wide range of local and international sources for their relevance. Thus, while the book faces inwards in that it directly targets the everyday problems of the practitioner in his or her local context, it faces outwards at the same time, connecting the practitioner to an external world of potential solutions. As with books one and two, the theoretical threads that hold the whole together are the theories of intersectionality and ecological systems theory. Sexual abuse is never just a problem of the individual: structures of inequality and the intersection of the factors they give rise to help to explain why some children are more at risk of abuse than others and the

sub-systems in which lives are lived can compound risk and vulnerability or alternatively can be sources of support and change. This ethos permeates the approaches and interventions we describe in the book.

The book is unique in that we use the term ‘practitioner’ in a deliberately inclusive way. We hope the book will appeal as much to those who share our commitment to tackling child sexual abuse but may have had little training as it does to the highly trained professional. We are reminded here of a strategy used by the government of Grenada following Hurricane Ivan in 2004, in which training in counselling was made available to professionals and interested lay persons alike (albeit at different levels). The extent of trauma arising from the devastation of this natural disaster was so great that it would have been impossible to provide professional support to everyone, but by increasing the number of people with counselling skills, a greater percentage of the population could be helped. Child sexual abuse in the region is a disaster too, though this is man-made. By increasing knowledge and skills in tackling child sexual abuse wherever the problem emerges and whoever the practitioner is who confronts it, we will extend help to a larger percentage of victims, to their families and to the perpetrators of their abuse.

The three books in this series on child sexual abuse in the Caribbean, of which this is the final volume, have all featured on their front covers the work of Jaime Lee Loy, an artist from Trinidad who uses her work to challenge violence against women and children.

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