

Equivocal Child Abuse

Sandra B. McPherson, Farshid Afsarifard



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Child abuse cases with hard-to-prove allegations pose challenges for all those who seek to protect the welfare of children. Helping courts, evaluators, guardians, and lawyers understand and work with difficult cases, **Equivocal Child Abuse** brings together insights, experience, and guidance from multiple sources to minimize unnecessary harm done to children and families. Exploring all facets of case management, the book discusses:

- Legal concepts and theory, the history of guardians *ad litem*, and the complexity of the processes involved in legal decision making
- How different court systems operate, the path of a case, and the roles of participants in custody cases
- The investigative process, the evaluation of report credibility, the use of videotape, perspectives of child custody evaluators, and sample investigations
- The testimony of expert witnesses, evaluators, guardians *ad litem*, and treating professionals; and the rules of evidence
- Hazards practitioners face in domestic relations and custody cases, including licensing issues, civil suit actions, and personal safety concerns
- Intervention options, such as supervised visitation, therapy for children, and mediation
- Mental health issues in case participants, including borderline personality disorder, narcissistic and related personality patterns, affective disorders, and substance abuse
- A working model for the forensic evaluator, with instructions on conducting the evaluation and reportage

Filled with case studies to elucidate concepts, the book also contains appendices with recommended guidelines for interviewing children in cases of alleged sexual abuse, a line-by-line expert critique of a child interview, and other tools, making this volume a critical resource for all those who contend with these complex cases.

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