# Child Psychology and Counselling

## Prof. Chiara Ionio

COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course aims to address the topic of childhood psychology and psychological and educational counselling interventions.

Knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- know the most recent theories published by the scientific literature on typical and atypical development in childhood;

- know the basic techniques of a counselling intervention aimed at children and their parents;

- know the different contexts in which to activate a counselling intervention.

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- refer to the reference text in understanding a clinical picture connected to the onset of any disorder in childhood;

- find their way around the basic techniques of a counselling intervention;

- orient themselves between the different contexts for activating a counselling intervention.

COURSE CONTENT

The course aims, first of all, to highlight the individual, family and contextual factors which, by determining different developmental trajectories, can either promote adequate development in the child or facilitate difficulties and disorders.

In particular, the risk and protection factors in exercising the parental role and the educational roles exercised by other reference adults will be considered, together with some specific forms of discomfort that can characterise the preschool- and school-going age. Requests for help that can become an opportunity for psychological/educational counselling in childhood will then be discussed.

The following will be presented: the theoretical models; the strategies characterising counselling interventions specifically aimed at dealing with forms of childhood distress; the most commonly used techniques and the different contexts in which psychological and educational counselling can be exercised (school, counselling, childcare services, hospital…). The lecturers will alternate throughout the course, which will be divided into the following units and subunits:

Unit 1: Definition of counselling and fields of intervention

 Deontological aspects of counselling

 Reference legislation

 Fields of intervention

Unit 2: Theoretical approaches to counselling

 Customer-centred

 Psychodynamic

 Cognitive-Behavioural

 Integrated approaches

Unit 3: Counselling in childhood

 General overview

 Objectives of the intervention

 The spiral of change

Unit 4: Counselling techniques in childhood

 Observation

Play

 Drawing

 Tales

 Interview and questions

Unit 5: Parent counselling

 Co-parenting

 Parenting nowadays.

 Work models with parents

Unit 6: Areas of counselling intervention

Pregnancy, postpartum and the first mom-dad-baby relationships

Siblings

Immigrant minors

Social relationships in childhood

Relationships between sibling

Friendship

Loneliness

The use of technologies in childhood

READING LIST

Lecturer’s lecture notes

Basic texts

Mazzoncini & Musatti (2012). I disturbi dello sviluppo. Cortina.

Tambelli (2017). Manuale di Psicopatologia dell’Infanzia. Il Mulino. Chaps. 1, 2, 4, 8.

One book chosen from the following list:

- Longobardi, Pasta, Quaglia (2012). Manuale del disegno infantile. Vecchie e nuove prospettive in ambito educativo e psicologico. UTET.

- Spitzer (2013). Demenza digitale. Corbaccio.

- Kanisza (2013). La paura del lupo cattivo: quando un bambino è in ospedale. Cortina.

- Smorti (2022). Diventare genitori tra sfide e risorse. Ed. Junior.

- Vicari and Di Vara (2020). Bambini, adolescenti e Covid. Erickson.

TEACHING METHOD

Frontal lectures, classroom exercises, group discussions, and commentary on films and case studies.

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

An oral exam on the texts and topics indicated in the Faculty Guide published on the website www.unicatt.it in the appropriate section.

The questions will cover the entire exam programme and will be formulated with reference to specific topics.

1. With reference to knowledge and understanding, students will be asked to illustrate the theoretical reference framework of both the typical and atypical developmental trajectories in childhood and the different intervention techniques in counselling.

2. With reference to the ability to apply knowledge and understanding, students will be asked to offer, within their answers to the questions, examples pertinent to the reference theory.

Assessment criteria

In assessing students' knowledge, consideration will be given to completeness, relevance and correctness of their answers, as well as appropriateness of language used. The answers to the open-ended questions will be given a mark from 0-3, based on the following criteria:

0 = no answer or wrong answer

1 = answer with sporadic and unsystematically correct elements, overall, mostly incorrect, irrelevant and ineffectively presented content

2 = answer correctly contextualised with sufficient but incomplete content, some incorrect elements ineffectively or incompletely presented

3 = correct, well presented, relevant and consistent answer

To pass the exam, students will have to obtain a minimum sufficient rating on all questions.

NOTES AND PREREQUISITES

Students must possess a basic knowledge of developmental psychology.

Should the current Covid-19 health emergency not allow face-to-face teaching, remote teaching will be carried out following procedures that will be communicated in good time to students.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.