Understanding Williams Syndrome: Behavioral Patterns and Interventions

Eleanor Semel, Sue R. Rosner

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Comprehensive and readable, *Understanding Williams Syndrome: Behavioral Patterns and Interventions* is an essential guide for all those professionally, scientifically, or personally involved with this so frequently misunderstood and underserved population--psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and other mental health professionals; special educators and vocational counselors; speech-language, physical, and occupational therapists; audiologists; physicians; and parents.

In the last 20 years, Williams syndrome has captured the interest of large numbers of scientists and attracted considerable media attention in spite of its rarity (estimated at no more than one in 30,000 births). Those diagnosed display a unique pattern of behavioral, cognitive, and physical limitations and strengths with fascinating neurogenetic implications—a pattern that poses enormous challenges to their parents and caregivers.

The authors, a specialist in learning disabilities and a developmental psychologist, review basic information about Williams syndrome, its medical conditions, paradoxical profile, and neurobiological mechanisms; and discuss distinctive features of the language and perceptual and motor performance of children and adults with the syndrome.

Other features include:

- * Strategies for working with patients.
- * An examination of the difference between Williams syndrome and other developmental disorders.
- * Problem-specific alternatives for treatment.
- * Analysis of new directions in research, clinical intervention, education, and systems for care delivery.

Throughout, they stress variations among individuals and subgroups in ability level, skills, talents, and problem severity; and emphasize the necessity of recognizing these components in planning treatment on an individual basis.



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