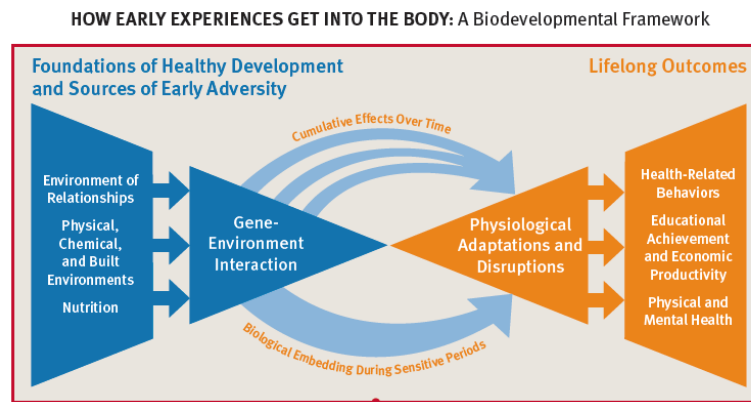


1. Fundamentals of assessment/course of action

- 1.1 Assessment/course of action as practised in community social pediatrics (CSP) is similar to the approaches taken in both holistic and social medicine. The American Holistic Medical Association describes holistic medicine as “the art and science of healing that addresses care of the whole person – body, mind, and spirit. The practice of holistic medicine integrates conventional and complementary therapies to promote optimal health, and prevent and treat disease by addressing contributing factors. In practice, this means that each person is seen as a unique individual, rather than an example of a particular disease. Disease is understood to be the result of physical, emotional, spiritual, social and environmental imbalance. Healing, therefore, takes place naturally when these aspects of life are brought into proper balance” (American Holistic Medical Association 2013).
- 1.2 Social medicine is defined as “the *study* of the relationships between society, health, disease, and medicine; the *practice* of community-oriented medicine based on understanding of these relationships; the *training* of health workers for community-oriented and culturally-relevant medical practice; and *advocacy* for systems and structures to promote socially-responsible medical practice and the conditions needed for good health”(Social Medicine 2007).
- 1.3 In keeping with these two schools of thought, assessment/course of action in CSP is designed to meet all the child’s needs (physical, social, intellectual, emotional, cultural and spiritual) and to come up with an integrated action plan that is adapted to each child’s reality in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics 2011 and Zuckerman 2012).

1.4 “The root cause of [children’s] problems is the nonrespect of the rights of the child” (Steinmetz 2010, p. 12). Assessment/course of action isn’t limited to looking at symptoms, the cause of a disease or the child’s problems; it goes beyond this to really understanding the child’s situation in its entirety. In other words, taking into account the genetic predisposition (biology) and the child’s milieu (environment) helps to grasp the child’s and the family’s lifecourse trajectories in all their complexity. For this reason, assessment/course of action is in line with the biodevelopmental framework developed by Harvard University’s *Center on the Developing Child* (see Diagram 1).

Biodevelopmental Framework



Source: Center on the Developing Child (2013)

1.5 This framework provides a holistic picture of the child in his or her context and helps practitioners put services in place that will meet children’s needs more effectively (Center on the Developing Child 2013). Community social pediatrics has adopted this biodevelopmental approach and has put it into practice through: a clinical process that is continually evolving depending on each child’s lifecourse trajectory and resilience; a collective intervention approach for the clinical team; and (3) a well-defined method called EEDA (Establishing, Exchanging, Decoding and Action).

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