

# Understanding the impact of difficult living conditions on children in situation of vulnerability

Course in Community Social Pediatrics

Developed by the Fondation Dr Julien in partnership with the Nicolas Steinmetz and Gilles Julien Chair in Community Social Pediatrics and the Department of Family Medicine, McGill University

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# Living conditions, toxic stress, and child development

Professor: **Delphine Collin-Vézina**, Director of the Nicolas Steinmetz and Gilles Julien Chair in Community Social Pediatrics, professor at the School of Social Work, McGill University.

## Course content

This course focuses on the diverse considerations concerning the difficult living conditions to which children and families in vulnerable situations are exposed. In line with cumulative risk models, research now suggests that the additive effect of several risk factors increases a child's vulnerability. There is a significant correlation between the number of risk factors to which a child is exposed and the severity of impact on the child's development. Furthermore, such impacts can endure well into adulthood.

After an introduction to social pediatrics in the community, this course will first deal with the different dimensions of child development. We will then present the notion of toxic stress to explain its influence on the development and life trajectory of children in vulnerable situations. Indeed, toxic stress, which is almost omnipresent in families living in difficult living conditions, causes prolonged and excessive activation of the physiological stress response system. We will see how toxic stress can derail a child's physical and psychological development whether it occurs in the prenatal or postnatal period. We will then look at the various disorders that can occur when the child's development is compromised by difficult living conditions. In this regard, we will discuss the elements that affect the child's psychological development and mental health, behavioural disorders as well as anxiety disorders. We will see the extent of the phenomenon of different forms of child abuse that expose children to toxic stress. We will then explain how complex trauma, a consequence of toxic stress, has a significant impact on the problems that children can develop. Finally, we will see how the characteristics of various environments, urban, rural, and indigenous, affect child development.

## Course Outline

The course consists of seven mainly asynchronous modules that include various activities among the following:

- ✓ Viewing presentations
- ✓ Reading
- ✓ Formative learning activities
- ✓ Discussion Forum
- ✓ Evaluation activities
- ✓ Synchronous presentations

## Module 1 - Introduction to Community Social Pediatrics

**Dr. Gilles Julien**, Pediatrician and Founder of the Community Social Pediatrics Model

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Identify key concepts in Community Social Pediatrics.
- ✓ Become familiar with the different stages of the service continuum.
- ✓ Identify the values specific to Community Social Pediatrics.

### Learning activities

- ✓ Watch the presentation "Introduction by Dr. Julien"
- ✓ Watch the presentation "Introduction to Community Social Pediatrics"
- ✓ Consult companion documents
- ✓ Listen to the podcast "Trajectories – Episode 1 – Miguel"
- ✓ Readings
- ✓ Forum 1
- ✓ Evaluation quiz
- ✓ Written assignment evaluation

**Approximate total duration: 15 hours**

**Written assignment and quiz due date: October 17th, 2021, 11h59**

### Mandatory readings

Fondation Dr Julien (2016). Excerpts from *Codification Document*. Transfert des connaissances.

High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights). (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. United Nations. Available online at <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

Julien, Gilles. (2004). *A Different Kind of Care - The Social Pediatric Approach*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 208 pages.

## Module 2 - Child Development

**Marie-France Marin**, Professor, Département de psychologie à l'UQAM, researcher at the Centre de recherche de l'Institut universitaire en santé mentale de Montréal, associate professor, Département de psychiatrie et d'addictologie de l'Université de Montréal.

### Learning Objectives

- ✓ Describe the basics of child development in different aspects: cerebral, physical, cognitive, emotional.
- ✓ Establish links between the development of certain functions and their influence on the subsequent development of other functions.
- ✓ Describe sensitive period.

### Learning activities

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Forum 2

**Total duration: 1,5 hours**

## Module 3 – Stress

**Marie-France Marin**, Professor, Département de psychologie à l'UQAM, researcher at the Centre de recherche de l'Institut universitaire en santé mentale de Montréal, associate professor, Département de psychiatrie et d'addictologie de l'Université de Montréal.

### Learning Objectives

- ✓ Explain the basics of stress
  - Identify the types of stressors
  - Identify biological reactions to stress
  - Specify the impacts on the body and brain
- ✓ Describe the impacts of stress during pre- and post-natal development
- ✓ Identify the impacts of chronic stress on cognitive and emotional functioning

### Learning activities

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Readings
- ✓ Forum 3
- ✓ Evaluation

**Approximate total duration: 12 hours**

**Written assignment due date: October 31st, 2021, 11h59**

### Mandatory readings

Ellis, B. J., Bianchi, J., Griskevicius, V., & Frankenhuis, W. E. (2017). *Beyond Risk and Protective Factors: An Adaptation-Based Approach to Resilience*. *Perspectives on Psychological Science: A Journal of the Association for Psychological Science*, 12(4), 561–587.

Lupien, S. J., McEwen, B. S., Gunnar, M. R., & Heim, C. (2009). *Effects of stress throughout the lifespan on the brain, behaviour, and cognition*. *Nature Reviews. Neuroscience*, 10(6), 434–445.

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2005/2014). *Excessive Stress Disrupts the Architecture of the Developing Brain: Working Paper 3*. Updated Edition. Disponible au [https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/wp3/Lectures obligatoires](https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/wp3/Lectures%20obligatoires)

## Module 4 - Links between difficult living conditions and functional disorders in child development.

This module has 3 sections.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Identify and understand the potential impacts of difficult living conditions on child development (attachment, adaptation, development, and behavioural functional disorders).

- ✓ Identify the levers advocated by a proximity comprehensive health model for children in vulnerable situations to reduce or eliminate sources of stress.

### Learning activities

- ✓ Complete the activities in Section 1 – Behavioural Disorders and ADHD
- ✓ Complete the activities in Section 2 – Psychological Development and Mental Health
- ✓ Complete the activities in Section 3 – anxiety disorders
- ✓ Readings
- ✓ Forum 4
- ✓ Evaluation

**Approximate total duration: 18 hours**

**Written assignment due date: November 21st, 2021, 11h59**

### Mandatory readings

Boydell Brauner, C. & Bowers Stephens, C. (2006). *Estimating the Prevalence of Early Childhood Serious Emotional/Behavioral Disorders: Challenges and Recommendations*. Public Health Report. May–June, 121(3), pp. 303–310.

Stewart-Brown, S. (1998). *Emotional wellbeing and its relation to health*. BMJ. 317:1608

### Section 1 – ADHD and Behavioural Disorders

**Fondation Dr Julien** in partnership with **Dr. Leila Ben Amor**, child psychiatrist, Université de Montréal, **Dr. Anne-Marie Bureau**, family doctor, Director of the Community social pediatrics Center of Gatineau and Vieux-Hull and **Maude Julien**, nurse, Director of the Community social pediatrics Center of Lévis.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Recognize and distinguish the manifestations of attention and behavioural disorders.
- ✓ Describe the comorbidities that may accompany these disorders.
- ✓ Recognize the biological and environmental sources of these disorders in children in highly vulnerable situations.
- ✓ Describe the levers used in community-based social pediatrics to intervene on these issues.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Short quiz (does not count toward your final course grade)
- ✓ Readings
- ✓ Forum 4

### Mandatory readings

Østergaard SD, Larsen JT, Dalsgaard S, Wilens TE, Mortensen PB, Agerbo E, et al. (2016) *Predicting ADHD by Assessment of Rutter's Indicators of Adversity in Infancy*. PLoS ONE 11(6): e0157352. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0157352>

Wolraich ML, Wibbelsman CJ, Brown TE, Evans SW, Gotlieb EM, Knight JR, Ross EC, Shubiner HH, Wender EH, Wilens T. (2005). *Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder among adolescents: a review of the diagnosis, treatment, and clinical implications*. *Pediatrics*. 2005 Jun;115 (6) :1734–46. doi: 10.1542/peds.2004-1959. PMID: 15930238.

## Section 2 – Psychological Development and Mental Health

**Dr. Clothilde Hamion**, child and adolescent psychiatrist and psychotherapist, Fondation Dr Julien.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Become familiar with the 5 factors influencing child development
- ✓ Become familiar with the concept of interdependence between the child and the primary caregiver.
- ✓ Identify the impact of the psychic pathology of the primary caregiver on the child's development
- ✓ Become aware of the intertwining of symptoms among the different disorders that can affect children.

### Learning activities

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Complete the required learning activities during the presentation
- ✓ Readings
- ✓ Forum 4

### Mandatory readings

Kieling C, Baker-Henningham H, Belfer M, Conti G, Ertem I, Omigbodun O, Rohde LA, Srinath S, Ulkuer N, Rahman A. (2011). *Child and adolescent mental health worldwide: evidence for action*. *Lancet*. Oct 22; Volume 378, Issue 9801, pp. 1515–25

Tremblay RE, Boivin M, Peters RDeV, eds. van IJzendoorn MH, topic ed. *Attachment*. Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development. Updated February 2021. [online] <http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/sites/default/files/dossiers-complets/en/attachment.pdf>

## Section 3 – anxiety disorders

**Dr. Clothilde Hamion**, child and adolescent psychiatrist and psychotherapist, Fondation Dr Julien.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Explain the continuum between physiological fear and anxiety disorders.
- ✓ Discuss how the five factors influencing child development affect the development of anxiety symptoms.
- ✓ Explore prevention and intervention measures used in Community Social Pediatrics to address anxiety symptoms.

### Learning activities

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Complete the required learning activities during the presentation

- ✓ Readings
- ✓ Forum 4

### **Mandatory readings**

Warren, S.L., Huston, L., Egeland, B. & Sroufe, L.A. (1997). *Child and adolescent anxiety disorders and early attachment*. Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. 1997 May; 36(5):637-44. doi: 10.1097/00004583-199705000-00014. PMID: 9136498.

Young, Elizabeth A., Abelson, James L.; Curtis, George C.; Nesse, Randolph M. (1997). "Childhood adversity and vulnerability to mood and anxiety disorders." *Depression and Anxiety* 5(2): 66-72.

## **Module 5 – Child Abuse and Neglect**

**Delphine Collin-Vézina**, Director of Nicolas Steinmetz and Gilles Julien Chair in Community Social Pediatrics.  
**Nico Trocmé**, Director of the School of Social Work and the Philip Fisher Chair in Social Work at McGill University.

**Sarah Dufour**, Professor, École de psychoéducation, Université de Montréal.

**Chantal Lavergne**, Researcher, School of Social Work, Université de Montréal.

### **Learning objectives**

- ✓ Understand the ecology of child abuse and neglect
- ✓ Become familiar with legal aspects and different approaches in situations of abuse

### **Learning activities**

- ✓ Watch the presentation "Ecology of Child Abuse"
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Complete modules 1 and 3 of the VEGA project
- ✓ Watch the presentation "Care for Children who are Victims of Abuse"
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Prepare for the synchronous meeting
- ✓ Participate in the synchronous meeting
- ✓ Readings
- ✓ Forum 5
- ✓ Evaluation

**Approximate total duration: 12 hours**

**Synchronous session during the week of November 22**

**Written assignment due date: December 12th, 2021, 11h59**

### **Mandatory readings**

*Violence and maltreatment: Are Quebec's youngest children safe from harm?* (Observatoire des tout-petits): [https://tout-petits.org/img/dossiers/Maltraitance/outils/Maltraitance-Brochure-Resume\\_8demix8demi\\_ANG.pdf](https://tout-petits.org/img/dossiers/Maltraitance/outils/Maltraitance-Brochure-Resume_8demix8demi_ANG.pdf)



*Maltreatment (child)*: Encyclopedia of Child Development: <http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/maltreatment-child/according-experts>

*Disclosure of child maltreatment: Guidelines*: [https://ciusss-centresudmtl.gouv.qc.ca/sites/ciusscsmtl/files/media/document/disclosure-malt\\_47242073.pdf](https://ciusss-centresudmtl.gouv.qc.ca/sites/ciusscsmtl/files/media/document/disclosure-malt_47242073.pdf)

## Module 6 - Complex Trauma

**Delphine Collin-Vézina**, Director of Nicolas Steinmetz and Gilles Julien Chair in Community Social Pediatrics.

This module has 4 sections.

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Define complex trauma and expose its prevalence in our societies
- ✓ Identify the after-effects of complex trauma and their impact on the development of children and adolescents.
- ✓ Distinguish how the trauma-based approach calls for a cultural shift in child intervention.
- ✓ Describe the ARC method, which structures a global approach to intervene with the adults surrounding the child and with the child himself or herself, which ultimately aims to integrate traumas.

### Learning activities

- ✓ Complete the required learning activities for each section
- ✓ Readings
- ✓ Evaluation
- ✓ Forum 6

**Approximate total duration: 14 hours**

**Written assignment due date: January 9th, 2022, 11h59**

### Mandatory readings

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014). *Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services. Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series 57*. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 13-4801. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services. <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/TIP-57-Trauma-Informed-Care-in-Behavioral-Health-Services/SMA14-4816> pp 33-89

*Complex Trauma in Children and Adolescents* (National Child Traumatic Stress Network): [https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/complex\\_trauma\\_in\\_children\\_and\\_adolescents.pdf](https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/complex_trauma_in_children_and_adolescents.pdf)

*Impact of Complex Trauma*: [https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//impact\\_of\\_complex\\_trauma.pdf](https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//impact_of_complex_trauma.pdf)

## **Section 1 – What is Complex Trauma**

### **Learning objectives**

- ✓ Define trauma
- ✓ Understand the prevalence of trauma in society as shown by the ACE Study
- ✓ Define complex trauma

### **Learning activities**

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Complete the required learning activities during the presentation
- ✓ Forum 6

## **Section 2 – The Aftermath of Complex Trauma**

### **Learning objectives**

- ✓ Describe the dual reality of complex trauma
- ✓ Describe the nine basic types of impairments caused by complex trauma
- ✓ Explore these nine impairments using a case study

### **Learning activities**

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Complete the required learning activities during the presentation
- ✓ Forum 6

## **Section 3 – Complex Trauma – a Cultural Change**

### **Learning objectives**

- ✓ Identify the change in culture that happens when a trauma-informed approach is used
- ✓ Describe the conditions needed to implement a trauma-informed approach

### **Learning activities**

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Forum 6

## **Section 4 – ARC: A Systemic Approach**

### **Learning objectives**

- ✓ Describe the ARC framework
- ✓ Apply the ARC framework in a case study

### Learning activities

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Complete the required learning activities during the presentation
- ✓ Forum 6
- ✓ Compare your answers to the document "Complex Trauma - Learning Activities - Possible Answers"

## Module 7 - Urban, Rural and Indigenous Environments

This module has 3 sections.

### Learning objective

- ✓ Draw links between social geographies and the development and overall health of children (urban, rural, indigenous)

### Learning activities

- ✓ Complete the activities for section "Urban Environments and Child Health"
- ✓ Complete the activities for section "Rural Environment and Child Health"
- ✓ Complete the activities for section "Indigenous Child and Youth Health"
- ✓ Forum 7
- ✓ Evaluation

**Approximate total duration: 15 hours**

**Written assignment due date: January 15th, 2022, 11h59**

### Section 1 - Urban Environments and Child Health

**Dr. Alena Valderrama**, Professor adjointe de clinique, École de santé publique - Département de médecine sociale et préventive, Université de Montréal

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Become familiar with how social geography shapes the health and development of children
- ✓ Recognize the role of social inequalities as major determinants of child development
- ✓ Describe the public health strategies used to reduce social inequalities
- ✓ Recognize the importance of intervening at the earliest possible stage

### Learning activities

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Use the companion document
- ✓ Reading
- ✓ Forum 7

### Mandatory reading

Coming soon

## Section 2 – Rural Environments and Child Health

Dr. Michelle Houde, Resident-doctor, Département de santé publique et médecine préventive, Université de Montréal

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Define “rurality”
- ✓ Recognize the social, economic, and geographic determinants of health in rural areas
- ✓ Identify the impacts of these determinants on the health of children living in rural environments
- ✓ Identify interventions that can improve the health and well-being of children living in rural areas

### Learning activities

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Complete the required learning activities during the presentation
- ✓ Reading
- ✓ Forum 7

### Mandatory reading

Kulig, J. C., Williams, A.M. (2012) *Health in rural Canada*. UBCPress Vancouver Toronto. Chapitre 1, pp. 1-7

## Section 3 – Indigenous Child and Youth Health

Dr. Kent Saylor, Mohawk Pediatrician, Director of the Indigenous Health Curriculum at the McGill School of Medicine

### Learning objectives

- ✓ Identify the Indigenous peoples of Canada
- ✓ Describe the history of Indigenous peoples and the impact of this history on their health and well-being
- ✓ Recognize the social determinants of health in Indigenous children and adults
- ✓ Define the concept of being an ally to Indigenous children and adolescents

### Learning activities

- ✓ Watch the presentation
- ✓ Consult the companion document
- ✓ Readings
- ✓ Forum 7

### Mandatory reading

Postl, Brian; Cook, Catherine and Moffatt, Miachel. (2010). *Aboriginal Child Health and the Social Determinants: Why Are These Children So Disadvantaged?* Healthcare Quarterly 14(Sp) October 2010: 42-51.

<https://www.longwoods.com/content/21982/healthcare-quarterly/aboriginal-child-health-and-the-social-determinants-why-are-these-children-so-disadvantaged->