

The importance of the interprofessional approach in cases of Child Sexual Abuse in Colombia

María Silvana Ochoa Carrascal

Rodríguez-Cely, L., Arbeláez, C., & Ardila, M. (2019). *Criterios de intervención interprofesional en casos de Abuso Sexual Infantil*. [Criteria for interprofessional intervention in cases of Child Sexual Abuse] Bogotá, Colombia: Crear Pensamiento Forense.

Statistics in Colombia reflect an escalated growth of Child Sexual Abuse (ASI, for its Spanish acronym) in recent years, which turn it into an alarming public health problem that calls on all institutions responsible for the regulation, prosecution, health care (physical and psychological) and pedagogy, and even the improvement of the forms of prevention, promotion, evaluation and monitoring of the cases. This is due to the fact that the strategies used to deal with this type of crime have not shown any diligence and effectiveness in their processes.

Given the above, and facing the current national context, it is imperative to consider what is suggested by the authors of the book *Criterios de intervención interprofesional en casos de Abuso Sexual Infantil* [Interprofessional Intervention Criteria in cases of Child Sexual Abuse] with respect to inter-institutional and intersectoral work to manage programs or actions that, based on their effectiveness, cause an impact when it comes to preventing, addressing and evaluating this problem. According to them, the professionals and institutions specialized in the subject must work in a joint and articulated manner in order to resolve both the repression suffered by the judicial system and the scourge that this type of crime causes to Colombians, especially Boys, Girls and Adolescents (hereinafter referred to as NNA, for its Spanish acronym).

Specifically, this book is composed of four sections, each one with an empirical, theoretical and contextual content that allow the reader to distinguish the scope and limitations of the ASI in Colombia. In its first chapter, *Consideraciones generales* [General considerations], the phenomenon is exposed in casuistic terms that have been registered, from the different institutions involved in the

reception and attention throughout the territory, in order to know their frequency. Thus, the complexity of ASI is explained, starting from its etiology, typology, symptomatology and consequences, which highlights the importance of interprofessional work for the prevalence of quality care.

Subsequently, in the second chapter, entitled *Papel de los profesionales* [Role of professionals], the reader will find a detailed and conclusive description of the functions, duties and responsibilities that must be fulfilled within the framework of the legal competences of professionals in Psychology, Medicine, Social Work, Law and Education when dealing with cases related to sexual crimes in children and adolescents.

Then, in the third chapter, the reader will find an *Análisis de guías y protocolos* [Analysis of guides and protocols] in which the main findings about the validity of the tools at national and international level are taken up again, with special emphasis on those that meet the integral protection requirements, in accordance with Law 1098 of 2006 or the *Código de Infancia y la Adolescencia* [Code of Childhood and Adolescence] in its seventh article (Congress of the Republic, 2006). This chapter concludes with an observation that encourages reflection on the part of the experts responsible for addressing and caring for these cases about the proper use of protocols in order to obtain broad, deep and comprehensive results, and thus avoid adverse effects on the victims.

Finally, in the fourth and last section, entitled *Criterios de intervención interprofesional* [Criteria for Interprofessional Intervention], there is a convergence of all the exposed knowledge that contributed to the consolidation of certain key criteria to comprehensively address children and adolescents victims of sexual crimes within the legal, judicial and health scenarios, where the importance of the principle of the child's best interests and the guarantee of their rights stands out. In the end it concludes with the invitation to revolutionize the paradigm prevalent in the judicial system and transform it into one that supports professional cooperation

* Member of the Ibero-American Association of Legal Psychology (AIPJ, for its Spanish acronym), professional in charge of issues of the Criminal Responsibility System for Adolescents and the Penitentiary System, attached to the Government of the Department of La Guajira.

and interdisciplinarity to promote optimal and qualified results when intervening on this type of case in Colombia.

In summary, this is a pertinent and useful book that guides in a clear, comprehensible and didactic way the best forms of prevention, intervention and attention of cases of sexual crimes in children and adolescents. It is worth mentioning that this publication is suitable for all audiences, both for parents and professionals of different natures, and, in general, for those who are interested in this phenomenon and wish to contribute to a better approach in the care of children and adolescents. Finally, this book

demonstrates the little study and exploration that has been done of this phenomenon in the country, despite having a high incidence, which motivates to conduct more research on the subject and pay more attention to the effects of this problem in our society.

References

Congreso de la República. (8 de noviembre de 2006). *Código de la infancia y la adolescencia*. [Ley 1098 de 2006].