

## BEHAVIOUR IN ITS CONTEXTS

### INTRODUCTION

This subject studies the applications of analysis of behaviour and development in the different contexts in which social work is applied where a solid psychological grounding is required. Behaviour is understood as a process or series of processes including the preparation or interpretation of stimulus, associative processes that transform and incorporate information received into the experience and current situation of the subject, and selection and execution of specific actions. The individual acts on the basis of the world and construction and interpretation of reality, for which reason the isolated individual is necessarily incomplete, acting on context and modifying it. In this regard, all behaviour is conceived within a context, both natural and constructed, and as such, this subject will address the different states of human development, the main stages in human development, as well as different contexts for social work intervention (maltreatment, criminal behaviour, drug dependencies, alcoholism, old age, situations of homelessness, health and mental health), in addition to the psychological competencies required for social work intervention.

### COMPETENCIES

- Acquire a body of knowledge common to that of other social intervention professionals (such as psychologists or psychiatrists) and be able to establish relationships with those professionals in order to identify the most appropriate form of intervention.
- Know the bases for intervention with persons, families, groups, organizations and communities to assist them to take well-founded decisions on their needs, circumstances, risks, preferred options and resources on the basis of knowledge and understanding of the foundations of human behaviour with relation to the different contexts in which that behaviour occurs.
- Encourage personal growth, development and independence, identifying opportunities to create and build groups knowing and understanding the foundations of human development, using programmes and group dynamics for individual growth and strengthening of interpersonal relationship skills.
- Analyse and organize information provided in daily work as an aid for reviewing and improving the professional strategies that must respond to emerging social situations, developing critical ability and self-learning when understanding individual behaviour and intervention in different social work contexts.
- Acquire knowledge that permits an understanding of the behaviour of individuals in their contexts and, in turn, enables one to defend persons, families, groups, organizations and communities and act on their behalf if the situation so requires.
- Acquire knowledge that permits an understanding of the behaviour of individuals in their contexts and, in turn, enables one to prepare and take part in decision-making meetings for purposes of better defending the interests of persons, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- Learn accepted standards for the practice of social work and guarantee personal professional development, using professional assertiveness to justify decisions, reflecting critically on those decisions and using supervision as a means to address professional development needs.

### CONTENT

1. Behaviour as object of psychology: historical-scientific evolution. Epistemology, psychology and social work. The problem of dichotomies in psychology: nature and nurture; nature and culture; continuity and discontinuity. Context as a cognitive and social representation of oneself, others and reality. The ecological perspective.

2. Human development as a context of behaviour. Maturity and learning. The concept of need and social services. Stages of human development. Adolescence. Maturity: stability and crisis. Ageing: environment and cognitive performance. Contexts for human development: family, school and peer group, workplace.

Risk factors and protection during human development.

3. Behaviour and intervention in different social work contexts: infant, gender and elderly maltreatment. Psychological consequences and detection of maltreatment; criminal behaviour. Main theories explaining criminal behaviour. Psychopathy. Intervention models; drug addiction. Basic concepts of tolerance, abuse and dependency. Psychological consequences of use and abuse of the various drugs. Social, health and work implications; alcoholism. Basic concepts of tolerance, abuse and dependence. Psychological consequences of use and abuse of alcohol. Social, health and work implications: homeless persons. The context of homeless persons. Psychological aspects; old age as a context. Normal and pathological ageing. Types of dementia. Dependence and independence in old age; health and its contexts. Cancer, cardiovascular disorders and obesity. Factors of protection and vulnerability. The social worker and promotion of health; mental health. Prevalence of mental disorders in Spain and internationally. Main mental disorders and their implications for the individual, family and society. Gender differences in mental health. Quality of life with mental disorders. The social worker and promotion of mental health.

4. Competencies required for social work intervention. The concepts of competency, ability and attitude. Specific and general competencies for intervention.