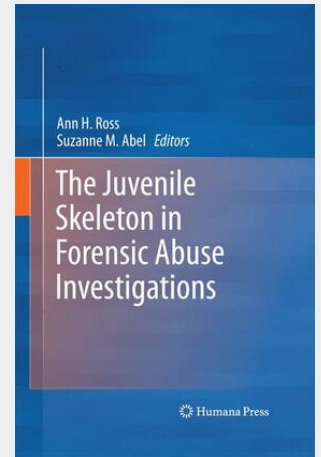


The Juvenile Skeleton in Forensic Abuse Investigations

Juvenile homicide and fatal maltreatment remain serious and pervasive problems in the developed world and especially in the United States, where in 2005 some 1,500 children died from neglect and physical abuse. Alarming statistics such as this, as well as an upsurge in the media attention paid to all things forensic, underscore the pressing need for the utmost rigor in the scientific investigation of child abuse cases. This well timed volume is a response to the climate of public and press interest in such inquiries, where the forensic aspects of the casework generate an enormous amount of attention. The contributions cover a wide range of topics and explore many of the finer details of investigations into juvenile fatalities suspected of being abuse-related. The chapters reflect both the multi-disciplinary nature of such investigations, and also the need for law enforcement professionals to take a rounded, holistic approach to the casework involved. The motivational factors that lead many professionals enter this arena of investigation are, of course, personal and individual. However, at the core of their commitment and their work is a shared need for justice, plain and simple. Victim advocacy and protecting the rights of children, both living and deceased, remains a key impetus for those professionals who specialize in child abuse research. At the heart of this book is the aim of providing both a vital resource for investigators, and a purposeful voice for the young victims of abuse, unable as they are to stand up and speak for themselves.

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