

17/1/2020

SUBMISSION RE SCREENING ALL 0-3 YEAR OLDS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Dear Commissioners,

It is greatly distressing to me that there is a proposal to screen children aged 0-3 years old as a means to predict future mental illness and so I hereby lodge my objection to this.

The means of screening is totally subjective. There is no valid, scientific medical testing in existence to determine such an outcome, yet we use subjectivity to prescribe harmful, mind altering drugs to children.

As a mother of 2 and aunt of 14 children I have had first hand observation and experience of the many behavioural facets of babies and children and I have to object to the idea that they are any sort of precursor to mental illness. They can be many things – underlying physical illness, emotional response to a situation that exists at that time, nourishment (or lack of), education, just to name a few.

By the Commission's own admission despite Australia's approach to this issue ".....improvements in the mental health of children and young people have been limited". Any approach to improve the mental health of children (or any person) has to be a holistic one. I strongly object to a solution reliant on the screening of children based on generalised behaviour in order to "predict" a future outcome, and that that can be used as the basis to prescribe them anti psychotic and anti depressant drugs to any child, let alone a child under 3 years of age. Please do not let this occur.

Yours sincerely,

Nina Fairlie