

Dear Productivity Commission,

7/1/2020

I am writing to you about the inquiry into Mental Health. As a mother I am extremely concerned about the potential for children aged 0-3 to be screened for Mental Illness. I have seen various media reports on this inquiry and I had to write to you to express how disturbed I am that our children could potentially be screened to see if there is a chance they could maybe develop an illness later in life. All children have times of growth, times they test the boundaries, act up, carry on, can't sit still, can't focus, yell, cry, be loud, be quiet, learn life and sometimes just have a moment. This is childhood. It's normal. Even if a child is screened, and I'm presuming you will do this by ticking boxes on a checklist similar to ADHD, and they tick a few of these boxes on the day, there is no way that it categorically means they will develop mental illness that requires treatment. But tagging these children will do damage to how

they grow, how they think, how they dream and how they live. I work in a school and have for many years. I see all kinds of children who are all unique and different. Some days they have bad behaviour. Some days they are angels. You cannot judge them on this. Maybe they are hungry or tired or nutritionally deficient. Just judging them through this screening will not take all of these considerations into account. Maybe their parents are just doing a bad job and the child is trying to be heard. There are so many possibilities as to causes and solutions. If you put in this screening you may harm more children than you help. Please do not approve this. Let our children be children. I have witnessed so many children who were hard to handle, restless, not interested in learning, when left alone they grow into beautiful productive adults. There is no medical evidence to support the Mental Illness diagnosis - but medical evidence of nutrition issues could be found. Please do not allow our children to lose their childhood. It's a basic human right. Sincerely  
Tara D...