

Marjolein Collins

13th January 2020

PROPOSAL TO SCREEN ZERO TO THREE YEAR OLDS FOR MENTAL ILLNESS

Dear Sir/Madam

As a concerned grand parent and teacher for over 40 years I am requesting that there is an investigation into the proposal to screen children zero to three year olds for "mental illness" and "future mental illness".

The screening questions are so subjective that any child could be at risk as being labelled mentally ill. Medical diseases can be screened for and verified by physical tests. There are no tests to confirm psychiatric diagnosis.

Symptoms for so called psychiatric disorders for 0 to 3 year olds include: **irregular feeding, difficulty sleeping, whining, crying, temper tantrums, shyness, sleeping with the light on and hyper activity** to mention a few.

The above mentioned symptoms can be applied to almost every child in this age category and are normal behaviours. Diagnosing by completing a few questions that usually apply to most children, then prescribing medication is not a solution to "mental illness" or for "future mental illness." Mental illnesses are categorised and labelled in DMS and every year more mental illnesses become apparent. Is this a market for the Pharmaceutical Companies? Where is this going?

I have seen school students become subdued, almost zombie-like under certain medications and sometimes using their condition as an excuse for poor behaviour. Self harm and suicides are on the rise as well as attacks on teachers and healthworkers. Is this evidence of the way diagnosis is done and solutions found in a pill?

Through displaying some of the symptoms of ADHD that a baby or toddler will get ADHD "in future" and to be treated as such is not based on sound research or evidence. Please consider an investigation into this before a blanket ruling occurs to screen 0 - 3 years children to be diagnosed with a future mental illness at this early age.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Marjolein Collins