

12.1.20⁰

Dear Commissioners,

I am gravely concerned about the plan to screen our children aged 0 - 3 years old - for mental health.

As a mother, grandmother and tutor of young children I care deeply for young children. I want them to be loved and secure and to grow up to be healthy in mind and body.

I believe children need love and acceptance from the adults around them. Criticism and being made to feel bad is the most unhelpful thing to them.

They may have some difficult situation at home or at child-care. We definitely need to help find out what is going on and do something about it.

Giving them drugs (psychiatric drugs) is not the answer.

As a former social worker I have seen the end result of these drugs in very damaged adults who need medication for the rest of their lives and are not 'cured'.

I want our children to be helped not drugged. They are our future and our most precious resource.

I ask you not to screen 0-3 year olds for mental health. This is not a plan based on scientific evidence and will only result in drugged children not happy healthy ones.

Yours sincerely ^{TUTOR} Jennifer Costello