13 January 202

Dear Sir Madam,

The proposal to screen zero to three year olds with the checklist of questions proposed I find most objectionable.

I am a grandmother and so many items on your list are totally normal things a child does in the course of its development.

This kind of screening is a total waste of public money. Particularly when the results of a so called ‘at risk’ child would be to drug them. This is appalling to me. Children need love and attention, not drugs.

More research is showing that a listening ear and someone who cares proves far more useful to someone who does have so called ‘depression’ or mental health issues to help them through it. I have been witness to this myself as a community worker and have done it with several friends who have been ‘depressed’ when it was only when things were too much for them and they need some help and kindness or peaceful surroundings to destress. Care, good nutrition and the right environment works wonders. What do drugs do? Not much to help from my experience except to worsen or cause very unwanted side effects. Sometimes even suicidal thoughts.

Australia has much larger issues to contend with at present and I suggest the money you will be wasting on such non-existent ‘mental health screening’ be put to better use where your community really needs it to help people rebuild their lives.

Please be human and don’t do this ‘screening’. These children are our future and filling them with chemicals that do nothing is not a good start to life.

Yours faithfully,

Allison Axford