

Children page

Psychiatric drugs and your child

Throughout his career, Dr. Breggin has been especially concerned about the psychiatric abuse of children and the failure to provide more effective solutions through improved parenting, educational reform and community resources. As the drug companies and organized psychiatry have sought larger markets for pharmaceutical products, children have come under extensive from the psychopharmaceutical complex. The first great assault took place in the form of diagnosing children with ADHD and then medicating them with stimulant drugs. Soon millions of children were defined as mentally dysfunctional or defective and were submitted to brain-damaging psychoactive medications.

A new pattern emerged as doctors began to treat the adverse drug reactions to stimulants—including over-stimulation, insomnia, agitation, behavioral abnormalities, depression, suicidality and violence, mania and psychosis—with increased numbers of additional psychiatric drugs. They usually did this without explaining to the parents that the drugs were causing the newly developed symptoms. Nowadays, many children come to Dr.

Breggin for consultations when they are taking four or five psychiatric drugs at once.

Not satisfied with this huge expansion of the drug marketplace, psychiatrists advocating on behalf of drug companies recently began to diagnose thousands of children with bipolar disorder. The purpose? To justify giving more "mood stabilizer" and "antipsychotic" drugs to children. The FDA has cooperated by approving Risperdal for some diagnostic categories in childhood.

As An overall result, millions of children are growing up with drug-intoxicated brains. They are given no hope that they can learn to control their own behavior and grow up to be effective adults—goals they will never achieve with medication-drenched brains.

At the same time, parents and teachers have become indoctrinated into believing that they cannot effectively raise or teach the children in their care and must instead resort to medical management by "experts." This massive disenfranchisement of parents and teachers has huge consequences in terms of depriving children of the care they need and depriving parents and teachers of the opportunity to exercise their skills and authority, and to improve their approaches to individual children, families and classrooms.

Many drug-treated children will suffer from irreversible brain changes that hamper their mental life. In the case of stimulants, many will have their growth stunted and become prone to cocaine addiction in young adulthood. As a result of neuroleptics like Zyprexa, Risperdal and Abilify, many will suffer from development delays and from tardive dyskinesia with its irreversible abnormal movements that impair and stigmatize them. Dr. Breggin has evaluated dozens of children in his practice who have developed tardive dyskinesia from the newer antipsychotic drugs.

Of all the harmful actions of modern psychiatry, the mass diagnosing and drugging of children is the most appalling with the most serious consequences for the future of

individual lives and for society.

All of the issues that are summarized here are discussed in more depth with scientific citations in Dr. Breggin's two new books, *Medication Madness* (2008) and *Brain-Disabling Treatments in Psychiatry* (2008). Several older books deal even more extensively with improved parenting and educational approaches to children, including *The Ritalin Fact Book* (2002), *Talking Back to Ritalin* (2001), and *Reclaiming Our Children* (2000).

See Dr. Breggin's blog at the Huffington Post for up-to-date commentaries on children's issues.

The following books by Dr. Breggin contain more detailed discussions of the use of psychiatric drugs for children:

- *Brain-Disabling Treatments in Psychiatry* (2008)

- *Medication Madness* (2008)

- *The Ritalin Fact Book* (2002)
- *Talking Back to Ritalin* (2001)
- *Reclaiming Our Children* (2000)
- *The War Against Children of Color* (1994)
- *Toxic Psychiatry* (1994)

Articles on children's issues and psychiatric medications

- Confirming the hazards of stimulant drug treatment (PDF)
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- A biomedical programme for urban violence control in the US (PDF)
- The psychiatric drugging of toddlers (PDF)
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- What people need to know about the drug treatment of children(PDF)
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- Psychostimulants in the treatment of children diagnosed with ADHD (PDF)
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- NIH consensus report highlights controversy surrounding ADHD diagnosis and stimulant treatment (PDF)
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- The NIMH multimodal study of treatment for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (PDF)
-
- What psychologists and therapists need to know about ADHD and stimulants (PDF)
-
- The hazards of treating 'attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder with methylphenidate (Ritalin)
-
- Brain development continues through teen years
- U.S. attention deficit on legal drug risks by Arianna Huffington
- ICSP calls for a moratorium on the psychiatric drugging of children
- Children poisoning themselves with illegal psychiatric drugs
- Psychiatry makes war on "bipolar children"
- School calls child services on parents who take child off Ritalin
- Recent FDA decision highlights ethical issues in drug research on children
- Something we can all agree on: stop the drugging of children
- Breggin testifies before Congress re: Ritalin and ADHD
- Campaigns against racist federal programs by the Center for the Study of Psychiatry (1996/1996)
- The White House conference on mental health (2000)
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- Peter Breggin's Testimony on ADHD and Stimulant Drugs before the House Committee on Education (2000)

