

The over diagnosis of adhd and the abuse of ritalin essay



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The Over diagnosis of ADHD and the Abuse of Ritalin Attention Deficit

Hyperactivity disorder was unheard of in the generation previous to us.

ADHD as it is now more commonly known as is one of the most frequently diagnosed psychiatric disorders occurring in children. This condition is characterized by inattention, fidgeting, lack of organization, or squirming when seated. Such children often have difficulty paying attention to details and are easily distracted by other events that are occurring at the same time; they find it difficult and unpleasant to finish their schoolwork; they put off anything that requires a sustained mental effort; they are prone to make careless mistakes, and are disorganized; they appear to listen when spoken to and often fail to follow through on tasks. " These symptoms usually become evident in preschool or when entering elementary school but can continue into adolescence and adulthood" (Mental Health). Many of these symptoms though, appear in normal children from time to time.

For the reason that there is no fixed test that will give an accurate reoccurring indication that the child in fact has ADHD, over diagnosis has become hard to avoid. Doctors now prescribe Methylphenidate or Ritalin to regulate attention and impulse control (Schwarzbeck). Ritalin is said to help students concentrate more in school, improves alertness, and ultimately helps the being to control the disorder thysel. In some cases, children do benefit from the medicine. Too many medicated children, however, do not accept the other forms of help they need if they are too become aware of their difficulties and learn to compensate. This leads to the overuse of the prescribed drug to counterweigh for the other forms of help they did not receive.

Which has resulted in discussions about the over diagnosis of ADHD and the abuse of Ritalin being one in the same. Over diagnosis is a major problem with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. An estimated three to five percent of adolescents suffer from this disorder. “ Boys are affected four times as often as girls” (Brazelton). Numerous children appear to be antsy, quick to anger, impatient and inattentive. Just because a child shows these indications does not mean he or she certainly has ADHD.

Being that there is no evidence shown in any precise tests such as, brain tests or blood tests, it is difficult to identify if the young person truly should be diagnosed with the disorder (NClive). Many careful diagnostic examinations are overlooked when examining a child. Instead, physicians have begun to rely on questionnaires, which are not intended to be absolute diagnostic instruments and cannot establish a reliable diagnosis (Shwarzbeck). The danger in depending on these hazy questionnaires and psychological tests is that children don't always react the same. There could be a different diagnosis each time. There is real danger in over diagnosing children.

Mental illness, like other illness, can get worse if left untreated and lead to other chronic problems. It's easy to be quick to diagnose a child with ADHD because the disorder and symptoms are so familiar, but for the most part it is an easier way to just deal with the problem. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is not something a child wants to live with for the rest of their life. Although many children do adjust and learn to control the effects, other may suffer more turmoil.

About six percent of children ages five to eighteen are prescribed to Ritalin for relief from attention and hyperactivity disorders” (Monson). ” In a recent study, in Seattle, it was found that sixty eight percent of the three hundred and twelve children who had received an ADHD diagnosis and had been prescribed stimulant medication did not have the disorder” (Schwarzbeck). Ritalin is an amphetamine like drug that activates the brain stem and causes a calming effect. Due to the drug being a central nervous system stimulant, it may be habit forming when used in doses higher then recommended dosage or for extended periods of time (Monson). Abuse had increased in Ritalin use, especially to those misdiagnosed with the disorder. A growing number of child care experts believe there are ongoing problems with the drug.

Some doctors are even referring to it as “ kiddy cocaine. ” In fact, Ritalin is a drug closely related to cocaine, it goes to the same receptor in the brain, causing the same high if taken in the same manner. Stimulants such as Ritalin are also known as uppers and beanies, along with a variety of other names. There are many reasons why Ritalin is abused. The main reason being the “ high” it gives a person.

It can increase energy, alertness and attention, which are accompanied by increases in blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing. The drug is also commonly known to be abused throughout college students. They feel as if it helps them to perform better in school. It is also helpful when they need to pull those late night study sessions. Because Ritalin is so commonly prescribed, it is usually not difficult to find ways to obtain the drug, legally or

illegally. Medications can be effective when they are used properly, but some can become addictive and dangerous when misused, or convenient(Monson).

For the past decade, discussions about the over diagnosis of ADHD and the abuse of Ritalin have been one in the same. Children across America are being diagnosed with this disease everyday. Most of which do not truly have the disease. Most children between the ages of one and twelve are inattentive and hyperactive, and usually pitch a fit when they do not get their way.

Doctors are overlooking the important details when diagnosing these adolescence. They are quick to prescribe Ritalin, or other stimulants, to help " solve" the child's problem. These stimulants are very addictive if taken in the wrong manner, and are very commonly abused. Whether it be by children, teens, or adults, who may or may not have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

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