

Stop Drugging Our Children



Common Sense About Drugs, Learning Problems and ADHD

There is a mixed message going out to America's children. On the one hand, they are warned about the dangers of drugs like cocaine and meth. They're told that drugs are a cop-out, an escape from having to deal with the real problems of life. Drugs can't solve your problems, they are addictive, harmful and they ruin people's lives.

On the other hand, the second message completely contradicts the first. It says prescription drugs are the solution to emotional problems, learning difficulties and behavioral issues. Feeling depressed? Take a drug. Feeling anxious? Take a drug. Having problems in school? Take a drug!

Yes, we're actually using drugs to treat children who have behavioral problems in school! Currently, about seven million children are being treated with drugs for Attention-Deficit Hyperactive Disorder or ADHD. People are being told that this disorder is the result of a chemical imbalance in their children and that the drugs they are being given will correct this chemical imbalance, but many parents and psychologists question this premise.

In this issue of *Sunshine Sharing*, we're going to challenge the assertion that mood-altering drugs are correcting a biochemical imbalance in America's children. We're also going to discuss why trying to solve children's mood and behavioral problems with drugs is no different than people using street drugs to try to solve their problems.

We don't just want to speak out against the drugs, however. We need to deal with the real causes of the behavior problems collectively labeled as ADHD. We want to discuss real solutions, not just quick fixes, to these behavioral problems—solutions that don't just mask the problems, but actually correct the causes.

Is ADHD a Biochemical Imbalance?

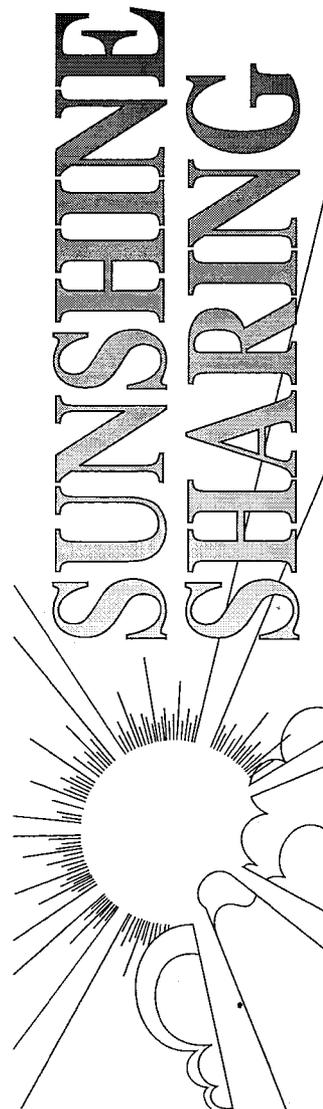
We'll start by looking at the assertion that ADHD is a chemical imbalance. If a person has type-one diabetes, they definitely have a biochemical imbalance. Objective medical testing can show that they are low in insulin. There is also a way to measure their blood sugar levels to determine how much insulin is needed. If a disorder is really biochemical, we ought to be able to objectively measure the imbalance and monitor the results from any medication that is used.

Now, let's contrast this with someone taking cocaine. People take cocaine because it's a stimulant, an "upper." It temporarily energizes them and enhances their mood. The drug may make them temporarily feel better, but it does not fix an imbalance in their body chemistry. We can't test someone for cocaine deficiency and then monitor their blood work and objectively document that their system is now in balance, because nobody suffers from a cocaine deficiency.

Cocaine is an amphetamine, a class of drugs that mimic the action of the neurotransmitters epinephrine and norepinephrine in the sympathetic nervous system. By stimulating the sympathetic nervous system, amphetamines mess up a person's metabolism. Amphetamines, like cocaine, can have serious consequences, including addiction, nervousness, loss of appetite, allergic reactions, hallucinations, weight loss, tachycardia and mood problems (including aggression, anxiety, depression and hostility).

The drug most commonly used to treat ADHD, methylphenidate (Ritalin®), is an amphetamine. It may be an even stronger stimulant than cocaine, which is why one of its nicknames is "kiddy cocaine." This raises a question. Does the nature of how a substance behaves in the body change just because some "expert" recommends it? What is the difference between trying to "fix" a restless child with amphetamines and people trying to get a "fix" with the same type

Learn more inside...



Your guide to better health the natural way.

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Important Notice

The information in *Sunshine Sharing* is for educational purposes only and should not be used to diagnose and treat diseases. If you have a health problem, we recommend you consult a competent health practitioner before embarking on any course of treatment.

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of substances? To make this point perfectly clear, consider that high doses of methylphenidate often produce agitation, tremors, euphoria, tachycardia, palpitations and hypertension. Like cocaine and other illegal “uppers” this “kiddy cocaine” can also produce psychotic episodes and paranoid delusions. Psychotic episodes, bizarre mannerisms, violent behavior, suicide and even death can result from cocaine, methylphenidate and other stimulant drugs.

Why Mood-Altering Drugs Aren't the Answer

To understand why these drugs aren't fixing some biochemical imbalance, it is necessary to understand how the nervous system functions. Nerve cells produce chemical messengers called neurotransmitters that communicate information to other cells. When things aren't right in the body, these chemical messengers signal the system that something is wrong. These signals may manifest as pain, anxiety, depression, restlessness, irritability or other bad feelings. They tell us that there is a problem that needs to be corrected.

When a person examines their life and makes healthy changes that correct the problem, the body sends different chemical messages. These signals manifest as pleasure, joy, peace, happiness, excitement and other positive or good feelings. These tell us that the problem has been fixed and everything is all right.

Mood altering drugs mimic the body's chemical messengers. When a person takes them, they override the body's own signals, replacing them with a temporary “everything's all right” message. Pain is replaced with numbness, bad feelings are replaced by stimulation or a sense of euphoria.

This relief isn't real, however, because the actual problems the body is experiencing haven't been solved. They've only been masked. Once the drug wears off, the nerves go back to trying to tell you something is wrong, and they may try to do so even more emphatically resulting in even greater physical or emotional discomfort. If the person continues to use the drug to mask these messages, then a cycle of addiction begins. This is why trying to fix mental and emotional problems with drugs isn't a good idea.

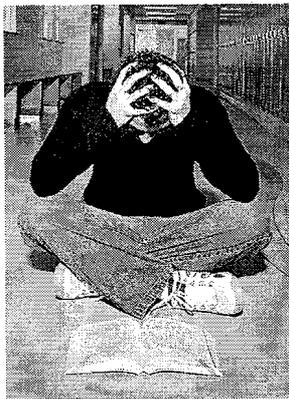
Why the Diagnosis of ADHD is a Farce

Using drugs to try to fix emotional/behavioral problems would be bad enough, but there's more. The problem is that ADHD is not a disease that can be proven by any objective criteria. It was literally voted into existence in 1987 by the American Psychiatric Association. The criteria for diagnosing this disease are completely subjective. There is a list of 18 behaviors and if someone decides that a child has enough of these behaviors they have ADHD. Here is a list of the 18 behaviors used to diagnose ADHD.

- Often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities
- Often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities
- Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
- Often leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected

- Often has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly
- Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions)
- Often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities
- Often avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as schoolwork or homework)
- Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g., toys, school assignments, pencils, books or tools)
- Is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli
- Is often forgetful in daily activities
- Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat
- Often runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate (in adolescents or adults, may be limited to subjective feelings of restlessness)
- Is often “on the go” or often acts as if “driven by a motor”
- Often talks excessively, impulsivity
- Often blurts out answers before questions have been completed
- Often has difficulty awaiting turn
- Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games)

(source: <http://www.ritalindeath.com/ADHD-Controversy.htm>)



Do you see how absolutely ridiculous some of these “diagnostic criteria” are? Children and teens can exhibit behaviors like these for many reasons. Really intelligent children may exhibit these behaviors because they find school boring. Other children may be having problems at home, including suffering from abuse. Children may also be suffering from hypoglycemia, irritation to the nerves from heavy metal and environmental toxins, stress and nutritional deficiencies. The behaviors listed above, could even be the result of poor parenting and poor teaching.

Unfortunately, instead of taking the time and effort to figure out what we can do to help these children solve their real problems, our schools and the medical profession are simply taking a short cut. Pop a pill and problem solved! It's easy to see why children put on drugs for behavioral and emotional issues are more likely to use recreational drugs. The message is pretty clear, “Pills can solve your problems!”

Schools, Social Pressure and ADHD

What makes this situation even more ridiculous is that ADHD isn't even being diagnosed by professionally trained psychiatrists. It's being diagnosed primarily by school teachers. All they have to do is compile a list of which of these negative behaviors a child is exhibiting in school and label the child as ADHD. Then, school administrators put pressure on parents to put their kids on drugs. In some cases, if parents don't comply, school officials have called child protective services and had parents charged with neglect.

This is done in spite of the fact that no studies have proven positive, long-term effects from the use of these medications. In other words, studies have not measured improvements in learning, academic performance or social behavior from using drugs to manage children in school. It's time to start looking for better solutions, like those found on the next page.

Natural Solutions for ADHD

If drugs aren't the answer to the behavioral and learning problems children have at school, what is the answer? The answer is multifaceted, because there are many factors involved. Here are some of the important ones to consider.

Positive Attention and Loving Discipline

We'll start by pointing out that children (including teenagers) *need* attention. Experts in parenting know that if children can't get attention in positive ways, they will act out in negative ways, just to get attention. In a child's mind, negative attention is perceived as better than no attention at all.

In today's society, both parents usually work, schools are overcrowded, and television, computers and video games are used as electronic baby-sitters. So, many of today's youth are literally starved for attention. Furthermore, electronic baby-sitters are well known to reduce attention span. Research has also shown that children have an easier time in school, when they have parents who actually spend time playing with them, reading to them and otherwise interacting with them. Children need loving guidance and in many cases that's all some of these children need.

But, let's assume that we have a child exhibiting the symptoms of ADHD who is getting positive loving help and attention from parents and other adults, providing them with firm, but loving guidance. What else could be a problem?

Junk Food Diets and Junk Food Brains

It's no secret that most Americans have a very poor diet and so do their children. There is ample evidence that a junk food diet contributes to reduced mental function, difficulty concentrating and behavioral problems. An increase in hyperactivity, juvenile delinquency and even criminal behavior has been associated with diets high in refined carbohydrates and food additives.

Most of today's kids are practically weaned on sugar and refined grains. High levels of simple carbohydrates cause rapid rises in blood sugar, which overstimulates the brain, causing nervousness and agitation. This is compounded by the fact that many kids are becoming addicted to caffeine at a very early age. Caffeine dehydrates the brain and depletes energy reserves in the nervous system. This also contributes to restlessness, irritability and difficulty concentrating.

Many parents would be shocked to discover how much calmer kids are when they aren't fed refined sugars, other simple carbohydrates and caffeine. They'd probably take their children off these foods immediately (assuming they could manage to give them up themselves).

To help kids (and yourself) make these changes, start by trying a junk food fast. Refrain from these foods for a period of at least three to four days and preferably a whole week. Then, as a reward, let yourself "pig out" on junk food and watch the almost

immediate psychological and behavioral changes. Then point these out to your kids and help them understand that these foods are harming their health.

It's also helpful to make healthy substitutes. Try using whole grains instead of refined flour and white rice and use natural sugars like freeze-dried sugar cane juice or honey to make some natural treats. This helps transition away from the bad to the good.

Licorice Root and **Super Algae** are great supplements to help kill sugar cravings. They balance blood sugar levels when taken in the morning, again at lunch and once more when kids come home from school.

Kids Need Good Fats

Good fats are absolutely critical to brain function, since the brain is 50% fat by dry weight. Most of those fats are omega-3s, which are deficient in modern diets. Many parents have found that giving their children healthy fats like **Super Omega-3 EPA** and **Krill Oil with K-2** helps them learn better. You can also supplement with **DHA**, the most important omega-3 fatty acid for brain function. For young children, this is available in a chewable tablet, **Sunshine Heroes Omega-3 with DHA**.

Young children typically love naturally fatty foods because their developing brains need them. So, it also helps to have sources of good fats in the diet, including walnuts, macadamia nuts, avocados, butter from grass-fed animals and coconut oil.

Brain Building Protein

The neurotransmitters that allow nerve cells to "talk" to each other are made from amino acids, the building blocks of protein. Many children with learning problems aren't getting enough protein, particularly for breakfast. Research shows that children who have protein foods for breakfast perform better in school than kids who skip breakfast. Children who eat sugar sweetened breakfast cereals (especially with low fat milk) do the worst.

If you're in too much of a hurry to prepare a traditional breakfast for your children, at least make them a protein powder smoothie using **Love and Peas** or **SmartMeal**. You can add fresh or fro-

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Additional Help and Information

For more information about helping children with learning problems using natural methods, contact the person who gave this newsletter to you. Their contact information should be found at the top of page four. They have additional handouts and resource materials to help you. You can also consult some of the following sources:

Holistic Solutions to Learning Problems by Steven Horne, RH(AHG)

The Comprehensive Guide to Nature's Sunshine Products by Tree of Light Publishing





America's Children are Not Drug Deficient

Over seven million American children are taking stimulants for a subjectively diagnosed condition known as Attention-Deficient Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). Learn what you can do inside!

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zen fruit, organic, whole milk or whole milk yogurt to vary the smoothie and make it more nutritious. Super Algae, mentioned earlier, is a good source of amino acids and helps balance brain function as well as blood sugar.

Other Supplements to Enhance Learning

GABA Plus is sometimes helpful. GABA is a calming neurotransmitter that inhibits the brain from "over-firing," calming down mental chatter and aiding relaxation and sleep.

Children, like adults can simply be stressed. If your children have enlarged pupils and seem anxious or nervous, they could probably use some nervines to help them relax. **Nutri-Calm** feeds the nerves with important B-complex vitamins and vitamin C, helping both adults and children to be more relaxed and focused.

Stress-J, available in both capsule and liquid form, and **Chinese Stress Relief** may also be very helpful for these kids.

If a child has small pupils and seems to calm down when given stimulants, they are parasympathetic dominant and the previous remedies will tend to make them more agitated. In this case, give them more iodine to stimulate the thyroid in the form of **Liquid Dulse**. You can also give them **Focus Attention**, a formula that enhances the neurotransmitters in the brain responsible for memory and attention.

These are not the only issues that can cause children to have problems learning. Heavy metals can damage the nervous system, making **Heavy Metal Detox** a helpful remedy. Leaky gut can also be a factor. In these cases remedies such as **Uña d'Gato Combination** or **Intestinal Soothe and Build** taken with **Stress-J** may help. Talk to the person who gave this newsletter to you for more information and assistance.