

# Global Youth Day Neglects 6 million US Children on Risky Psychiatric Drugs

*CCHR applauds International Youth Day but says it ignores the mass drugging of children that leads to suicide and violence*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- With August 12th delegated International Youth Day (IYD), [Citizens Commission on Human Rights International \(CCHR\)](#), a mental health industry watchdog, reminded policymakers that 2.1 million U.S. children and youths are still being prescribed antidepressants that could adversely impact them in ways that prevent them from reaching their full potential. CCHR says legislators should be demanding to know why there's such a reliance on these treatments when drug regulatory agencies have warned against antidepressant use in youths since 2003. The promises of improved mental health for youths—backed by billions of dollars in government-funded programs—have failed to reduce suicide and violence, including shootings and serious acts of senseless violence in schools.



CCHR applauds International Youth Day but says it ignores the mass drugging of children that leads to suicide and violence; 63% of “medicated” teens involved in a sample of U.S. school shootings-violence were taking antidepressants the FDA warned against 18 years ago.

The IQVia Total Patient Tracker Database reports more than 6.1 million 0-17 year-olds had taken psychotropic drugs in 2020, of which 418,425 were aged 0-5. Greater than 2.15 million were taking antidepressants.[1]

Federal allocations to youth suicide prevention programs were \$41.91 million in 2018 and increased to \$45.29 million in 2022—for a total of nearly \$214 million over five years.[2] In 2019, 8.9% of youth in grades 9-12 reported that they had made at least one suicide attempt in the previous 12 months. Female students attempted almost twice as often as male students (11% vs. 6.6%).[3]

Community-based violence prevention programs received \$8 million in 2018, which increased to \$14 million in 2021, then more than tripled to a whopping \$50 million in 2022—a 525% increase and a total of \$87 million over five years.[4]

School shootings had already increased by 37% between the 1990s and 2013 and have continued unabated.[5] In a sample of 32 [school shootings/acts of senseless violence](#) between 1997 and February 2018—when the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Florida left 17 dead and 17 injured—in which the perpetrator was taking or withdrawing from psychiatric drugs, it was found that 20 of the perpetrators (63%) were taking antidepressants, sometimes in combination with other prescription psychotropics. Another five were indicated as being on medication for “depression,” which, if antidepressants, would constitute 78%.[6]

The numbers could be far higher as toxicology tests—especially for antidepressant use—are not always conducted. In the Adam Lanza Sandy Hook school shooting in Connecticut in 2013, the state Assistant Attorney General refused to disclose if Lanza was taking antidepressants because, he told a court, it could “cause a lot of people to stop taking their medications.”[7] Jan Eastgate, president of CCHR International said, “This was an alarming admission, denying parents of minors information on the potential links between the drugs and violence and suicide had Lanza been taking them.” The toxicology test and findings that were conducted remain questionable, CCHR adds.

Eastgate said that minimally, legislators should investigate their investment in mental health programs to determine the results, especially as funding should lead to a decrease in rates of mental ill-health, suicide and violent behavior.

The IYD, established by the United Nations, aims to amplify the message that action is needed across all generations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to leverage the full potential of all generations.[8] Eastgate stated, “However, there’s been a shocking level of State inaction and neglect in the oversight of how many children and youths are subjected to psychotropic drugs that can put them at risk of blunting their emotions, thus reducing their drive and ability to achieve.”

In March 2004, the FDA issued an advisory that patients taking antidepressants may experience “anxiety, agitation, panic attacks, insomnia, irritability, hostility, impulsivity, akathisia (severe restlessness), hypomania, and mania.”[9] In October of the same year, it issued its strongest black box warning that antidepressants can induce suicidal behavior in those younger than 18.

The UN and World Health Organization have warned against reliance upon the biomedical model and excessive medicalization.[10] In 2020, Dr. Dainius Pūras, a Special Rapporteur, addressed the UN Human Rights Council and warned against the exaggerated benefits of psychotropic medications and highlighted that their effectiveness is not comparable to other medicines that are essential for certain physical conditions, such as for example, antibiotics for

bacterial infections. "There are no biological markers for mental health conditions," he said.[11]

Add to this the landmark study published in *Molecular Psychiatry* in July 2022, where researchers reviewed major studies published over several decades and found no convincing evidence to support the theory that a chemical imbalance in the brain causes mental disorder. Parents have been misled for years that this was a source of their children's problems, requiring antidepressants or other psychotropic drugs to "correct" it.[12] Teens have been falsely told that chemical imbalances are a source of depression.

CCHR said the organizers of International Youth Day should use the opportunity to condemn the medicalization of teen angst and behavioral problems, which has the potential to damage their lives. The priority must be access to workable, non-harmful programs that can help achieve a brighter future for teens and generations to come.

[Read the full article here.](#)

[1] <https://www.cchrnt.org/psychiatric-drugs/children-on-psychiatric-drugs/>

[2] <https://imprintnews.org/youth-services-insider/2022-federal-spending-deal-children-families/63482>

[3] <https://afsp.org/suicide-statistics/>

[4] <https://imprintnews.org/youth-services-insider/2022-federal-spending-deal-children-families/63482>

[5] <https://www.cchrnt.org/2022/07/11/billions-spent-on-violence-prevention-ignores-how-psychotropic-drugs-cause-hostility/> citing: "School Safety Policies and Programs Administered by the U.S. Federal Government: 1990–2016," A Report Prepared by the Federal Research Division, Library of Congress under an Interagency Agreement with the National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice; Allison Paolini, "School Shootings and Student Mental Health: Role of the School Counselor in Mitigating Violence," ACA (American Counseling Assoc.) Knowledge Center, Vistas, 2015

[6] <https://www.cchrnt.org/school-shooters/>

[7] <https://www.cchrnt.org/2013/09/24/state-of-connecticut-refuses-to-release-adam-lanzas-medical-records/>

[8] <https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2022/06/2022-IYD-Concept-Note.pdf>

[9] <https://www.cchrnt.org/cchrs-exposure-of-antidepressant-risks-false-marketing-of-the->

[chemical-imbalance-theory/](#) citing: "Worsening Depression and Suicidality in Patients Being Treated with Antidepressants Medications," US Food and Drug Administration Public Health Advisory, 22 Mar. 2004.

[10] "Major changes to suicide prevention needed, with rights-based approach to make life "more livable" — UN expert," UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 10 Oct. 2019, <https://previous.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25118&LangID=E>

[11] <https://www.cchrnt.org/2021/06/11/world-health-organization-new-guidelines-are-vital-to-end-coercive-psychiatric-practices-abuse/> citing: "A human rights-based global agenda for mental health and human rights," A/HRC/44/48, Human Rights Council's 45th session, 15 Apr. 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-health/human-rights-based-global-agenda-mental-health-and-human-rights>

[12] Joanna Moncrieff, Ruth E. Cooper, Tom Stockmann, Simone Amendola, Michael P. Hengartner and Mark A. Horowitz, "The serotonin theory of depression: a systematic umbrella review of the evidence," *Molecular Psychiatry*, 20 July 2022

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