

Prevent the Dangerous Psychotropic Drugging of California's Foster Care Youth



Petitioning California Legislators and Policymakers
by

Citizens Commission on Human Rights International (<http://www.cchr.org/>)

WHEREAS: Nearly 25% of adolescents in California's foster care system are prescribed mind-altering psychotropic drugs—sometimes two to four or more drugs at a time—and 3 1/2 times the rate for all adolescents nationwide.

WHEREAS: In 2012-13, up to 57% of foster children taking psychotropic drugs were prescribed antipsychotics, which can cause life-threatening diabetes, persistent tics, breast growth in male children and brain shrinkage.

WHEREAS: 30% were prescribed antidepressants that the Food and Drug Administration has assigned a "Black Box Warning" for suicide in children and adolescents. Antidepressants can also cause agitation, hostility, hallucinations, severe restlessness, impulsivity, mania, self-harm and withdrawal effects.

WHEREAS: Foster children aged 5 and younger are prescribed psychotropic drugs.

WHEREAS: California spends more on psychiatric drugs for foster children than on any other kind of medication—more than \$226 million in the last decade by Medi-Cal.

WHEREAS: Psychiatrists and doctors with financial ties to pharmaceutical companies prescribe foster children psychotropic drugs. On average the higher prescribers collected almost four times—or about \$10,000 more—in pharmaceutical funding than the lower prescribers in 2013.

WHEREAS: Between 2008 and 2013, an average of three or four children in foster care died each year. Coronal and police investigations need to determine whether children dying under state care were prescribed psychotropic drugs, and, if so, any relationship to the death.

WHEREAS: A minor has the right to his own bodily integrity which should be respected; foster youths should have the right to object to psychotropic drugs.

BE IT RESOLVED: California policymakers take immediate actions to protect foster youth, by:

- Requiring a full and searching physical examination, including lab tests and other screenings to be conducted in accordance with the California Medical Evaluation Field Manual (to rule out any medical condition) and to have all alternatives exhausted before a Psychotropic Medication Application (PMA) is made to the courts.
- Providing foster youths the right to be informed of the risks of psychotropic drugs in an age appropriate manner and to officially object to taking them.
- The right to be protected from polypharmacy (multiple psychotropic drugs at the same time).
- The right to be treated by doctors without conflicts of interest with psychotropic drug makers.

Go to and sign petition: <https://www.change.org/p/california-legislators-and-policymakers-prevent-the-dangerous-psychotropic-drugging-of-california-s-foster-care-youth>

Note: For this particular petition, the members of the National Family Advocacy Team © (NFAT) support this documentation to be directed to California Legislators and Policymakers. The Primary Reasons are:



- the petition is directed to a particular state;
- the petition is clear and concise
- the petition is written in a format that most legislators and policymakers can understand;
- CCHR is a major organization that recognizes the over-use of psychotropic drugs; and
- Many members of CCHR are highly recognized for their knowledge and efforts.

These are just a few reasons. I'm sure one can be creative and think of more.

Thank you for reviewing this information,
Charles Ferrari
National Team Coordinator
NFAT