Non-diagnostic based approaches to helping children who could be labelled ADHD and their families.

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Abstract

Mental health services are not always good for you. There are some troubling facts to confront such as the increase in the use of diagnostic based approaches and psychotropic medications for children and young people being associated with poorer rather than better outcomes. In this article I will outline some of the evidence around outcome as a result of treatment for young people diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and for those who are prescribed long-term stimulants. I will then discuss clinical approaches that move beyond a focus on symptom management that diagnostic paradigms encourage. This includes clinical models that take account of the diversity of contextual and relational issues that young patients present with and the possibility afforded of engaging in more positive and hopeful therapeutic approaches such as the Relational Awareness Programme (RAP).