



Protect Access to Evidence-Based Psychiatric Medications for Children and Adolescents

Issue: Recent federal reports on child health propose policies that risk undermining public confidence in, and appropriate access to, evidence-based psychiatric medications for children and adolescents.

Background

- Research shows that for many children suffering from a mental health disorder, the most effective treatment is a combination of psychotherapeutic intervention and medication.
- Decisions about prescribing psychiatric medications should be made carefully, based on a comprehensive evaluation by a trained medical professional, in collaboration with patients, caregivers, and others involved in the care of a child or adolescent.
- The safety and efficacy of commonly used psychiatric medications—including traditional antidepressants, antipsychotics, mood stabilizers, and stimulants—have been established through decades of rigorous research, real-world evidence including from national registries with thousands of people, and FDA oversight.
- Despite this, the recent MAHA Assessment and Strategy reports cast doubt on the safety and efficacy of psychiatric medications when prescribed for children and lay the groundwork for potential future federal actions impacting children's access to these critical medications.

Request

- Ensure that federal policies and initiatives affecting children's access to psychiatric medications are grounded in rigorous, high-quality scientific evidence.
- Relevant clinical experts, including child and adolescent psychiatrists, should be involved in the development of these policies and initiatives.