

# SSRI & SNRI Babies

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by Ann Blake-Tracy

## SSRI & SNRI BABIES

### The Next Generation Medical Guinea Pigs—Our Prozac, Zoloft and Paxil Babies

by Ann Blake-Tracy, Executive Director, International Coalition for Drug Awareness  
(This article was originally written for and published in the Citizen's section of the Salt Lake Tribune and the Deseret News.)

On June 17, 1998, syndicated columnist Arianna Huffington published an article entitled "Kip Kinkel: Listening to Prozac?" Finally someone has had the courage to address the real issues in last month's tragic Oregon school shooting spree and is encouraging the public to ask questions about children on Prozac when this drug has not been approved for use in children. Once a drug has been approved by the FDA, doctors can prescribe it for children, even though it has not been fully tested or approved for use in children. Such is the case with the SSRI antidepressants: Prozac, Zoloft, Paxil and Luvox, and the SNRI antidepressants: Effexor and Serzone. The numbers of children on these drugs has jumped dramatically in the last few years. There are presently a million children ages 6 – 18 on these drugs.

One month before the Springfield, Oregon shooting, the American Psychiatric Association and the American Academy of Pediatric Psychiatrists recommended a list of drugs already approved for adults that they want the FDA to consider approving for children. The recommendation included the SSRIs and SNRIs for use in children as young as two and drugs for anxiety, aggression and manic depression in babies only one month old!

Perhaps because of Utah's high use of these medications for several years, we could stand as a test laboratory for the FDA and spare others the agony of serving as guinea pigs. Since the release of these drugs on the market Utah has held the title of the "Prozac Capital" of the nation. Along with that we have had drastic increases in: suicide, unwed pregnancies, domestic violence, manic-depression, MS, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, hypoglycemia, diabetes, bankruptcies, and our divorce rate is now higher than the national average. Patients report all of these as side effects of these drugs and there is overwhelming scientific evidence spanning over three decades to support those reports. Our teen suicide rate coincides perfectly with our use of mind altering prescription medications – Utah's teen suicide rate is three times the national average while our use of these drugs is also three times the national average.

How could these changes in Utah be produced by these serotonergic medications? As I detail in my book, *PROZAC: PANACEA OR PANDORA?*, the catalyst for several articles on Prozac in *Citizen's*, the problem with this group of drugs lies in the basic hypothesis. These new antidepressants were designed to increase the brain chemical serotonin. Theoretically we were told that this increase in serotonin would be beneficial in many ways. Now it seems everyone has jumped on the serotonin bandwagon and society is even looking for natural ways to increase serotonin levels. Yet, for three decades medical studies have demonstrated that INCREASED levels of serotonin produce initial euphoria, psychosis, mania, aggression, organic brain disease – especially mental retardation at a greater rate in children, autism, Alzheimer's, anxiety, depression, mood disorders, anorexia, nightmares, abortions, migraines, hot flashes, irritability, sleeplessness, sleep apnea, chest pain, shortness of breath, constriction of the bronchial tubes, tension, decrease in reaction time, compulsions for alcohol and other drugs, etc. (These would also be the expected results of Fen-Phen and Redux – both serotonergic medications)

Medical research documents that what is beneficial is an increase in the metabolism of serotonin. Unfortunately the SSRIs DECREASE the metabolism of serotonin (5HIAA). We have research to show at what percent each drug decreases this metabolism. Medical research demonstrates that the results of lowered levels of serotonin metabolism are: suicide involving violence and multiple attempts, arson, violent crime, insomnia, depression, compulsions for drugs and alcohol, reckless driving (road rage?), impulsive behavior, bulimia, hostility, exhibitionism, obsessive behavior, arguments with friends and family, impaired employment due to arguments with co-workers, etc.

So why are we now in the 90's being told that increased serotonin is good for us? Is it because it is good for the pocketbooks of the manufacturers? One manufacturer is running full page newspaper and magazine ads bringing in over \$6 million daily, while on the other hand they are settling Prozac suicide cases for huge amounts of money in exchange for silence from victim's families on the details of those settlements. The silence in the court cases ensures that the drug will be allowed to finish out its patent time, thus bringing in the highest possible profits for the company. They knew that with \$6 million coming in daily, they can afford to settle a large number of lawsuits and still come out "smelling like a rose."

Just last week in Salt Lake I interviewed a school teacher who attempted to hire students to kill her principal while on Prozac. Then a 14 year old girl, now off Paxil, through tears confessed to her mother that, although she did not know why, while on the drug she attempted to hire someone to kill her mother. Larramie Huntzinger, under the influence of SSRIs, blacked out and ran his car into three young girls killing two. Last summer a 13 year old boy on Prozac put a gun to his head and pulled the trigger. The same month another 13 year old boy on Zoloft only six days hung himself. An 18 year old model student and LDS seminary president on Paxil for

four days shocked his loved ones by shooting himself. And a 16 year old on Prozac 2 weeks hung himself. How many more have done the same over the last ten years? How long will it take us to count the dead and dying children in Utah alone?

Developing brains are far more vulnerable than adult brains and brain damage generally becomes more apparent after the brain is fully developed, rather than immediately. Much has come out lately about cortisol producing brain damage. While medical research shows that one single 30mg dose of Prozac DOUBLES the level of cortisol. Should we expect brain damage from this? Certainly! A Layton 16 year old documented a 30 point drop in his IQ during his use of Prozac. His case is far from isolated. We also know that drops in blood sugar will immediately cause brain cells to die. This is why hypoglycemia must be diagnosed and managed quickly in order to prevent brain damage. Yet an increase in serotonin produces rushes of insulin dropping sugar levels and chemically inducing hypoglycemia – thus we encounter another way by which these medications produce brain damage.

Parents need to be aware of the drugs' damaging effects upon their children's bodies as well. This drastic increase in cortisol causes a multitude of serious physical reactions including impairment of linear growth, as well as impairing the development and regeneration of the liver, kidneys, muscles, etc.

How many of the parents of the million children already on these medications been warned of the dangers of using them in combination with cough syrups and cold remedies containing dextromethorphan? The combination can produce PCP reactions, seizures, and even death. Last month a young girl in South Jordan, Utah on Paxil developed a cough that comes from high levels of serotonin. Unaware of the dangers, her mother began to give her cough syrup. On the second day she trashed her school room in a rage and by the time her mother arrived to take her to the emergency room her eyes were dilated and she was catatonic. She had to be told what happened as she had no recall of the incident. The girl's mother is also concerned about an 11 year old neighbor on Paxil who is cutting himself. When asked why he is doing this he states that it "feels good." [Citizen's section of the Salt Lake Tribune and Deseret News, published on July 27, 1998.]

Beyond all this there is the horrific withdrawal often associated with the SSRIs. Unless patients are warned to come very slowly off these drugs by shaving minuscule amounts off their pills each day, as opposed to cutting them in half or taking a pill every other day, they can go into terrible withdrawal. This withdrawal includes bouts of overwhelming depression and can include life-threatening physical effects, psychosis, or violent outbursts. Considering the number of adults wondering if they can survive the withdrawal, imagining a child or infant having to experience such a terrible ordeal is beyond comprehension!

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If this drugging of our babies is not enough to awaken public interest, I personally do not want to witness what it will take to do so! And if we are not yet alarmed by what we see happening around us with this group of drugs, perhaps it is time to discontinue our own use of one of these serotonergic drugs – referred to by patients as the “I don’t give a damn!” drugs.

**Ann Blake Tracy, Executive Director,**

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**[www.drugawareness.org](http://www.drugawareness.org) & <http://ssristories.drugawareness.org>**

**Author:** “Prozac: Panacea or Pandora? – Our Serotonin Nightmare – The Complete Truth of the Full Impact of Antidepressants Upon Us & Our World” & Withdrawal CD “Help! I Can’t Get Off My Antidepressant!”

***WARNING: In sharing this information about adverse reactions to antidepressants I always recommend that you also give reference to my CD on safe withdrawal, Help! I Can’t Get Off My Antidepressant!, so that we do not have more people dropping off these drugs too quickly – a move which I have warned from the beginning can be even more dangerous than staying on the drugs!***

***The FDA also now warns that any abrupt change in dose of an antidepressant, whether increasing or decreasing the dose, can produce suicide, hostility or psychosis. And these reactions can either come on very rapidly or even be delayed for months depending upon the adverse effects upon sleep patterns when the withdrawal is rapid! You can find the CD on safe and effective withdrawal helps here: <http://store.drugawareness.org/>***

## Ann Blake–Tracy

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([DrugAwareness.Org](http://DrugAwareness.Org) & [SSRIstories.Net](http://SSRIstories.Net))

Author: "Prozac: Panacea or Pandora? – Our Serotonin Nightmare – The Complete Truth of the Full Impact of Antidepressants Upon Us & Our World" & Withdrawal CD "Help! I Can't Get Off My Antidepressant!"

She has specialized since 1990 in adverse reactions to serotonergic medications (such as Prozac, Sarafem, Zoloft, Paxil, Luvox, Celexa, Lexapro, Effexor, Serzone, Remeron, Anafranil, Fen–Phen, Redux and Meridia as well as the new atypical antipsychotics Zyprexa, Geodon, Seroquel and Abilify), as well as pain killers, and has testified before the FDA and congressional subcommittee members on antidepressants.

**WITHDRAWAL WARNING:** In sharing this information about adverse reactions to antidepressants I always recommend that you also give reference to my CD on safe withdrawal, Help! I Can't Get Off My Antidepressant!, so that we do not have more people dropping off these drugs too quickly – a move which I have warned from the beginning can be even more dangerous than staying on the drugs!

**WITHDRAWAL HELP:** You can find the hour and a half long CD on safe and effective withdrawal helps here: [store.drugawareness.org](http://store.drugawareness.org) And if you need additional consultations with Ann Blake–Tracy, you can book one at [www.drugawareness.org](http://www.drugawareness.org) or sign up for one of the memberships for the International Coalition for Drug Awareness which includes free consultations as one of the benefits of that particular membership plan. You can even get a whole month of access to the withdrawal CD with tips on rebuilding after the meds, all six of my DVDs, hundreds of radio interviews, lectures, TV interviews I have done over the years PLUS my book on antidepressants with more information than you will find anywhere else for only \$30 membership for a month (that is only \$5 more than the book alone would cost) at [www.drugawareness.org](http://www.drugawareness.org). (Definitely the best option to save outrageous postage charges for those out of the country!)