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## Challenging the international trend to increase prescribing rates for psychotropic drugs for school aged children – An issue of safeguarding their wellbeing

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I will open my talk with the concept of ‘Psycho-Economic Imperialism’ (Traxson 2013) –which I define as the biochemical colonisation of young developing minds for huge commercial profit and social control. I coined this term to help stimulate debate on the growing trend internationally to medicate more and more young children for behaviour problems that may be associated with their immaturity or their distressing life experiences. It has been well received even in America which has the highest rates for medicating children with such potentially toxic drugs. I will outline some key issues in this crucial area of professional practice and give illustrations from three main psychotropic drug categories stimulants, anti-depressants and anti-psychotics. I will use these to promote discussion and encourage colleagues to follow the principle of being ‘Ethically Mindful,’ i.e. working in a way that better Safeguards Children from the the potential risk of toxic harm. I will share some examples of challenging such diagnostic and prescribing practices and share a Reflective Checklist, which I have developed in consultation with a range of professionals who are involved in this field and which was inspired by the work of Dr Atul Gawandne in his seminal book, ‘The Checklist Manifesto.’(2009).

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