

# Medal or Medicine?



Marilyn (Em) Brideson  
Psychologist & Life Coach

**SINCE TIME** began there have always been active and very active children – just as there have always been placid and docile children. We used to call the former children, boisterous.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health (a component of the US Dept. of Health & Human Services) – Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder is one of the most common mental disorders that develop in children.

I am wondering if the sudden appearance and escalation of ADHD symptoms has anything to do with

- Fast food
- Smaller Living Space
- Increased television viewing
- Increased danger of having children play in streets and parks
- Decline in physical education and sport in schools
- Increase in single parent and two parent working families

If you take a very physically active child, impose many of these conditions above, I wonder what the chances are of him or her, appearing to be hyperactive - one of the three major symptoms of ADHD?

The other two symptoms of this new condition are - impulsivity and inattention.

In years gone by, we trained children to learn the consequences of acting without thinking. Yes, sometimes the wooden spoon sitting on the bench top was a reminder of the consequences. It seemed wiser to train a child in the rules of life at home, than have the police teach them.

This type of training demonstrated that punishment followed impulsive acts. Children had some healthy fear of consequences and so learned to curb their impulsivity. Most children reared this way, emerged unscarred and self disciplined.

We can improve attentiveness, by teaching the child to improve their focus by observing the child's natural interests. Reading, puzzles, board games, drawing, gardening, sport and the likes, teach children the value of developing concentration.

Alas, society has changed and we have new threats to children's well being. Therefore we need some counter activities to reduce the potential harm.

*Here are a few suggestions for children who have been diagnosed ADHD before you give them any drugs:*

**1. Keep a Diary:** Observe them when they are quietly relaxed in a particular environment and note the conditions that led to the stillness. Repeat these conditions often.

**2. Change the diet.** Start with the exclusion of fast food and high sugar content foods. Change the way you think. These children are bursting with energy- sugar and stimulants are not right for them. Find out more about good that they love.

**3. Make exercise part of their routine.** If you cannot take them to a park or pool, use indoor equipment. Maybe employ a trusted teenager to take them on bike rides in safe places. Choose appropriate schools and after school activities. Find outlets.

**4. Television?** It's called the off switch. Then get them physically challenged. This is usually met with great protest. However, children's job is to challenge the rules; parent's job is to enforce the rules and erect wise boundaries.

Parenting children with excessive energy is extremely challenging. Parents need to be creative and mindful that excessive energy may also be viewed as a gift. Using drugs to control children's overly active behaviour is to my mind both dangerous and without vision.

We don't give stimulants to accelerate placid children, so why use drugs to tone down boisterous children? It may be a quick fix, but another way of thinking about it is that high energy, harnessed correctly, has the potential to become a gold medal.

**30% OFF**  
**Your First Visit To The Beauty Room**  
*(upon presentation of this ad)*  
6 Bridge Rd Richmond.  
Telephone 9428 2935

**D'Jore**  
Receive A Complimentary Treatment & Blow Wave With Every Colour Over \$85  
1011 Burke Rd, Camberwell.  
9882 4304  
Sarah (Beauty Therapist)  
0402 972 551

**Holistic Counselling**  
Bach & Australian Bush Flower Healing Essences  
For All Enquiries Telephone Joan On 0421 410 268

**Paint'n Powder On High BEAUTY SALON**  
BOUTIQUE PERFUMERY FASHION ACCESSORIES  
1117 High St. Armadale. 98229599  
www.paintnpowderonhigh.com.au



**MEDICI Institute**  
breast augmentation  
breast reduction  
liposculpture  
tummy tucks  
nose-reshaping  
face lifts  
browlifts  
eye lifts  
facial rejuvenation  
dermal fillers  
line smoothers  
**9707 5799**  
11 Langmore Lane, Berwick  
www.cosmeticsurgery.com.au

**Hair extensions & courses**  
We specialize in many methods of extensions attachments phone for a **free consultation** or course info  
Specializing in cut and colour no ammonia bleaching  
www.westendhair.com.au  
P & F. 9510 6437  
48 chapel st windsor Melbourne

**ORTHODONTICS**  
Bringing Smiles To Life  
• Orthodontics for adults & children  
• No referral necessary  
• Invisible, (Lingual) braces  
• Clear Braces  
• "High-tech" metallic braces for faster treatment  
• "Invisalign" & ClearSmile treatment  
**Dr Greg White Ph 9882 8384**  
565 Riversdale Rd Camberwell

**CorPilates**  
Mat, Studio & Pre/Post Natal Classes Available  
Level 1, 175 High Street Prahran VIC 3181.  
Ph: 9510 0880 corpilates@optusnet.com.au - www.corpilates.websytle.com.au  
Call the studio for further inquiries 9510 0880

**blondes to BRUNETTES** 479 HIGH ST, PRAHRAN TEL: 9521 1637  
**Spray Tan \$20** conditions apply\*  
\* Buy a three-tan Voucher for \$60 and use them anytime you want. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other advertised specials. This offer will expire on the 31/10/2005.

**UNISEX SALON VULETIC HAIR**  
**WINTER SPECIAL \$130** 1/2 Hd Foils, Cut & B/W  
\*On Mention Of This Advert.  
7/177 Toorak Rd, Sth Yarra.  
Telephone 9827 7717

**Cuban Uprising Across Melbourne**  
Afro-Cuban Dancing A Platform in Melbourne for Latin American Revolutionaries, undisclosed sources say. In spreading the love of dance, people become exposed to radical new ideas through hypnotic Afro-Cuban music!  
**Cuban Dance Academy**  
Revolutionary Movement with Attitude!  
Level 1, 411 Swan St Richmond Victoria  
Tel/Fax: 03) 9429 8852 Mob: 0412 132 842  
enquiries@cubandanceacademy.com.au  
www.cubandanceacademy.com.au