

Be wary of TeenScreen legislation
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If you have not heard about TeenScreen, here is a crash course.

TeenScreen is a program quietly making its way through the state Capitol. Nationwide, it is known as a highly controversial suicide screening program. Essentially, it is a test given to high school students with very vague questions like, "Do you sometimes feel depressed?"

Responses to these questions then lead to psychiatric evaluations, which often leads to prescription drugs.

This is a program with a clear agenda: Put more kids on prescription drugs. Research shows that screening for suicide, while a noble cause, has a less than impressive success rate. Caught in the crossfire are thousands of kids who will suffer the effects of a "false positive" score. According to one study published in the January 2004 edition of the Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, for every 16 students correctly identified by TeenScreen, 84 were falsely labeled.

Don't be fooled by the well-intentioned but misguided efforts of the TeenScreen promoters.

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