

Are We Misdiagnosing Immaturity as ADHD?

When it comes to hyperactivity disorders such as ADHD, there's no debate that diagnoses are on the rise amongst America's youth.

What is debated, however, is the best way to treat ADHD.

Until recently, it seemed that [thrusting a pill](#) at children was the standard treatment. But more experts are beginning to wonder if some ADHD cases can be reduced through efforts like [behavioral modification therapy](#). Others are wondering if children just need time to grow and mature.

A new study in [The Journal of Pediatrics](#) seems to lend support to this idea.

For over 14 years, researchers in Taiwan examined whether or not a child's age at school entry influenced ADHD diagnosis. After studying nearly 400,000 schoolchildren, the researchers found that the oldest children in the class (those born in September) had a much smaller chance of being diagnosed with ADHD than the youngest children (those born in August).

As the [Telegraph](#) explains, such a rise in diagnoses "may be caused by teachers comparing the behaviour of more mature children to those of youngsters who are up to a year younger."



Such research should give us pause, particularly since many of today's ADHD cases are first [observed in the classroom](#). Would we keep many children off of medication if we simply gave them time—and encouragement—to grow and mature?