

**BIG BROTHER WATCH:**

# **ILLINOIS LAUNCHES COMPULSORY MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING**

**FOR CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN**

## **THE LEADER-CHICAGO BUREAU**

**C**HICAGO -- Monday, July 19, 2004 This week, a series of public forums on a program requiring all pregnant women and children through age 18 years to be tested for mental health needs is being held this week in five different locations statewide.

One group of parents learned about the state's plans to proceed with this program and on Monday issued an alarm asking for parents and citizens concerned about the new program to voice their opinions at the forums.

"We're moving toward social training over academic training with this program," Larry Trainor, a Mt. Prospect parent of four children and a contact for Citizens Commission on Human Rights, based in Los Angeles, said today.

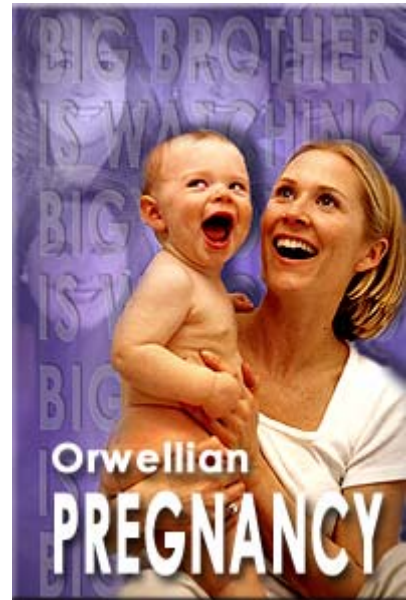
"Since psychiatric involvement in education, SAT scores have gone down for the past few decades. Evaluating mental conditions is not based on scientific evidence, it's subjective," he said.

The \$10 million plan for the setup of the Children's Mental Health Act of 2003 is being considered at this week's public forums starting Monday, July 18 in Champaign.

Signed into law, the bill passed the Illinois General Assembly last spring, sponsored in the House by State Representatives Julie Hamos (D-Evanston) and Patricia Bellock (R-Westmont). State Senator Maggie Crotty (D-Oak Forest) and Susan Garrett (D-Highwood) shepherded the legislation through the Senate.

The legislation passed the House with a 107 to 5 vote, and the Senate unanimously.

"What if they find a student has a math disorder, a reading disorder. Would that be a mental health disorder, one that would cause the parents to put their children with a drug for a condition they may or may not have?" Trainor asked.



Orwellian program in Illinois seeks to place all pregnant women and children through compulsory screening for "mental defectives."

The mental health program will develop a mental health system for "all children ages 0-18 years," provide for screening to "ensure appropriate and culturally relevant assessment of young children's social and emotional development with the use of standardized tools."

Also, all pregnant women will be screened for depression and thereafter following her baby's birth, up to one year. Follow-up treatment services will also be provided.

Trainor said that he is trying to get parents and citizens out to voice their opinion about the new program.

Apparently, children's mental health will be assessed along with their academic standards in the new proposed testing. The Illinois State Board of Education has been given the responsibility to develop the appropriate tests, according to last year's legislation.

The Task Force hosting the public forums this week are to send a recommendation to Governor Blagojevich by the end of the summer, according to the Act (HB 2900).

**THE ABOVE IS COPYRIGHT © 2004 THE ILLINOIS LEADER™, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

*This is a Developing story . . . Thank you to [We Hold These Truths](#) for alerting us*

## THE ROAD TO HELL IS PAVED WITH GOOD INTENTIONS

# WHY YOU NEED TO BE CONCERNED

*Commentary by Laura Dawn Lewis*

If you haven't noticed yet, the majority of new laws and policies being implemented are sold on fear through the necessity of good intentions and as a way to protect you by allowing your government to take care of you, as if the government is a better steward of your body, soul and mind. Each is euphemized to seem harmless and necessary. Every time a law is passed, you give up a portion of your freedom. This is a fact. Some laws are necessary to allow society to function toward a common good. Laws like murder is bad. Stealing is unjust and beating a child unacceptable. These create the commonalities that define civilization.

Since September 11th, 2001 our governments, state, local and federal continue to push through resolutions, legislation and ideas directly in contradiction to the rules we've already established for America, set forth in our Constitution. In effect, each of these chips at our civil liberties, forcing us further away from our values and principles. This law in Illinois represents one such example. Without a doubt the women pushing it through created it with the best of intentions; yet anytime something becomes mandatory, intentions become abuses. The following are the key reasons I believe the citizens of Illinois and the rest of us in the United States must object to this legislation. If we allow it to pass in one state without confronting it, others will follow.

### **1) THIS IS PROFILING:**

Segmenting society based upon subjective ideals, this opens up the ability to create a caste system based upon the mental health results of women and children. This means your child's future, the classes he or she takes and the opportunities open to them could be limited simply based upon test results at a given point in time. It segments society into mentally healthy and various degrees of mentally unhealthy. The potential for abuse of this information is immense. [TOP](#)

### **2) IT IS COMPULSORY, MEANING YOU DO NOT HAVE A CHOICE:**

The mental health of your children, yourself if female or your wife will now be on state records. Once in state records, you now open yourself up to abuse based upon these tests and increase the likelihood of such information being used to screen for employment, benefits or privileges such as a driver's license, college admissions, retirement or health care.

### **3) THE STATE DETERMINES WHETHER YOU ARE MENTALLY HEALTHY OR NOT:**

This is not a good idea.

For example: A close friend of mine was thrown into an alcohol treatment program ten years ago after a 20 minute diagnosis. Her life was falling apart and she was sinking into deep depression, prompting the visit to the Psychiatrist. The defining factor being she mistook the shakes one gets from drinking too much coffee or taking diet pills for delirium tremors, which she didn't even know existed until she arrived at the treatment facility. The question asked, have you ever had the shakes? She answered yes thinking of ephedrine and caffeine. She also had driven twice after drinking and engaged in a one-night stand, answering yes to the question, "Have you ever done something you regretted after drinking?" She did not have a problem with alcohol, but was not allowed to leave the treatment center until she confessed her alcoholism. At twenty-seven, she'd only been drunk nine times in her life, all during college. Once sent to a treatment center the insurance company required completion and sign off by the facility before they would pay. After thirty-days she finally made up a story and got out. [TOP](#)

Her real problem was the fact she had been raped and molested several times in her teens and had been suppressing it for twelve years, which did come out in her first step. She lived abroad at this time and women didn't have the same rights as they do in the United States so she was told it was her fault and silenced, thus allowing the abuse to continue unchecked. Sixty-eight handwritten pages delved into this. Now she knew the problem causing her depression, anger and erratic behavior. But the treatment center made her write a new first step because hers didn't deal with alcohol abuse. When she insisted alcohol wasn't involved, which it wasn't; they insisted she was in denial. Eventually she figured it out and that first step did allow her to realize what was really going on with her, but her employer, insurance company and doctors now had her flagged as an alcoholic and this designation has haunted her ever since all because she answered questions according to her experience and they interpreted according to theirs.

This is why mental health is subjective, not objective. The diagnosis is only as good as the information given, the context taken and the skill of the mental health professional.

#### **4) THIS IS A VIOLATION OF YOUR PRIVACY.**

Your children do not have a choice, the state decides if they are "healthy" and channels them into programs they deem appropriate. One example of how this may work is something I went through in high school when I was wrongly channeled based upon aptitude and personality tests, which I document in this essay on [The Gifts of Math](#). With this legislation, even adult women, you do not have a choice. By simply becoming pregnant you give up your right to personal privacy and become part of the system.

#### **5) IT IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL**

The [Bill of Rights](#) guarantees every American and person living in the United States the right to be secure in their own person and protected against unreasonable search and seizure, this includes thought police. One of the dangers of our invading Iraq as a pre-

emptive deterrent is we have now established in our society a precedence, a Minority Report scenario by which we engage and justify based on possibility rather than addressing the action after it occurs. The fear of maybe drives this. It's an irrational fear.

## THE PRICE OF IRRATIONAL FEAR

Last year 43,220 people died in US traffic accidents and over 195,000 deaths due to hospital error. Do we wage a war on prescription mix-ups, unsafe driving or medical misdiagnosis, a real threat to Americans? No, the state of Illinois opens up its women and children to more potential hospital mix-ups and we wage a war on international terrorism which killed 0 people in the United States during 2002 and 2004. It killed less than twenty in 2003 with the DC Sniper case. We punish based upon the 'what if', rather than holding accountability only to those who do. This mental health screening is a personal pre-emptive strike aimed at women and children, a collective punishment for all to find the one Andrea Yates or Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold among us. [TOP](#)

In return for this "safety", we lay our rights down and trample them over the fear of what might happen but probably won't. This is not what the United States is about and we're seeing more and more legislation like this which strips us of rights, categorizes us and channels us into different risk areas including CAPPS II, The Trusted Traveler, Homeless tagging with RFID's and Mexico's doing of the same with its judicial workers. Of course, do not forget the Patriot Act and Patriot Act II.

This is what happens when people become too afraid to deal with the issues causing problems, willingly sacrificing their rights to self-determination over to a government whose sole purpose is to protect itself. George Washington warned us of this. Henry David Thoreau warned us of this. George Orwell warned us of this. President Eisenhower warned us of this and people like Patrick J. Buchanan, Ralph Nader and Karen Kwiatkowski continue to warn us. Unfortunately the reality seems to fall on deaf ears. One of the results of this is the above legislation in Illinois, no doubt one day coming to a state near you. <End>

### RELATED STORY OFFSITE:

[TINY CAMERAS SOON TO BE AMONG CHICO POLICE TOOLS](#) August 6, 2004

By Chico ER (California)

*Federally subsidized law enforcement now blur the difference between terrorism and crime watch.*