Healthy children and teenagers should not be given drugs designed to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, the American Academy of Neurology said.

While young people with the disorder benefit from the treatment, the group noted, a growing number of healthy young people are taking these medications in an effort to increase concentration and school performance.

“Doctors caring for children and teens have a professional obligation to always protect the best interests of the child, to protect vulnerable populations, and prevent the misuse of medication,” said position statement author William Graf, M.D. of Yale University, in a news release.

“The practice of prescribing these drugs, called neuroenhancements, for healthy students is not justifiable.” The statement concludes there are both legal and developmental reasons these medications should not be prescribed to healthy children and teens, Reuters reports.

The long-term effects of these drugs have not been studied in children, the group notes. Children and teens may not have sufficient decision-making abilities while their cognitive skills and emotional abilities are still developing. In addition, children and teens face the risks of being over-medicated and dependent on the drugs, according to the statement. “The physician should talk to the child about the request, as it may reflect other medical, social or psychological motivations such as anxiety, depression or insomnia. There are alternatives to neuroenhancements available, including maintaining good sleep, nutrition, study habits and exercise regimens,” Dr. Graf said.

Do you suspect that your child is abusing alcohol or using drugs? Are you worried? Have you noticed some changes with your child? As a parent, it is normal to be concerned. Listen to your intuitive voice and read more here.