

Too many kids diagnosed with ADHD

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JEAN ENERSEN / KING 5 News

From almost the beginning, Aaron and Judy Levine knew that their son Noah was gifted.



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Noah's handwriting was keeping him back.

"When I interact and relate with him, it is on the level of a much older child," said Judy.

But at school something just wasn't in sync.

Noah's handwriting was keeping him back, and then there was his constant squirming.

"So many people, even many specialists were saying, oh, this kid is a classic ADHD, let's get this kid on Ritalin," said Aaron.

The Levines decided not to go that route. After seeing 32 specialists, they finally found local doctors Brock and Fernette Eide, the authors of the book, "The Mislabeled Child."

They believe the term ADHD is overused.

"It becomes a disease or a pathology and something that they actually have to live with or can excuse some of how they act," said Fernette Eide.

"At it's best the diagnosis of ADHD can be a good way of identifying kids who are in need of further help, but at its' worst can be a label that really covers up the fact that this is a child with a visual problem, or a hearing problem, a child with a language problem," said Brock Eide.

Although some kids can benefit from medication, too often treatment stops there.

"When those medications get on board, that's the time to really start the program. It's going to allow them to develop those skills to come off the medications later," said Brock.

The Eides say certain behaviors tend to run in families, especially those in creative fields. Although sister Tovah doesn't have her brothers' handwriting issues, she does share his boundless enthusiasm.

"Some of these roguish aspects that are present in children are really wonderful traits later on and it's really learning how to tame the beast is what we try to do," said Fernette.

Noah is now learning the piano to help develop his small motor skills. At school he's also allowed to dictate his assignments until his handwriting kicks in.

"He is really quite happy now at school and we're really grateful," said Judy.

The Eides say behavioral problems often follow the learning disability and not the other way around. They call it secondary baggage.