

March 6, 1955

Ellen Donnelly,  
Childrens Department,  
Institute of Psychiatry  
Maudsley Hospital  
London,

Dear Dr. Donnelly;

I have your letter inquiring about shock treatment for schizophrenic children.

We have been using electric shock treatment since 1942 quite extensively on children - now over 500 cases. The treatment has been for the most part on schizophrenic children, but not only the very retarded ones or those with the most "organic" involvement. We also use it on well integrated schizophrenic children with a lot of anxiety and "pseudo-neurotic" features. It is more difficult, for management reasons, to use it on the paranoid, acting-out, "pseudo-psychopathic type" although often very effective. It is not as often effective on the "pseudo-defective" young child though has conspicuously in many cases resulted in initiating maturation in other-wise autistic, mute, retarded children.

Electric shock treatment is easier to administer to children than adults - they tolerate it better, ~~there~~ are fewer complications and the positive effects are less dramatic but often progressive.

We have been accustomed to administering the shock treatment every morning except Sunday for 20 treatments. We have used the Rahn machine and aim to get a grand mal convulsion with each treatment. No preparation is necessary. The children are ready to go up to school before the morning session is over.

I hope this information is what you want.

Yours,

Lauretta Bender, M.D.