

Medical doctors' group votes to oppose vaccine mandates

A leading national physician organization is calling for a moratorium on all government-mandated vaccines and has passed a resolution to that end at its annual meeting.

Members of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS) voted at their 57th Annual Meeting in St. Louis to pass a resolution calling for an end to mandatory childhood vaccines. The resolution passed without a single "no" vote.

"Our children face the possibility of death or serious long-term adverse effects from mandated vaccines that aren't necessary or that have very limited benefits," said Jane M. Orient, M.D., AAPS executive director.

"This is not a vote against vaccines," said Dr. Orient. "This resolution only attempts to halt blanket vaccine mandates by government agencies and school districts that give no consideration for the rights of the parents or the individual medical condition of the child."

Forty-two states have mandatory vaccine policies, and many children are required to have 22 shots before first grade. On top of that, as a condition for school attendance, many school districts require vaccination for diseases such as hepatitis B -- primarily an adult disease, usually spread by multiple sex partners, drug abuse or an occupation with exposure to blood.

And yet, children under the age of 14 are three times more likely to suffer adverse effects -- including death -- following the hepatitis B vaccine than to catch the disease itself.

Just last week, students in Utica, N.Y. were sent home from school, and told they could not return until they had been forced to receive hep B vaccinations. Further, parents were threatened by Child Protective Services with possible seizure of their children based on "education neglect."

"It's obscene to threaten to seize a child just because his parents refuse medical treatment that is obviously unnecessary and perhaps even dangerous," said Orient. "AAPS believes that parents, with the advice of their doctors, should make decisions about their children's medical care -- not government bureaucrats. This Resolution affirms that position."

SOURCE: Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS), November 2000. (Resolution and mandatory vaccine fact sheet posted at www.aapsonline.org)