Personal Belief Exemptions: A Growing Risk to Public Health

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What We Do

- Statewide Coalition - 501 (c) (3) non profit
- Achieve full immunization protection to protect health and prevent serious illness
- Advocacy and Education
HEALTH & SAFETY COMMISSION

PROPOSED CHILD PROTECTION COTTON WOOL SUIT

IT DOESN'T LOOK SAFE TO ME AT ALL - HIS FACE IS TOTALLY EXPOSED TO DANGER

© Original Artist
Since 2008-09 personal belief exemptions trending upward in California

Measles outbreaks and pertussis epidemic

Rapid rise of misinformation about vaccines

CIC PBE Task Force developed in 2010

Task Force Recommendations:
  - Educational Interventions
    - Schools
    - Physicians
    - Public
  - Legislation
California’s PBE Numbers (2010)

• 25% increase over previous 2 yrs

• Total kindergarten entrants w/ PBE 2.33%

• Range of 0.1% to 18%

• 30% Counties > 5%
Exemptions to Immunizations as Required by California School Immunization Law

*7. PERSONAL BELIEFS EXEMPTION: If immunization is against your religious or personal beliefs, you will be asked to sign an affidavit at the time of registration. Your child will then be exempt from the immunization requirements.

*NOTE: If your child is exempt because of 1, 2, or 7 above, and there is a disease outbreak, the school may be ordered by the Health Department to temporarily exclude your child for his/her protection.

The California Health and Safety Code, Division 105, Part 2, Chapter 1, Sections 120325-120380 establishes the immunizations required and exemptions. Regulations to implement the law are contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 8, 6000-6075.
Legislative Remedies

Change in statute needed to redirect upward trend in PBE’s

- Education efforts are likely not enough
- Current process for claiming PBE more convenient for some than getting child immunized
- Continued increase in PBE’s will at some point, impact herd immunity
Timing and Support

Due to legislative cycle, many stakeholders recommended waiting until 2013

However,

- Several legislators were ready now
- PBE legislation in other states
- Interest and momentum in the media and on social networks
Preparation

- Message Development
- Partnership Development – Bill sponsors
- Building network of support
- Educating key participants
- Media
- Anti-Vaccine groups are organized
Assembly Bill – 2109

- Will require a healthcare provider signature to document vaccination counseling
- Does not place barriers to obtaining an exemption
- Protects parents' rights to be fully informed about recommended vaccinations
- Similar to Washington State Law
Key Points

- A majority of parents believe immunizations are important.
- Parent’s questions are important and they deserve to have reliable information to support the healthcare decisions.
- Children who are exempted from vaccine are at significant risk for diseases.
- Diseases can spread quickly.
- Public health officials want to ensure that requests for exemptions from immunization are based on conviction, not convenience.
Key Points - continued

• Proposed changes would not take away a parent’s right to exempt their child
• Proposed changes would not impact exemptions for medical reasons or religious beliefs.
• Proposed changes would not change current vaccine recommendations for school or child care entry.
• There are numerous surveillance systems that monitor vaccine safety and effectiveness of vaccines.
A Public Health Issue

- Legislative activity
  - Including Kansas, South Dakota, Vermont, Arizona
- Measles Outbreaks
  - Europe, Asia, Super Bowl
- Speaking Up for Public Health and Immunizations
  - Physicians and healthcare providers as trusted sources of information
  - Renewing trust in vaccines
Speak Up

OPINION

THE CASE FOR VACCINES

AND THE CASE AGAINST THEM

American Medical Association

Celebrity Gossip

LIFE AND TIMES OF THE STARS
On-line Communications
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