

Endorsed By

March 5, 2008



Response Address

254 Trickum Creek Road  
Tyrone, GA 30290

Renée R. Jenkins, MD, FAAP  
President  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
141 Northwest Point Blvd  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098

Re: Invitation to support

Dear Dr. Jenkins,

On behalf of the endorsing organizations, representing broad diversity in the autism community, we take this opportunity to express concern regarding the recent recommendation that infants and children up to 18 years of age receive annual influenza vaccine which continues to be preserved with thimerosal. Continued public concern on this matter dictates a reevaluation of the Academy's stance on this important health issue. We propose the following in response to public concern to restore faith in vaccine policy and safety:

1. As public concern remains high despite removal of thimerosal from most vaccines, reaffirm the precautionary elimination of thimerosal from all vaccines, including influenza, administered to children as stated by the AAP in 1999 and restated in 2000.
2. Recognize the need to resolve the noted on-going Federal agency conflict of interest, i.e. that the CDC both promotes and polices vaccines, by supporting The Vaccine Safety and Public Confidence Assurance Act of 2007 introduced by Congressman Dave Weldon (R-FL). This measure transfers vaccine-safety regulatory functions now conducted by the CDC to a new independent agency, the Agency for Vaccine Safety Evaluation (AVSE). It also requires public access to data, and transparency in decision-making by government regulators.
3. To accurately determine the role of vaccination in autism spectrum disorders, support The Comprehensive Comparative Study of Vaccinated and Unvaccinated Populations Act of 2007, introduced by Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY). This measure directs the NIH to conduct, or support, a study comparing total health outcomes in vaccinated versus unvaccinated children.
4. Recent published findings by Drs. Burbacher and Pichichero regarding the toxicokinetic differences between methyl and ethyl mercury clearly demonstrate the need to define a safety standard for ethyl mercury based on ethyl mercury's specific properties, instead of the properties associated with methyl mercury. Given these and other similar research findings, request the FDA conduct toxicity testing on ethyl mercury in accordance with current toxicity standards to determine a new "safe" standard based on ethyl mercury. See the attached Science Summary for more information

Should the public's concerns remain unaddressed, a drop in immunization rates might become a reality. To date, immunization rates have continued to rise while thimerosal-containing vaccines have been greatly reduced. Supporting the above serves to eliminate any lingering public doubt and will alleviate AAP's concerns regarding decreased immunization rates in this regard.

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Additionally, pursuant to the AAP report *Management of Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders* in 2007, which stated "...it's important for pediatricians to become knowledgeable about complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies, ask families about current and past CAM use, and provide balanced information and advice about treatment.", we would ask that this statement be reaffirmed and acted upon. Thus, collaboration between AAP, Defeat Autism Now! practitioners and the Autism Treatment Network to bring much needed objectivity regarding effective treatments immediately to as many affected individuals as possible would embody the premise of the 2007 report and go beyond the agreed-upon need to simply screen children effectively.

We respect the role the AAP has played in the past to reduce the public's concerns with regard to mercury vaccines. We strongly encourage the AAP to continue in that role and proactively protect our children from possible harm and restore national trust in vaccine safety by supporting the above principles and reaffirming statements to remove mercury "as soon as possible". We look forward to working together in the best interest of children in America.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Theresa K. Wrangham".

Theresa K. Wrangham,  
President, SafeMinds