

Leading Medical Organizations Endorse Strong School and Childcare Vaccination Requirements *and* Elimination of Non-Medical Exemptions

School and childcare immunization requirements are central to efforts to ensure high vaccination rates for our nation's children. Having a highly vaccinated population protects not only the children who receive vaccines, but also infants who are too young to be vaccinated, other children who cannot be vaccinated due to certain medical conditions, and other people in the community at risk of severe illness if exposed to vaccine-preventable infections.

Allowing exemptions to school- and childcare-required vaccinations that are non-medical (e.g., religious or philosophical) erodes vaccination rates and increases the risk of community outbreaks. Recognizing the benefits and safety of vaccines for children and the risk of disease outbreaks when vaccine exemption rates increase, the following medical, nursing, and public health organizations oppose states' policies allowing exemptions that are non-medical.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS (AAFP) supports immunization of infants, children, adolescents, and adults as defined by recommendations set forth in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and approved by the AAFP. "With the exception of policies which allow for exemption from required vaccination for a medical contraindication, the AAFP does not support other immunization exemption policies." *2015 September Board of Directors; 2020 Congress of Delegates*

LINK: <https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/immunization-exemptions.html#Immunization%20Exemptions>

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS (AAP) The Academy "supports laws and regulatory measures that require certification of immunization to attend child care and school; supports medically indicated exemptions to specific immunizations as determined for each student; recommends all states and the District of Columbia use their public health authority to eliminate non-medical exemptions from immunization requirements." *Committee on Practice and Ambulatory Medicine, Committee on Infectious Diseases, Committee on State Government Affairs, Council on School Health, Section on Administration and Practice Management; September 2016 and reaffirmed July 2022*

LINK: <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2016-2145>

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNCOLOGISTS (ACOG) recognizes that "non-medical exemptions from immunizations – personal, philosophical or religious – endanger the health of the exempted and other individuals, communities, and our nation. ACOG opposes non-medical exemptions from state immunization requirements and urges ob-gyns to educate and encourage patients to get immunized." *Board of Directors, June 2019; Amended and Reaffirmed, July 2022*

LINK: www.acog.org/clinical-information/policy-and-position-statements/statements-of-policy/2022/vaccines-and-nonmedical-exemptions

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS (ACP) "The American College of Physicians calls on states to pass legislation to eliminate any existing exemptions, except for clear medical contraindications, from their immunization laws." *ACP Board of Regents, September 14, 2021*

LINK: www.assets.acponline.org/acp_policy/policies/position_statement_on_immunization_policies_to_protect_the_public_sept_2021.pdf

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (AMA) "The AMA strongly supports efforts to eliminate nonmedical exemptions from immunization, and will continue to actively urge policymakers to do so." *Press Release; June 13, 2019*

LINK: www.ama-assn.org/press-center/press-releases/ama-policy-advocates-eliminate-non-medical-vaccine-exemptions

AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION (ANA) states "ANA does not support any exemption from immunization other than for medical contraindications.

All requests for medical exemption from vaccination should be accompanied by documentation from the appropriate authority to support the request." *ANA Position Statement; approved July 22, 2021; updated November 23, 2021*

LINK: <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/official-position-statements/id/immunizations/>

INFECTIOUS DISEASES SOCIETY OF AMERICA (IDSA) recommends that "states should eliminate exemptions to immunization mandates based on non-medical indications, because intentionally unvaccinated individuals pose an unacceptable danger to the public." *Board of Directors, June 23, 2012*

LINK: www.idsociety.org/globalassets/idsa/policy--advocacy/current_topics_and_issues/immunizations_and_vaccines/statements/062312-idsa-policy-statement-on-state-immunization-mandates.pdf

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY & CITY HEALTH OFFICIALS (NACCHO) "advocates for policies that reduce or eliminate religious and philosophical exemptions from [school and child care] requirements." *Board of Directors; July 2019*

LINK: www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/16-01-School-and-Child-Care-Immunization-Requirements.pdf

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PEDIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONERS (NAPNAP) "In an effort to ensure that all pediatric populations are protected against vaccine-preventable illness and remain healthy, NAPNAP affirms that NPs [nurse practitioners] and other pediatric health care providers must...lead policy change in states to eliminate nonmedical exemptions for school entry." *Executive Board; June 9, 2018*

LINK: [www.jpedhc.org/article/S0891-5245\(18\)30378-X/pdf](http://www.jpedhc.org/article/S0891-5245(18)30378-X/pdf)

PEDIATRIC INFECTIOUS DISEASES SOCIETY (PIDS), "whose membership constitutes individuals dedicated to the treatment, control, and eradication of infectious diseases in children, opposes legislation or regulations that would allow children to be exempted from school and childcare immunization requirements based on their parents' personal or religious beliefs (non-medical exemptions). Exemptions from school and childcare requirements can lead to outbreaks of disease." *October 2020*

LINK: https://pids.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Pediatric_Infectious_Diseases_Society_Position_on_Non.pdf

SOCIETY FOR HEALTHCARE EPIDEMIOLOGY OF AMERICA (SHEA) "strongly endorses robustly enforced immunization requirements for all attendees and staff of childcare and education facilities . . . Only recognized medical contraindications documented by a clinician should be accepted as a reason for not receiving recommended immunizations." *Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology, Vol. 42, Issue 1, January 2021*

LINK: <https://doi.org/10.1017/ice.2020.342>

