

## Vaccine Advocacy Talking Points

### Note:

You should contact your state and local health director and/or the immunization program director to ask about any outbreaks or issues going on in your district, community, and/or state because these sorts of local examples will always be the most impactful. While they may not be able to share detailed information due to health laws, even anecdotes and examples highlighting local issues can be very helpful.

IDSA represents over 11,000 infectious diseases physicians and scientists devoted to patient care, disease prevention, public health, education, and research in the area of infectious diseases. Our members care for patients of all ages with serious infections, including meningitis, pneumonia, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections such as those caused by methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), vancomycin-resistant enterococci (VRE), and Gram-negative bacterial infections such as *Acinetobacter baumannii*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, emerging infections such as Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), Enterovirus D68, and Ebola, and bacteria containing novel resistance mechanisms such as the New Delhi metallo-beta-lactamase (NDM) enzymes and others that make them resistant to a broad range of antibacterial drugs, including one of our most powerful classes of antibiotics, the carbapenems (carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae, or CRE).



## General Vaccine Advocacy Support

- IDSA supports the CDC-recommended vaccine schedule.
- Vaccines save the lives of an estimated 42,000 children each year in the United States and are one of the greatest tools we have for preventing disease.
- High vaccination rates in the population help stop the spread of vaccine preventable diseases. When vaccination rates drop in a community the risk of an outbreak is increased significantly.
- Vaccine preventable diseases can result in hospitalization and death.
- Vaccines are backed by decades of scientific data demonstrating their safety and efficacy and are some of the most rigorously tested and observed public health interventions.
- The Vaccines for Children program, which provides immunizations to children in the United States who are unable to afford them, has saved nearly \$259 billion in direct medical costs in the last 25 years.

## Discussing a proposal to expand exemptions to childhood vaccine requirements

IDSA believes that the only exemption for vaccination should be medical contraindication. When parents choose not to vaccinate their children, they not only putting their own children at risk, but also children who are too young, immunocompromised, or otherwise contraindicated to receive the vaccine. These individuals depend on herd, or community, immunity, which is only effective when high immunization rates are maintained. In several of the recent outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases, some of the children who got sick were too young to have already gotten the vaccine themselves.

## Discussing an informed consent proposal

Vaccinating a child according to the CDC vaccine schedule is the standard of care for pediatricians. The CDC schedule is the result of decades of scientific and clinical testing by experts. A bill aimed at requiring physicians to review every potential adverse event is nothing more than an attempt to inappropriately scare parents out of vaccinating their children by describing outcomes that are experienced by less than one in a million children, and which often cannot be definitively linked back to the vaccination itself.

## Discussing healthcare personnel exemption proposal

Public health and healthcare workers are the first line of response to outbreaks and health emergencies. They are at a significantly higher risk of being exposed to vaccine preventable diseases and closely interact with many other sick patients who may be at greater risk for infection. Forcing a healthcare facility to hire individuals who do not meet the facility's vaccination requirements unnecessarily endangers patients.

Please [contact IDSA](#) if you need talking points for a specific proposal not covered above.