

[IMAGE]

To Vaccinate or Not to Vaccinate? Information You Need to Know

By Claudia Anrig, DC

Barbara Loe Fisher has been a diligent advocate for providing parents with the information necessary to make informed decisions regarding the usage of vaccinations for their children. Her lifetime work has paved the way to bring discussion to the safety and efficacy of so many chemicals that have become mainstream in today's pediatric population. With many parents becoming concerned about the possible safety issues for their children, this interview provides resources to assist you in determining what is right for your family.

Barbara, you are the co-founder and president of the National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC), a nonprofit charity. How did your personal experience with vaccinating your own children lead you to spend your life advocating for parents and children's rights? I became a vaccine safety and informed consent advocate after my 2-and-a-half-year-old son, Chris, was injured by DPT vaccine in 1980. Chris was a very healthy, exceptionally bright baby. All that changed after he suffered a brain inflammation within hours of his fourth DPT shot, and was left with multiple learning disabilities and attention-deficit disorder. He had to stay in a special-education classroom throughout elementary, middle and high school.

My mom and grandmother were nurses. I had been a writer at a teaching hospital after I graduated from college and before I became a mom. I thought I was well-educated about medical issues, but in the 1970s and early '80s, nobody was talking about the fact that vaccines could damage the brain or cause death. It was shocking to find out that the old, crude, whole-cell pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine in DPT shots was still on the market and required for children to attend school.

vaccination - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark After watching the Emmy award-winning documentary, "DPT: Vaccine Roulette," in the spring of 1982, I knew there was something wrong with a public health policy that legally required children to be injected with a toxic vaccine while pediatricians kept mothers in the dark about the vaccine's risks. I joined with other parents of DPT vaccine-injured children in the Washington, D.C., area that year and co-founded the nonprofit organization known today as the National Vaccine Information Center (www.nvic.org). In 1985, medical historian Harris Coulter and I co-authored

the book *DPT: A Shot in the Dark*, which was the first major critique of the U.S. mass vaccination system.

What is NVIC's mission? The mission of the NVIC is to prevent vaccine injuries and deaths through public education and protect the informed-consent ethic. We are not doctors and do not advise anyone to use vaccines or not to use vaccines. Our mission is to empower people with accurate, well-referenced information so they can take responsibility for and defend the vaccine choices they make for themselves and their children.

I know you've represented the voice of parents and children in Congress and in the media, supporting free choice or exemption options, the opposite side from the pharmaceutical industry. How aggressive have they come against you as a result? Over the past three decades, we have been successful in raising public awareness about the connection between mandated use of so many vaccines in childhood and the growing numbers of chronically ill and disabled children filling doctors' offices and special-ed classrooms across the country. The more successful we have become, the more intense and frequent the public attacks have been on NVIC and me by doctors and journalists promoting "no exceptions" vaccine mandates, and by Pharma-funded medical trade groups like the American Academy of Pediatrics.

There is no question that pediatricians are feeling the heat because more parents are refusing to buy the myth that vaccines are risk free and that without using so many of them, babies will not stay healthy.

Being attacked publicly for doing what you know is the right thing to do is not easy, but I have come to view those personal attacks as a measure of our success.

Why is informed consent so important for parents making decisions for their children? Parents have the legal and moral responsibility to provide and care for a child until they are old enough to care for themselves. Making well-informed health care decisions for a minor child is part of fulfilling that parental responsibility.

Informed consent means you have the human right to be fully informed about the benefits and risks of a medical intervention, including a pharmaceutical product, and [are] allowed to make a voluntary choice about whether or not to accept the risk for yourself or your minor child. All parents should have the legal right to exercise voluntary, informed consent to vaccination for their children without suffering societal sanctions for exercising that right, especially when vaccine manufacturers and doctors giving vaccines in America are protected from civil liability when vaccines cause a child's brain injury or death.

For parents visiting NVIC.org for the first time, what are the resources you have available? Our website is the oldest and largest consumer-operated website featuring information on vaccination on the web. We offer well-researched articles, commentaries and videos including:

- Referenced information on diseases and government-recommended and mandated vaccines
- Up-to-date vaccine laws for all 50 states, and a map showing states that allow medical, religious or conscientious belief exemptions
- MedAlerts, a user-friendly searchable database of vaccine-related hospitalizations, injuries and deaths reported to the federal Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System ([VAERS](#))
- A Vaccine Ingredients Calculator (VIC), which makes it easy to add up the amounts of ingredients in vaccines doctors recommend
- [Vaccine Freedom Wall](#), where people post real-life stories about being threatened and punished for trying to make voluntary vaccine choices
- A sign-up form for free subscription to NVIC newsletters and registration to use the online [NVIC Advocacy Portal](#)

Speaking of the NVIC Advocacy Portal, it was launched online in 2010. Can you explain the purpose of the portal and why is it beneficial to get involved? The free, online NVIC Advocacy Portal was created to help empower residents in every state to become effective vaccine choice advocates. Registered users of the portal are sent e-mail notices when legislation is moving in their state that either threatens or expands vaccine exemptions. Then, with one click on the computer or smartphone, users are put in touch with their own state legislators so they can take action.

NVIC worked with parents and chiropractors in Vermont and California last year to preserve personal-belief vaccine exemptions in those states. Now we need help in Oregon, Arizona and other states to fight the powerful Pharma-medical trade / public health lobby determined to eliminate all nonmedical vaccine exemptions in America. Everyone should become a user of the NVIC Advocacy Portal if they want to help save vaccine choices under attack right now in many states.

Claudia Anrig, DC, practices in Fresno, Calif., and is on the board of directors of the [International Chiropractic Pediatric Association](#), an organization that can answer your questions regarding the value of chiropractic care during and after pregnancy.

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