

Should children vaccination be compulsory?

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### **Abstract**

The issue of compulsory vaccination of children has been discussed severally in various parts around the world. Different opinions have been raised in relation to this issue with some people arguing that vaccination should not be compulsory. This paper draws on various studies that have been conducted with regard to this issue of mandatory vaccination. The paper examines various issues that have been addressed and raised in the research in order to determine whether vaccination should be compulsory or not.

In the past years, it has been a requirement in all the fifty states in the United States for children to get vaccinated before being enrolled in school. However, almost all the state governments have allowed exceptions on the basis of religion. In Australia, the situation is different since vaccination of the children is tied to the benefits that are received by a child. Unlike the US, where some most parents are delaying their children for vaccination until they join school, parents in the UK have embraced vaccination for a long time even without coercion from the government. Vaccination is the most effective method that can work in saving lives and promoting good health among the people (Wright, 2018).

There are various reasons why the government has made it a requirement for all the children to be vaccinated. According to Dr Samuel Kartz, (2017) “if sufficient numbers of children in a community are immunized, the vaccinated ones protect the unprotected by effectively stopping the chain of transmission in its tracks and drastically lowering the probability that the susceptible child will encounter the bacteria or virus (par 3),” This simply implies that if the entire community embraces vaccination, it helps in creating a pool of individuals that are immune. Even though the vaccines may not work in some children, the

children that acquire immune systems that are sufficient help in protecting the few that do not benefit from the vaccines.

As long as the majority of the people or children in a certain population maintain their health, the entire community is protected. When children are given certain vaccines, the likelihood is high that individuals will not acquire the diseases that are targeted. However, in order for the vaccines to work efficiently, all children must be vaccinated. Herd immunity is only achieved when 95% of individuals that are susceptible to a certain infection are vaccinated (Pym, 2019). Attaining herd immunity usually protects the individuals that are vaccinated and those that may not have been vaccinated. One of the most efficient methods of meeting herd immunity is coming up with an initiative that ensures that all individuals are vaccinated such as the rule requiring that all children should be vaccinated against various infections before joining public schools (Ciolli, 2012).

Therefore, based on research that has been done on the issue of compulsory vaccination, it is clear that vaccination should be mandatory. All children should be vaccinated against the infections that they are most likely to acquire. One reason is that vaccination helps in prevention against the infections that the children are susceptible to. The other reason is that it helps in promoting good health and most importantly, it promotes the creation of herd immunity. With compulsory vaccination, it implies that the intake of various vaccines is high. In the end, almost all the individuals in a community are vaccinated which reduces the likelihood of any infection coming up. Therefore, although the government may put in place measures that ensure high uptake of vaccines, parents should ensure that they vaccinate their children even without being coerced.

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