

**MINNESOTA PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
POLICY RESOLUTION**

VACCINATIONS ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE HEALTH OF MINNESOTA, NOVEMBER 2015

WHEREAS, the scientific efforts to develop vaccines that started with Louis Pasteur and Edward Jenner have been one of the most significant improvements for human health in history¹; and

WHEREAS, vaccines have led to the eradication of smallpox and the near eradication of polio worldwide which has and will continue to save countless lives in the future^{2,3}; and

WHEREAS, the US Center for Disease Control credits vaccines with saving 732,000 children's lives, and prevented 322 million potential cases of illness since the Vaccines for Children program was enacted in 1994 that provided free vaccinations for children who lack health insurance⁴; and

WHEREAS, vaccines have been effective in reducing the spread of infectious and potentially life-threatening diseases such as diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella, chickenpox, shingles, influenza, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, meningococcal disease, pneumococcal, rotavirus, and whooping cough/pertussis¹; and

WHEREAS, the cost-effectiveness of using vaccines to prevent infectious disease outbreaks and epidemics is great⁵, and the CDC estimates that since 1994 vaccinations have saved \$295 billion in direct costs and \$1.38 trillion dollars in society costs⁴; and

WHEREAS, the safety of vaccines has been demonstrated⁶⁻⁸; and

WHEREAS, high vaccination rates in the population are essential to achieving protection from preventable disease outbreaks and the associated consequences of becoming infected^{1,5}; and

WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association advocates for improving vaccination rates and strengthening support of vaccinations^{9,10}; and

WHEREAS, many parents express confusion and doubt about the necessity of vaccination¹¹; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota has yet to realize the full benefit of vaccines by immunizing all eligible individuals¹²; and

WHEREAS, the incidence of vaccine preventable disease outbreaks such as measles and pertussis are rising, leading to increased healthcare costs and negative consequences in the population including deaths^{13,14}; and

WHEREAS, for some children and many adults, vaccines are too costly or are not convenient to obtain¹⁵.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Minnesota Public Health Association:

1. Affirms that vaccines are safe and effective for public health to prevent human disease outbreaks in MN;
2. Supports legislation that increases the availability and access to vaccines, including stronger requirements for vaccinations in susceptible populations, particularly for children;
3. Supports programs which increase access to vaccines and/or healthcare coverage that aim to remove cost as a burden to vaccination;
4. Supports research that aims to develop new vaccines, improve existing vaccines, and increase the reach and access of vaccines.

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