

Testimony Submitted to US Food and Drug Administration's
Vaccines and Related Biological Products
and Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies
Advisory Committees

July 27, 2000

Good morning, members of the Committee. My name is Lynn Tylczak and I'm the Communications Director for PKIDs, Parents of Kids with Infectious Diseases. We're a national nonprofit with two missions. First, we assist the families of children affected by infectious diseases. Second, we educate the public about infectious diseases and various methods of prevention including immunizations.

I am here to speak on behalf of those families whose children suffer from vaccine-preventable diseases. In the past few years, we've been contacted by folks from all over the country who want straight talk about childhood immunizations. These moms and dads have heard contradictory statements in the media and on the Internet – and they don't know what to believe. They want to know the truth.

As your committee ponders the issues before it today and what, if any, action should be taken to address them, we only ask that you continue to do what you do so well - follow the science to find the answers.

As parents, we support childhood immunizations. It's critical for the protection of our children to maintain high rates of coverage. Too many of our families have children living with horrible diseases, diseases that could have been prevented with a simple shot. Some of our parents even know the pain of losing a child to one of these preventable diseases. They agonize over the "if only" - if only they'd gotten their child vaccinated.

We all want what's best for the kids. Vaccines should not be brought onto the market until research shows that they are safe and effective. After vaccines are in use, the scientific community should continue to look for ways to improve their safety and increase their efficacy.

That said, we ask that care be taken to avoid creating fear and misunderstanding among concerned parents. Vaccines save lives. There is a big difference between inference and information, certainty and circumstances, coincidences and causal links. Let science do its job. Let it save our children.

Thank you.