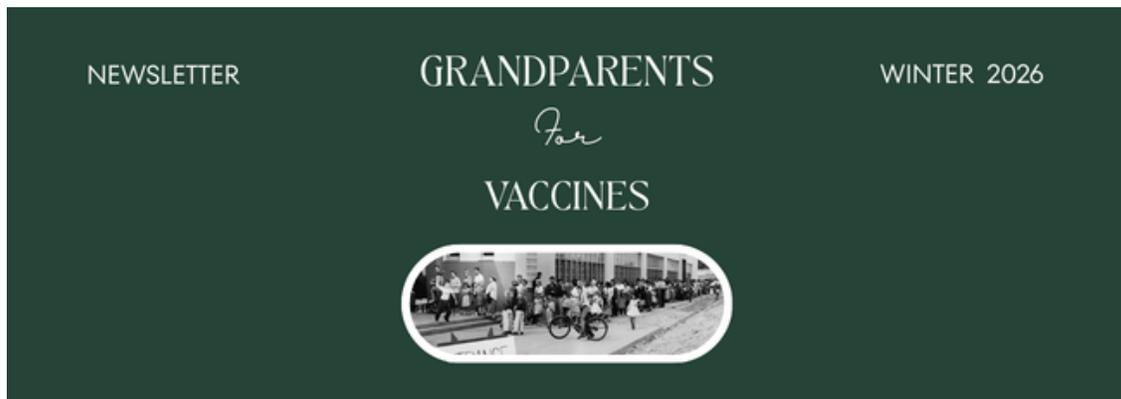


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## HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM GRANDPARENTS FOR VACCINES!

Since our launch last September, we are pleased to announce that Grandparents for Vaccines is now officially chartered in the state of Ohio as a 501(c)(3). Our all-volunteer leadership team now serves as the official GFV Board of Directors: Arthur Lavin, President and Founder; Donna A. Gaffney, VP Events; Teri Mills, VP Media; Danielle Dunetz, VP Social Media; and Kimberly Boller, Treasurer.

In an unprecedentedly difficult year for public health, many individuals and organizations worked to ensure that parents could continue to access reliable information to make informed decisions about their children's health. One of the most visible voices has been epidemiologist Katelyn Jetelina, widely known as Your Local Epidemiologist, who was named the 2024 Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in Public Health. In her 2025 end-of-year review, "[20 Public Health Wins in 2025](#)," **Grandparents for Vaccines made the list!** GFV was recognized among new coalitions for "Standing Up for Science" and praised for "filling gaps, staying rooted in evidence, and helping Americans feel confident and protected."

In December, new state leaders stepped forward, bringing us to 44 leaders across 22 states. Our goal is representation in all 50 states by the end of the first quarter of 2026. We welcome anyone who can offer a few hours a month. Special thanks to Colorado state leader Diane J. Windsor for keeping our website current.

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## GRANDPARENTS FOR VACCINES OPPOSES FEDERAL ROLLBACK OF CHILDHOOD VACCINE RECOMMENDATIONS

On January 5, 2026, Grandparents for Vaccines released a [statement](#) criticizing federal health officials for rolling back recommendations for several routine childhood vaccines, warning **the move could put our grandchildren at risk and confuse families seeking medical guidance.**

The changes remove long-standing recommendations for vaccines that protect against illnesses, including influenza, hepatitis A and B, RSV, rotavirus, and meningococcal disease.

“For generations, grandparents have seen firsthand what happens when children are not protected,” said Teri Mills, MS, RN Emeritus, vice president for media at Grandparents for Vaccines. **“We remember polio wards, measles outbreaks, deaths from the meningococcal sepsis and meningitis. Suffering from diseases that vaccines later helped prevent.”**

Grandparents for Vaccines is **particularly concerned about the removal of the meningococcal vaccine from the recommended schedule**, as this germ once

our grandchildren,” Mills said.

Grandparents for Vaccines also rejected comparisons to European vaccine schedules, including Denmark’s, saying differences in population size, classroom density, climate, and disease exposure make such comparisons inappropriate.

**The organization emphasized that the vaccines are not banned and that parents can still choose to vaccinate their children.**

“Our message to parents is simple,” Mills said. **“The best schedule to follow for protecting our grandchildren is the immunization schedule of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Our children should be cared for by pediatricians and doctors who follow this guidance.”**

Grandparents for Vaccines says now more than ever, the grandchildren of America rely on being protected by these doctors, whom they trust, not to follow the political winds.

### **VACCINATION RATES ARE PLUMMETING. HOW IS YOUR COMMUNITY DOING?**

At a time when measles is surging at the highest rates in over a generation – and the US is on the verge of losing the measles elimination status it has held since 2000 – a recent article in *The Washington Post* had a headline concerning to every grandparent:

**“U.S. vaccination rates are plunging. Look up where your school stands.”**

The article reported that at least 5.2 million kindergarten-age children in the U.S. are living in counties where vaccination rates for recommended immunizations have fallen below the herd immunity threshold (the number doctors say is needed to achieve overall protection for the class), exposing children, their families, and their communities to increasing health risks. Herd immunity protects children too young to be vaccinated and immunocompromised individuals.

**What can you do?**

- Use [the article’s](#) search feature to **look up vaccination rates in your community** - and in your grandchildren’s communities. Knowledge is power!
- **Share what you learn with your family, your friends and neighbors, your local school board, and your elected officials.** (States make laws about the vaccines needed for school entrance, and schools are tasked with ensuring those requirements are met. Time out of school/work for quarantine related to

- **Use what you learn from trusted sources** like Grandparents for Vaccines when talking with others about the importance of vaccination.

Dr. Jeremy Faust, emergency room physician, public health expert, and author of the *Inside Medicine* newsletter, recommends using the following phrase when speaking to those who may be vaccine-hesitant: **The politics have changed, but the science has not.**

Read more in the December 31, 2025, edition of [Inside Medicine](#),

- **Keep sharing with others!** Use the power of your personal stories to explain why vaccination is important to you!

### CONVERSATION STARTERS

Many grandparents have told us that one of their greatest challenges is knowing how to talk about vaccines with hesitant parents or with those simply unsure why immunizations still matter for children today. **Younger generations are often unaware of the real-life impact of vaccine-preventable childhood diseases. Your story can help change that.**

To help, each issue of the *GFV Newsletter* will feature one or two brief conversation starters designed to open the door. These prompts are meant to unlock your lived experiences and help you share firsthand stories that bring clarity, credibility, and compassion to these important discussions.

Conversation Starters:

1. *We love you and our grandkids so much. That's why we're saying these things.*
2. *We know what these childhood diseases look like and feel like. Here's what I've experienced and seen...*



[Download our Newsletter](#) to read all about Indiana state leader **DEB ROBARGE!**

\* **Consider sending in your story in writing or via a video** you record with your phone (if the file is too large, we recommend sending it to us using WeTransfer.com, a free website that allows you to email large files). These stories help us increase content on the [Grandparents for Vaccines YouTube channel](#).

\* Please **follow GFV on all of our social media** (links are at the bottom of the newsletter). GFV would also like to add content from kids, especially teenagers, to our [TikTok page](#).

\* **Talk to your family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and all who are concerned about plummeting vaccination rates in our country.** Encourage them to join GFV.

\* **Looking for speakers for an upcoming event? GFV is here to help.** Please let us know, and we will do our best to accommodate your program.

\* **Consider becoming a state leader (or co-leader)!** As the old English proverb says: Many hands make light work!



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