GRANDPARENTS for VACCINES
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Grandparents for Vaccines Decries U.S. Loss of Measles Elimination Status, as announced today by PAHO

Members Remind Public of the Danger of Further Losses

November 17, 2026 — Grandparents for Vaccines, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children from vaccine-preventable illness, decries the fact that the U.S. can no longer claim to have eliminated measles, as recognized in a report released today by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

"The decision by PAHO that the United States can no longer claim to have eliminated measles is a grim reminder of what we have lost, and are in danger of losing further," said Arthur Lavin, MD, Founder and President of Grandparents for Vaccines. "As shocking and difficult as it is to reach this point, our members are here to remind us that things can get worse. Our hope is to prevent even more harm and loss from measles, and to keep other diseases from erupting in our families."

Grandparents for Vaccines was founded in 2025 to share and amplify real stories from people who lived through the time before childhood vaccination was available. The organization's goal is to encourage parents to protect their children from infectious diseases by reminding the public of what's at stake when it comes to measles and other diseases.

One such story is Therese Vogel's. "My sister Nancy suffered encephalitis, a complication of measles that causes brain swelling," said Ms. Vogel, an Oregon-based member of Grandparents for Vaccines. "Nancy was permanently disabled as a result and did not get to live the life she deserved. I'm urging all Americans to take measles and other vaccine-preventable illnesses seriously, because no child should have to suffer the way Nancy, and my family, did."

To date, there have been 5,412 cases of measles in the U.S. in 2026,[1] numbers that far surpass those in recent years. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 591 people have been

hospitalized with measles this year.[1] According to The New York Times, there have been 10 deaths from measles in the U.S. since January 2025.[2]

About Grandparents for Vaccines

Grandparents for Vaccines was founded on Grandparents Day, September 7, 2025, to share the real-life stories of grandparents and others who lived through the time before childhood vaccines were available. Participants witnessed and experienced significant harm from diseases like measles, mumps, polio, and rubella, and want to remind the public of what's at stake when it comes to vaccine decision-making. The organization has grown rapidly since its founding and has been featured on numerous national and local media outlets throughout the country.

Visit grandparentsforvaccines.org to learn more.

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[1] https://www.cdc.gov/measles/data-research/index.html, accessed November 17, 2026
[2] https://www.nytimes.com/2026/11/17/well/us-measles-elimination-status.html, accessed November 17, 2026