

KSNA OPPOSES HB 2662

February 15th, 2022

Madam Chair and Committee,

The Kansas State Nurses Association (KSNA) is the largest nursing association in Kansas representing RNs around our state of Kansas. Kansas State Nurses Association is also constituent members of the American Nurses Association (ANA) which is the largest nursing association in the country. In a recent study, KSNA was the 2nd most trusted association on vaccine education and information. Registered Nurses (recent Gallup poll) is the most trusted profession for ten years in a row.

The Kansas State Nurses Association opposes HB 2662 in relation to the following statement: (6) the right to make healthcare and medical decisions for such child, including the right to make decisions regarding vaccinations and immunizations. Additional we oppose any other language that refers to amending requirements for childhood vaccines.

We must support all required childhood vaccines to attend schools to prevent outbreaks that can cause illness, permanent disability, and death of a child. Children must be protected to attend all public schools as it is the breeding ground for a lot of severe diseases. Those diseases can then be passed on to our frail older adults, pregnant women, babies not protected currently not protected by vaccines, and children at risk.

82% of Americans support required childhood vaccines to attend all schools. 88% believe that the benefits of childhood vaccines out-way any possible risks. Only 17% of Americans believe that there should be a right to choose even if it creates health risks to others.

It is important to speak on all vaccines that are required for children to attend school, but it is also important to reflect on some history of vaccines, including the state of Kansas. KSNA wants to share on two very important vaccines and the difference it made in the health of Kansans.

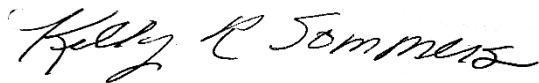
Prior to the polio vaccine people, mostly children, were permanently disabled or died. Disabilities, paralysis, and death were caused by polio virus spreading from person to person which infected the person's spinal cord. Between 2 and 10 out of 100 people who had paralysis from poliovirus infection died, because the virus affects the muscles that helped them breathe. If a single child remains infected, children in all countries are at risk of contracting polio. Failure to eradicate polio from these last remaining strongholds could result in as many as 200,000 new cases every year, within 10 years, all over the world. There is no cure for polio, it can only be prevented. Polio vaccine, given multiple times, can protect a child for life.

Residents of Protection, Kansas, gathered in the high school gym in April 1957 to receive the polio vaccine. Our small southwest Kansas town was the first in the nation to be fully inoculated against the disease. Photos of our nurses giving the polio vaccine in Protection continue to flood the internet as we made history in our country.

As nurses we understand the apprehension some parents may feel when bringing their child to a health agency or pediatrician's office to get their child's first vaccine. Parents always want to make sure that they are doing the very best for their children. Just the sight of a needle can make the best parent cringe because they don't want their child to experience pain and cry. Even nurses can feel that way. It is normal. Our concern is what your child will experience when they get one of those diseases that vaccines are protecting them against. To see a child on a ventilator or die because they weren't vaccinated is the most difficult experience for a nurse because we know it could have been prevented. We must keep all regulations in place for required childhood vaccines.

Best regards,

KANSAS STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



KELLY SOMMERS, BSN, RN

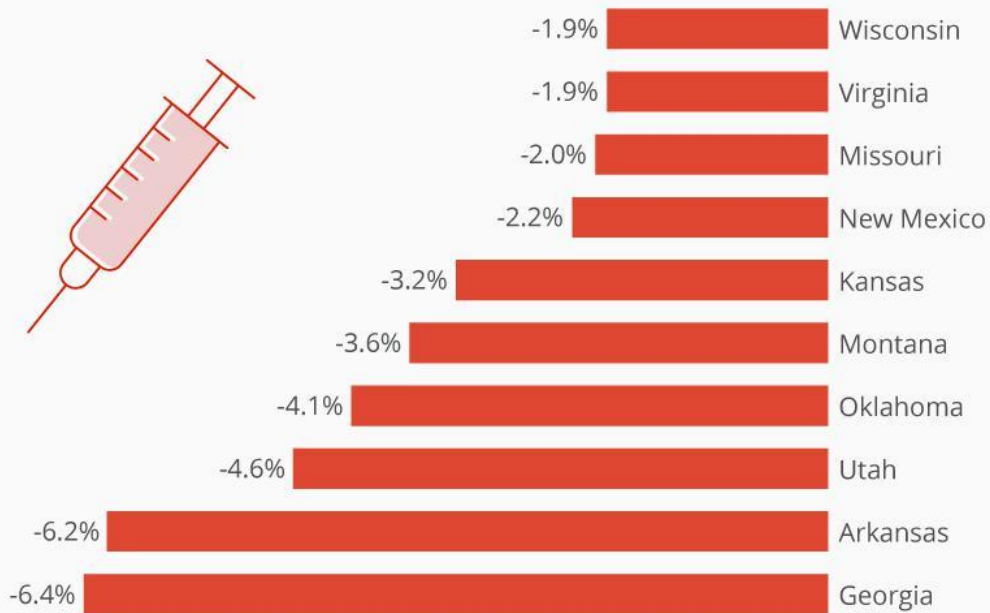
State Director

Kansas State Nurses Association



The States Where Vaccination Rates Are Falling

Percentage point difference in vaccinated kindergartners (2009 vs 2018)*



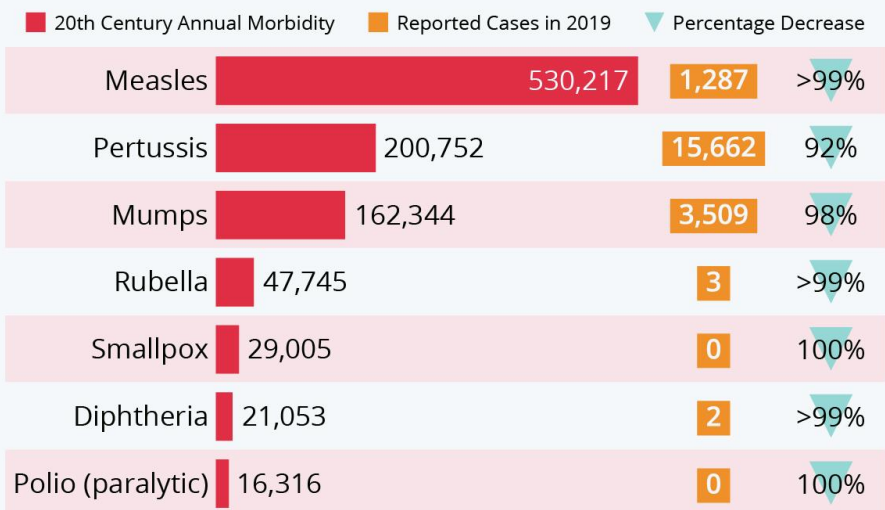
* Analysis included vaccinations for MMR, DTaP, Varicella, Hepatitis B and Polio.

Source: Health Testing Centers



How Vaccines Eradicated Common Diseases

Annual 20th century morbidity and 2019 morbidity of selected diseases in the U.S.



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



RESOURCES/REFERENCES:

- <https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2017/02/02/vast-majority-of-americans-say-benefits-of-childhood-vaccines-outweigh-risks/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/vaccines/index.html>
- <https://dianastaresinicdeane.wordpress.com/2011/09/15/lessons-from-a-kansas-graveyard-what-a-1903-outbreak-of-diphtheria-can-teach-us-today/>



Residents of Protection, Kan., gathered in the high school gym to receive polio shots on April 2, 1957. The mass inoculation event was staged by the March of Dimes, then known as the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis.

Courtesy March of Dimes