

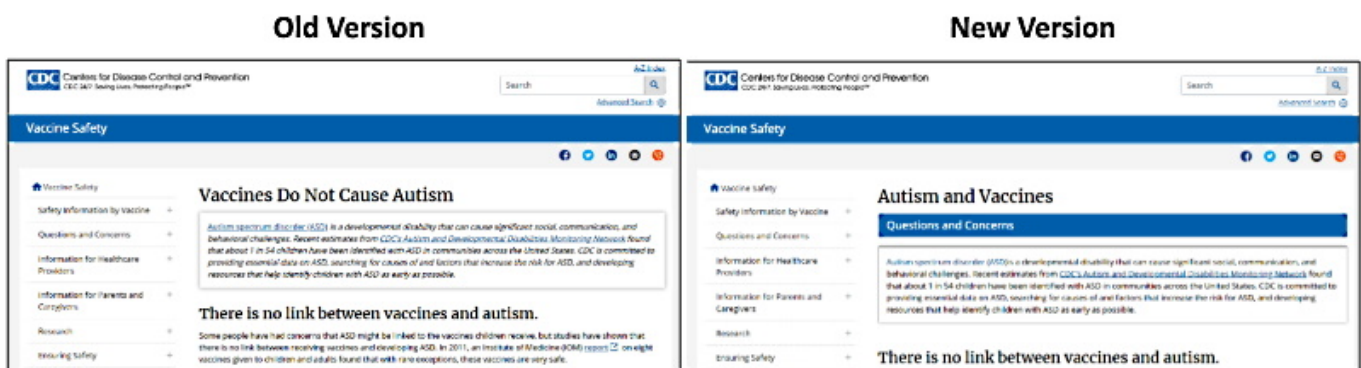
CDC Removes Claim 'Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism' From Its Website

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ICAN, through its attorneys led by Aaron Siri, has been relentless in its legal demands and actions to compel the CDC to remove its blanket claim that "Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism" from its website. We are excited to report that the CDC has finally capitulated to those demands! It has removed this claim from its website!

[CDC's Autism-Vaccine Page](#)



The more than three-year journey for how ICAN, and its legal team, achieved this result is a story of determined persistence. Here are the highlights.

ICAN's Opening Salvo (Oct. 12, 2017 – Dec. 31, 2018)

The journey began with a [letter](#) sent to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) on October

12, 2017. That letter explained why the CDC cannot scientifically claim that “Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism” on its website. ICAN then ended with the following demand: “Please confirm that HHS shall forthwith remove the claim that ‘Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism’ from the CDC website, or alternatively, please identify the specific studies on which HHS bases its blanket claim that no vaccines cause autism?”

To put HHS and the CDC (an agency within HHS) on their heels, mere days after sending this letter, ICAN also sent a [FOIA request](#) on November 1, 2017, demanding:

All reports, scientific studies, and any other documents the CDC relied upon to support the assertion “Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism” located on its website at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/concerns/autism.html>.

The CDC quickly called ICAN’s counsel, Aaron Siri, regarding this request. After some negotiations, the [CDC formally responded](#) on November 7, 2017, stating that “A search of our records failed to reveal any documents beyond the records hyperlinked in the specific web site” to support the claim that vaccines do not cause autism. The CDC had thus revealed a truth, one that HHS could not run from in its response to ICAN’s letter.

On January 18, 2018, HHS responded to ICAN’s October 12th letter. In that [letter](#), HHS provided a list of studies it said supported the conclusion on its website that “Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism.” All of the studies cited related either to a single vaccine, MMR, or to a single vaccine ingredient, thimerosal. None of these studies support the claim that vaccines given during the first six months of life do not cause autism.

Given that HHS failed to support its claim that “Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism,” ICAN responded by [letter](#) dated December 31, 2018 wherein ICAN asserted that “HHS cannot scientifically

claim that ‘Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism’” and “must therefore remove this claim from the CDC website until it can produce the studies to support the claim.”

ICAN’s Pincer Maneuver (Jan. 1, 2019 to June 18, 2019)

In order to keep the pressure on to force the CDC to be honest with the public, during the first six months of 2019, ICAN submitted numerous requests for communications among key personnel within the CDC relating to autism. Some of these requests sought emails going back decades. The key players within the CDC with regard to vaccines and autism now knew we were watching, and that we would have their unvarnished, internal emails related to autism.

ICAN Drops the Gauntlet (June 19, 2019 to Dec. 30, 2019)

Now that ICAN had gathered the proof in the form of evidence and admissions it needed to hold the CDC’s feet to the fire, on June 19, 2019, ICAN demanded that the CDC produce copies of the studies it relies upon to claim that all the vaccines given during the first six months of life “Do Not Cause Autism.” These vaccines include DTaP, HepB, Hib, PCV13, and IPV. ICAN also demanded that the CDC produce studies to support that the cumulative exposure to these vaccines during the first six months of life “Do Not Cause Autism.”

ICAN, of course, already had the CDC’s admissions on these points from its prior FOIA request in November 2017, the HHS letter exchange, and the CDC’s internal emails. The CDC had nowhere to hide and no way to dissemble. As expected, it responded to ICAN’s request with the same list of studies involving MMR or thimerosal. Not a single study supported that DTaP, HepB, Hib, PCV13, and IPV do not cause autism.

ICAN Battles the CDC in Court (Dec. 31, 2019 to March 5, 2020)

ICAN then put the pressure directly on the CDC. Instead of

walking away after the CDC effectively admitted it did not have the studies ICAN sought, ICAN [sued the CDC in federal court](#). The suit focused on the CDC's claim that "Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism" on the basis that the CDC had not specifically listed the precise studies that it asserts support that claim. This lawsuit also quoted from the [deposition of Dr. Stanley Plotkin](#), the godfather of vaccinology, who admitted under oath that he was "okay with telling the parent that DTaP/Tdap does not cause autism even though the science isn't there yet to support that claim."

After a lot of wrangling between ICAN's counsel Aaron Siri, and the Department of Justice, which was representing the CDC, the CDC finally capitulated and signed a [stipulation that was entered as an order of the court on March 2, 2020](#) in which the CDC identified 20 studies as the universe of support it relies upon to claim that DTaP, HepB, Hib, PCV13, and IPV do not cause autism. Here is a summary of the vaccines these studies cover:

- 1 relating to MMR (not a vaccine ICAN asked about);
- 13 relating to thimerosal (not an ingredient in any vaccine ICAN asked about);
- 4 relating to both MMR and thimerosal;
- 1 relating to antigen (not a vaccine) exposure; and
- 1 relating to MMR, thimerosal, and DTaP.

Incredibly, the one study relating to DTaP on the CDC's list was a recent [review by the Institute of Medicine \(IOM\)](#), paid for by the CDC, which conducted a comprehensive review looking specifically for studies relating to whether DTaP does or does not cause autism. The IOM concluded that **it could not identify a single study to support that DTaP does not cause autism**. Instead, the only relevant study the IOM could identify found an association between DTaP and autism.

In other words, the only study the CDC listed that actually looked at any of the vaccines given to babies during the first

six months of life concluded that there are no studies to support that DTaP does not cause autism. Yet, the CDC chose that study as one of the few that supports its claim that “Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism”!

This reality is truly incredible because, when it comes to autism, vaccines are the one suspected culprit that the CDC claims to have exhaustively investigated but, yet, the CDC could not provide a single study to support its conclusion that the vaccines given during the first six months of life do not cause autism.

The CDC regularly complains that those raising concerns about vaccine safety are unscientific and misinformed. It is therefore truly stunning that when we asked the CDC for studies to support its claim that “Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism,” the March 2, 2020 stipulation and order made it abundantly clear that it was the CDC’s own claim that “Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism” that was unscientific.

ICAN’s Coup de Grâce (Mar. 6, 2020 to Aug. 26, 2020)

And now for the coup de grâce. ICAN’s demands at the end of 2019 and over which it took the CDC to court in early 2020 were for the studies the CDC “relied upon” to claim that Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism. ICAN now had a court ordered stipulation that specifically listed the twenty studies the CDC “relied upon” to support this claim – none of which supported that the vaccines given during the first six months of life do not cause autism.

To assure that the CDC understood ICAN was never, ever, ever, letting this issue go, on March 6, 2020 (days after concluding the federal lawsuit) ICAN submitted the following FOIA demand to the CDC: “*All studies supporting the claim that DTaP does not cause autism*” and days later requested “*Studies created or retained by CDC to support the claim that DTaP does not cause autism.*” The difference between this and ICAN’s prior requests is subtle but powerful. Instead of asking for the

studies the CDC “relied upon” to support that DTaP does not cause autism (as it did previously), ICAN was now seeking the studies that in fact support that DTaP does not cause autism.

In response to this request, the CDC could not list its MMR or thimerosal studies – its hands were tied. It understood there was nowhere left to hide its unsupported claim that “Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism.” And it knew that ICAN would again take it to court, and this time the outcome could be even harsher.

The CDC Capitulates

On the heels of the foregoing, and dozens of related demands regarding autism that ICAN continued to press, in the dead of the night, and without any fanfare or announcement, on [August 27, 2020](#), the CDC website removed the claim that “Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism” from its website! The CDC had finally capitulated to the truth!

Compare for yourself the CDC’s autism-vaccine webpage on [August 26, 2020](#) versus [August 27, 2020](#).

You may be wondering why we waited until now to announce this amazing news. Well, ICAN and its legal team have been so busy fighting on dozens of vaccine related fronts (mandatory MMR vaccines, flu shot requirements, improper COVID vaccine trials, etc.) that we only realized the CDC’s vaccine-autism claim had been removed when we recently turned back to that front! Like a Mayan temple hidden in plain sight for hundreds of years, ICAN only recently discovered the CDC’s silent capitulation.

The Future

The most recent [data](#) from CDC shows that 1 in 36 children born this year in the United States will develop autism. This is a true epidemic. If the CDC had spent the same resources studying vaccines and autism as it did waging a media campaign against parents that claim vaccines caused their child’s autism, the world would be a better place for everyone.

To their credit, parents with autistic children have never backed down. In the face of incessant brow beatings by public health authorities, studies have found between 40% and 70% of parents with an autistic child continue to blame vaccines for their child's autism, typically pointing to vaccines given during the first six months of life. These parents know what they experienced, what their parental instincts tell them, and no amount of shaming can change that truth.

With the removal of the claim that "Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism," it is ICAN's sincere hope that our public health authorities have turned or will soon be turning the corner on this issue. That they will fund independent scientists to conduct the desperately needed studies of autism and the cumulative impact of the vaccines given during the first six months of life.

The cries of parents who know that vaccines caused their child's autism should no longer be ignored. The science must be done. And ICAN will continue to fight to make sure that that it is done.

Epilogue

The CDC's website does continue to claim that "Vaccine ingredients do not cause autism" and so ICAN's fight continues! Our next step will be to force the CDC to admit whether or not they are also making this claim for aluminum adjuvants used in vaccines. And if so, to produce the studies to support this claim. (See ICAN's white paper on aluminum adjuvants and autism [here](#).)

Of course, whether one or more ingredients, like water used in vaccines, does not cause autism is not really the issue. The question is whether the vaccine, the product itself as formulated, causes autism. And we now know that the CDC finally understands that it can no longer claim that "Vaccines Do Not Cause Autism."

This victory for truth and science could not have happened without the encouragement ICAN receives from its supporters like you. Thank you for making our work possible!