

New Colo. report recommends for parents to be educated on vaccinations

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

Parents who want to exempt their children from required vaccinations because of personal beliefs first should be educated on immunization benefits and risks, a new report says.

Colorado state law requires that students enrolled in licensed child care centers and schools have a certificate on file documenting the child is up to date on all required immunizations. Students can be exempted if a parent files a one-time form that claims personal beliefs against immunizations. Students also can be exempted for medical or religious reasons.

The report is the result of six months' work by a stakeholder group convened to study the state's personal belief exemption policy and make recommendations to update it. Other recommendations include publishing school and child care center immunization and exemption rates, annual renewal of the personal belief exemption and requiring a medical provider or health official sign the exemption form.

"The personal belief exemption policy should strike a balance between individual rights and our responsibility to protect public health," said Dr. Larry Wolk, executive director and chief medical officer of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. "We appreciate the thoughtful recommendations of the work group."

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