

October 4, 2016

National NewsMedia Council

RE: Formal Complaint – Breach of Journalistic Standards

I am writing to file a formal complaint regarding an editorial written by unidentified author(s) at the Windsor Star. The editorial I wish to draw your attention to is entitled "**Star's View: Immunization drive long overdue**" (September 30, 2016) <http://windsorstar.com/opinion/editorials/stars-view-immunization-drive-long-overdue>

In the article the author(s) makes the false statement that vaccination is a requirement in the Province of Ontario in order for children to attend school. Quote: *"It's provincial law that all children by (sic) immunized against infectious disease for the protection of all from the folly of the few."* This statement is a clear misrepresentation of the legal requirements pertaining to vaccinations.

All vaccinations in Canada are voluntary. In Ontario, the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) is the legal instrument that sets out vaccine requirements for school children, as well as providing explicit legal exemptions from vaccination. What is required in the Province of Ontario is up-to-date documentation of either adhering to the recommended vaccine schedule **OR** a statement of exemption based on conscience, religion or medical reasons.

The author(s) fail to inform readers that parents have the legal right to exempt their children from the practice of artificial immunization.

*"Unlike some countries, immunization is not mandatory in Canada; it cannot be made mandatory because of the Canadian Constitution. Three provinces (now two) require proof of immunization for school entrance: Ontario and New Brunswick for diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella immunization; . . . But, exceptions are permitted on medical or religious grounds and reasons of conscience; **legislation and regulations must not be interpreted to imply compulsory immunization.**"*

[Immunization in Canada](#); May, 1997; Vol 23S4  
Canadian National Report on Immunization - 1996

I suggest that the editors of the Windsor Star would or should reasonably be expected to have knowledge of Ontario's laws governing vaccination of children in school and daycare. This begs the question why the author omits vitally important information about parents' legal right to obtain conscience or religious based vaccine exemptions under ISPA.

The Windsor Star appears to be actively engaged in depriving Windsor's citizens of their Charter rights to fundamental freedoms of conscience and religion, their legal right to security of the person, and their medical right to informed consent.

The efforts of the Windsor Star are also a violation of numerous international Conventions to which Canada is signatory including the Nuremberg Code and Helsinki Accords which defend the basic human right to refuse unwanted medical treatments. These human rights treatise uphold the Informed Consent ethic and reject the moral argument that the creation of alleged benefits for the many justifies the sacrifice of the few, as is so well articulated in the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights; Article 6 – Consent:

*“Any preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic medical intervention is only to be carried out with the prior, free and informed consent of the person concerned, based on adequate information. The consent should, where appropriate, be expressed and may be withdrawn by the person concerned at any time and for any reason without disadvantage or prejudice.”*

Parents with legal exemptions for their unvaccinated or partially vaccinated children feel under attack when they read editorials such as presented in the Windsor Star because a Canadian’s legal right to exemption from vaccination isn’t acknowledged and shared with the general community. Such reporting creates fear, distortion, and division in a community. This fear and distortion, however, is created by the media’s misrepresentation of the facts.

When citizens are denied their right to even know that they have a legal right under the law to exempt their children from vaccines for school or day care, that vaccination is NOT mandatory, and that no one can force them to vaccinate their children against their will in order to go to school, the result is a government and medical industry imposed tyranny supported by a complicit media.

The media ought to be independent of government and corporate agendas, and instead serve as an honest broker of information and work to safeguard and protect the rights and freedoms of Canadians. This kind of deceptive editorializing by the Windsor Star harms not only those who may not be aware of their legal right to chose not to vaccinate, it also undermines confidence in the integrity of the media to be accurate, fair, and balanced.

It is my expectation that Canada’s media would respect and protect our rights and freedoms as citizens of Canada rather than erode and undermine them. I request the NewsMedia Council to uphold the standards of responsible journalism and address the inaccurate and deceptive efforts of the Windsor Star.

Our communities deserve better.

Ted Kuntz