

Association for Vaccine Damaged Children (AVDC)

Press Conference

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Speakers:

Edda Goldman (West) – Spokesperson for AVDC

Parents of Vaccine Injured Children from the AVDC:

Colin Rothwell

Ed Tetu

Henry Kortekaas

Katie Kortekaas

Nancy Howes

Bill Ventress

Sylvia Ouimet (sp)

Cathy (sp) Wakefield

Marie Cowieson (sp)

Colby Bole (sp)

Patricia Britt

Edda Goldman: Good morning everybody, I'm Edda Goldman and I'm one of the spokespeople for The Association for Vaccine Damaged Children. We really appreciate your presence here today and we're basically here today to introduce to you families of vaccine damaged children and to bring this government and the public our deepest concern about the devastating damage caused by whooping cough vaccine. Our main concern is that other families do not have to suffer what we are going through. For our children it's too late. They already sacrificed for the public good and the benefit of society.

When we realized that there were so many of us, whose children had been affected by the DPT vaccine we formed our Association both to represent our children who cannot speak for themselves (child cries) and to support each other. We are deeply committed to ensure that all Canadian parents have vaccine information, which we did not have, in order that they can make responsible decisions. It's clear through our work that no matter how immediately a child reacts to the vaccine it is simply not being acknowledged and there is no follow up to determine the degree of damage or long term effect to the child's health. This across the board denial prevents the government and the public from having any true knowledge of the extent of damage and death that the vaccine is causing. How many children is this happening to? Nobody knows for sure. Certainly the government has no idea of the numbers of children that are being affected. On the March 29, 1986 after the deaths of four or five children, immed... in France, (child cries out) France immediately withdrew the use of DPT vaccine pending a full scale investigation. How much more damage and death must be suffered by our children in

Canada before this government takes strong action. Both the government and the medical establishment have a very strong commitment to disease prevention through vaccine programs. Unfortunately they have lost sight of the fact or are unwilling to acknowledge that now the risks of the vaccine by far exceed any risk of the disease of whooping cough. It's extremely painful to bring our children before the media but we feel so strongly that Canadians must know this is happening. Our presence here today is not an act of sensationalism but an honest plea that the truth be unveiled – that the truth of what has happened to our children be removed from the obscurity of statistical manipulation. It is not fear we are trying to create but knowledge and awareness. As parents of vaccine damaged children we know that the pertussis vaccine is unsafe. We are asking for a full scale investigation into the tragedy of vaccine damage and death in this country and the immediate suspension of the use of the vaccine or at the very least a delay of vaccine schedules until 6 months of age.

I would like ... um... I would like to thank those members of the press and the communications media who have, in the past, had the courage to tell our story which has enabled us to find each other so that we can continue to work together to protect other children and other families from this tragedy. And I would like to begin this press conference by the introduction of the Rothwell family. This is Donna and Colin Rothwell and their little boy Patrick. And the Rothwells would like to make a statement as well and I will then introduce the other families here who will say a few words. So Colin and Donna, please come up.

Colin Rothwell: Well, obviously I'm here with my wife Donna, our daughter (inaudible) and our son Patrick. Patrick is a statistic. He didn't choose it that way. When he initially incurred his problems we thought we were the only ones - that Patrick was one in a million. Shortly afterwards we received a little bit of publicity and we were totally shocked at the number of people that phoned and wrote that had similar problems. Consequently we are delighted to belong to the Association so we feel that we are not alone anymore. But coming here today has been hard. It's been difficult for us but if any way it can bring some sanity in this situation so that no other family has to go through the grief that we have gone through.

Edda Goldman: Thank you very much Colin. I would like to introduce the Ed Tetu family. This is Ed and Lois Tetu and their little daughter Melanie.

Ed Tetu: I just hope you bear with me because I'm as nervous as can be. I'm not used to this. Lois and I are from the little town called Stratton, it's in Northwestern Ontario near the Manitoba border. Melanie, she was born on St. Patrick's Day March 17, 1976 – it was a normal delivery. Her six week check-up was normal according to the doctor's records. Two different doctors - one called her a normal, healthy baby at 6 weeks. On June 22, 1976 she received her first DPT-P shot and two days after she became very fussy and started screaming. She screamed for three days. Unless she was passed out sleeping. We took her back to the same doctor and the guy called it teething - prescribed Atarax – we now find out that Atarax is an anti-histamine. What that has to do with teething I don't know. This same guy he's now the public health doctor in Belleville doing the same thing to other kids I guess. I don't know how he got that position. On July the 22nd she received her second DPT-P shot and that day the

clinic in Emo was closed so we took her to a doctor in Rainy River - Lois's sister went with her that time and Melanie was just stiff, screamed all of the time in the doctor's office even - it was the same prolonged screaming. And that doctor again called it teething. Lois has often said that she wished children were born with their teeth as there are so many things blamed on that. I would like to just sort of impress on people how we were unaware - we were never warned at all - of the possibilities that vaccines could cause a problem. We weren't unaware or aware of it all the time until last year when 20/20 aired that show and The Journal aired the show and we started digging into the records. Lois, we were lucky, she kept real close records in the baby book and even written on the calendar. Things that had happened so - so we found out that way - it wasn't that we were ever informed by any physician at that time that it could have been it seemed like everywhere we went to Winnipeg Toronto here, with Melanie they didn't know what the problem was. Uhh... But the one question they always asked us - Is she fully vaccinated? We thought that they were trying to find out if we were good parents or not. Um.... Excuse me a little bit here, I have got so much to say and I know I can't say it all and I'd like to just uhhh - in our area also, like I said it's very lightly populated and all the little towns and villages in the area, the populations wouldn't be over 20,000. In one year within a few months of Melanie we know of at least eight kids with cerebral palsy alone, that's not counting the ones with chronic ear infections. In one town near us in one class alone there's eight children, eight children in one class with tubes in their ears. Ever since we took Melanie to be diagnosed at a year old we asked in Winnipeg of course concerned with what could have caused it - they didn't know. We told them about all of the children in the area. We thought maybe it was the mill or something - something had to be in common with all of them. We never did get an investigation or any or any answers to it. About three years ago I think it was, I read in Reader's Digest that vaccines could possibly cause problems and then we had Melanie at the Crippled Children's Centre here in Toronto two years ago, I mentioned that to a doctor there. He said, oh, no, it's never been a problem in North America. He said it was in Great Britain years ago but that was the old style vaccine and I found out since that it has been a problem in North America and he did nothing but lie to me. He had to of, he had to have known in his position that it has been a problem in North America. And why wasn't he interested into looking into it?

One of the other girls, Trudy, from home, she's just a few months older than Melanie, and we have been able to convince her parents to go and get the records from their doctor and in her records after her first shot they quit giving them to her. She had problems, respiratory problems, infections, ear infections, it's marked right in her records - adverse re-start - after the first shot they started them over again, they gave her more needles and she was even supposed to have and then she was also, Trudy was also given two preschool shots and a normal healthy child is only given one.

Now Melanie, we found out in December, that she's been staying at the Centre in Thunder Bay getting therapy and going to school, and we found out last December that she also received two preschool shots. Now what I'm trying to say, these children, these two children that I know of, that we have some records for, shouldn't have had one shot after they reacted the first time - they shouldn't have had any. They were not only kept pumping them into them but they gave

them more than any normal healthy child would get. And I have records to prove that if anybody wants to see them after.

The package inserts CPS book – doctors go by - it states that if a child with neurological disorders or a history of seizures there is no more needles given. They were. Umm.... I met with our local MP John Perry umm.. Jack Pierce, our MPP, he told me yesterday that he would have liked to have been here but he's busy travelling in the area, he said if I would have been there I would have joined you. I also met with Jake Epp, the federal Minister of Health, for a couple of hours in March. Mr. Perry – he wrote Epp a letter and he wrote to Dr. Friesen, our public health doctor requesting an investigation. Friesen's reply to him was that the population was too small in the area to do an investigation if you can believe that. I don't know what the population has to do with whether there's eight children damaged that

If anybody wants to go over this with me after I [inaudible]. I believe that there is a lot of dishonesty going on - the public health people believe that vaccines are a good thing and the last thing they want is if there's problems with it so they try and cover it up and that way we're not getting the true statistics at all and if it's true in our area what's happening that I know of and that the same with the rest of the country what are the statistics?

Edda Goldman: Thanks very much Ed. I'd like to introduce the Kortekaas family next. Katie and her husband Henry and their little daughter

Henry Kortekaas: Maureen

Edda Goldman: Maureen

Henry Kortekaas: We have three children, Maureen is our second. Because the Ventresses who are sitting over there spoke up more than a year ago we only have one child that is brain damaged. Otherwise the chances are pretty high that we would have two children brain damaged. And this is why we're here. To tell other parents the possible dangers of pertussis vaccine. Our first child had um had the um DPT shot and um screamed for thirteen hours. Naturally we were concerned we asked the doctor and he says its normal don't worry about it, it happens to everyone. So our second child Maureen, she didn't have the thirteen hours of screaming but she had a progressive um... deterioration in her physical and her mental abilities. Maureen can't crawl, she can only lay down. She obviously is a happy girl, she's at about a 6 month level and she can't really speak. She does communicate her wants and needs by crying and we consider ourselves fortunate. There are many other children in this room that are brain damaged and physically handicapped far beyond Maureen's condition. (inaudible)

Katie Kortekaas: I could go into great length discussing the situation before Maureen was born and the circumstances around her birth and our situation is no different from anybody else's. It was in that same respect normal, she had normal progression, the same as Mr. Tetu said, the child reached certain milestones, went to the doctor, received the shot, there was no consultation, there was no advice there was no scenario of the parent sitting down with the

doctor where the doctor should say, by the way Mrs. Kortekaas, I feel that I should tell you that there are certain adverse effects to this vaccine. That did not occur. We didn't even have the back of the package read to us. In all honesty I'm no different than any other woman in this country. I never thought this would happen to us – five years ago I didn't know the meaning of the word pertussis reaction or any concerns to any vaccine related problems. My husband and I feel that we owe it to this child and to the rest of our family and to the rest of all of the other families in Canada that either have kids now or are contemplating having children to take a good long hard look at the vaccine, the pros and the cons and to have the medical profession do a second assessment of the situation and to get Canadians to take a look at the damage that is occurring to our kids.

Henry Kortekaas: If you talk to any doctor they'll admit the pertussis isn't a perfect vaccine. The kids in this room, the children in this room and their parents indicate how imperfect it really is.

Katie Kortekaas: Our particular family situation is not normal. Our other two normal children will never, never know the meaning of a normal and I'm going to continue to use that word, family relationship. They will never know what it is to have a true reciprocal love of a sister .. um... we've got a five-year-old that has had to counsel kids in his Junior Kindergarten class over the meaning of the word handicapped. And when asked in school as to a brief discussion of what he was he tell me a little bit about yourself, he spent the whole time he had talking about his family and his special sister at home so that should tell you how much of an effect a situation like this has on normal family life. Maureen has to come first all the time. Her wants and needs have to be addressed first. She can't do anything for herself. She can't feed herself. She can't even sit up. We have to have pillows around her because she falls over. And um... The kids have learned, the other two children have learned how to help us take care of her. One is barely two, the other one just turned five, that's unfair – it's unfair to them and it's definitely unfair to her. She has been denied the right of living out life normally.

Henry Kortekaas: The Association for Vaccine Damaged Children isn't really looking for new members. We hope by talking to you today that we can, maybe stop having new members. We have enough problems. Thank you.

Edda Goldman: (inaudible) I'd like to introduce Nancy Howes next. Please come up Nancy.

Nancy Howes: Hello everybody. (inaudible) My name is Nancy Howes. My husband (inaudible) could not be here today. And this is our five-year-old daughter Christine. She's had all but her preschool inoculation and we thank the good Lord that she's normal and healthy. And this is our 18-month-old daughter Patricia. Patricia was born on the 12th of October 1984, received her first inoculation on the 6th of December 1984 and within a months' time was hospitalized in Sick Children's hospital for five weeks. We were never told about DPT, always mentioning DPT and were told no way. She was re-hospitalized in May in Sick Kids again for another five weeks and we again said could this be DPT – no definitely not. And when we were bringing her home we said, could you just tell us, how could we approach the situation without mentioning DPT,

could you just tell us if this baby was born like this. And they went and got her file and said to us, no, there is absolutely no way this baby was born like this. From the lumbar puncture we took in January there was an inflammatory process taking place in her spinal fluid which could have been sitting there for two months idle. And there is absolutely no doubt in my mind that the DPT shot is the culprit of Patricia's condition now. She's 18 months of age, does not have full head control, does not sit up, is clinically blind, has pretty well uncontrollable seizures ... is on a very stringent diet right now because they told us this is a last ditch effort for Patricia. There are really no other drugs available for her type of seizure and it's this or nothing. They don't really hold out a whole lot of hope for her. She's at about on the average 4 to 6 month old level but there are some things that a 6-week old baby does better than what Patricia does now. And we just, you know, we hope like crazy that by approaching the public today that we can help other kids. Again, I just, we could all go on and on about our situations and what kind of a life we live at home. Again, with Katie, our lives will never be normal again. Christine has suffered so much trauma over the past 18 months with the hospitalization of her baby sister and the baby sister that we had her so psyched up for. And this is not the baby sister that she wanted. Anyways, thank you very much.

Edda Goldman: Thank you Nancy. Bill would you like to come up and say a few words?

Bill Ventress: (inaudible)

Edda Goldman: The thing is you have to be near the mike otherwise it doesn't get picked up.

Bill Ventress: I want to apologize for my (inaudible). Steven is our first and we were just like any other normal parent, check-ups, doing all of the progressing just like any other normal child and at exactly three months he went in for his first DPT shot and uh, he had ran up somewhat of a high temperature. We gave him Tempra like the doctor told us. He slept for somewhat longer than he normal ever slept before. And then within the 18 days he gradually deteriorated and (inaudible). We took him to the hospital and they rushed him through to Sick Kids and said that it was, uh, he was a mystery child – they couldn't really find out why he went into seizures and convulsions and so forth. And uh, as we uh, (inaudible) our doctor, our pediatrician at home about the needle coming up to the 2nd shot we watched a Phil Donohue show in July of 84 or 82 and she said, no, no, Canada is altogether different than the States. He had uncontrollable convulsions. We ended up seeking help into the States and we took his baby book and within pretty well 18 to 5 days after three of the needles he was in the hospital for convulsions. And now the seizures are somewhat controlled. And that, but he's at the stage of maybe a 3-5 months old child.

We have a second child and she's had two of her vaccinations, we've had the pertussis part taken out and she's doing quite well. But it's more of a vaccine roulette, you take your chances. And, I originally, I went on The Journal just to let other parents know what could happen. And that's it.

QUESTION from reporter: Could I ask someone a question here? Um, you all seem to be saying that you went to doctors, no one ever said that that was the problem. Did anybody ever diagnose that that was the problem or did they, are you just (inaudible) from your own research and your own questions?

Ed Tetu: We know, having an exemption form filled out by our family physician, that Melanie is not to have any more needles (inaudible) and the reasons for it is because she has epilepsy, seizure disorders and prior severe reactions to the vaccine.

QUESTION from reporter: But you say that no doctors have ever told you “well, we’ve made a mistake” or yes, that, no one has ever sort of said “vaccines are the cause”.

Colin Rothwell: In our case we were given the diagnosis as possible post pertussis.

QUESTION from reporter: I’m sorry, possible

Unknown person: encephalopathy (inaudible)

Katie Kortekaas: Post pertussis encephalopathy

QUESTION from reporter: So that’s only in one case.

Nancy Howes: We were told when Patricia was rushed into Sick Kids I phoned the doctor that delivered her – he did not administer the needle but the nurse did – and this doctor said to me, I want you to know one thing as her mother just in case I’m not around for her next inoculation - I had never heard of this before. And I said what is that – and he said, just in case I’m not around for her next inoculation Patricia cannot have any more pertussis and I said oh, why? Because pertussis is known to cause seizures was his answer to me.

Henry Kortekaas: Maureen was diagnosed off the record

QUESTION from reporter: Excuse me could you speak at the mike because we can’t pick up your sound at all.

Henry Kortekaas: OK (inaudible) Maureen’s condition was diagnosed off the record as possibly being caused by pertussis in Canada and in the States – probable cause was pertussis vaccine damage.

QUESTION from reporter: You say off the record.

Katie Kortekaas: Off the record.

Henry Kortekaas: Off the record.

QUESTION from reporter: What do you mean off the record?

Katie Kortekaas: That they would never put it....

QUESTION from reporter: So he admitted, the doctor admitted to you?

Henry Kortekaas: Yes, there was a neurologist that admitted that. Maureen was born, you might say perfect, in the sense that a child is given a test, an Apgar test I think they call it, a couple of seconds after birth and then about 10 minutes later and she scored a 10 and a 10 – (inaudible) one minute and five minutes after birth. And Maureen scored a 10 and a 10 on that Apgar test. The pediatrician that delivered Maureen believed she was perfectly normal and was quite surprised when we informed him of her problems.

Edda Goldman: Could I just interject for a minute. This is a really difficult area. This business of diagnosing. There are no diagnostic tools at this time to diagnose pertussis damage. We ... everybody seems, has to go on the circumstantial evidence. You have a child that is perfectly healthy, the child is given a shot, the child then goes into a seizure reaction or a collapse and then you see the progression and deterioration of health thereafter. And what you see here today is many children who have seizures and collapse and were continuously revaccinated so that they ended up in a state of disability that you are witnessing today. This need not have happened. We do have a couple of parents who have not spoken yet who do have letters of acknowledgement that their children are vaccine damaged. I'd like to introduce Mrs. Ouimet from Sarnia.

Sylvia Ouimet: My name is Sylvia Ouimet. I am from Sarnia. I do not have my child with me today. My child's name is Sherry. Sherry was born absolutely normal, she had her first DPT shot when she was two months old, she had her second one when she was four months old as to which time she went into a very, very difficult seizure that they had to take her out of with Valium. It, I believe, went on just over an hour. We rushed her there. That night my doctor said to me, well hopefully this is a one shot deal. The one shot deal went into numerous, numerous, numerous hospital visits going from Sarnia to London, Memorial Hospital to Sick Kids Toronto. Two years later my own doctor came to me and he says Mrs. Ouimet I don't know why this have to happen but I'd like to inform you that over in Europe in cases like this where a child is damaged through, through the vaccination that the families are compensated because the government realizes that one out of so many children have to suffer. They have to suffer so that the rest of them can be healthy. He sent me to a lawyer. He says, Mrs. Ouimet, you have, I feel that you have a case where you should be compensated. He says, I don't know how we're going to do it, how we're going to do about it, whether you'll have to sue me, the drug company, or which. At which time I have been pursuing it. The more I have the more I have been finding out what a terrible, terrible hazard that pertussis vaccination is, how unclean it is. Again I've watched the 20/20 program. I've read books on it. I just found out about this Committee approximately a week and a half ago. My lawyer said get in touch with this Edda Goldman apparently there is some Committee. Aside of that I thought I was the only one – like everybody else has said – one in a million who had a problem child. And I just thought I better

come up here and tell that story because it's my own doctor that has admitted to me it is definitely the pertussis secondary to the inoculation.

Edda Goldman: Thank you very much Sylvia. We also have Mrs. Wakefield who would like to make a statement, and she is here with her daughter and she has also a diagnosis of vaccine damage.

Mrs. Wakefield: Hello My name is Cathy (sp) Wakefield, this is my daughter Jodie. Jodie is 13-years-old. She was born October 27, 1972. She was born quite normal. She weighed 9 pounds 6 ounces and she was quite a healthy baby. Jodie (inaudible) her first needle, she had a normal high fever, nothing really too much. Her second DPT shot when she had, within five hours, she went into convulsions which lasted over an hour and a half. We rushed her to the hospital – and they gave her Valium to bring her out of these seizures. At the time the doctor said that it was probably just a normal reaction to high fever and I think they called it febrile convulsion at the time. So things went on and she had her next DPT shot which the doctor said she had to have. It was more important than not having it at all. And this time she really went into seizures bad. She was hospitalized at Etobicoke General Hospital. And they ran tests on her and found that she had encephalitis, a type of encephalitis to the brain. This was not revealed to us at the time. Again they told us it was convulsions that she would outgrow as she got older. As she got older she seized more and more. The convulsions are very uncontrollable. We moved to Peterborough, Ontario when she was two and a half years old. At this point she had all of her immunizations from Toronto and each time she'd seizure. When we lived in Peterborough our doctor revealed to us exactly what was at the basis of her problems – it was the pertussis in the needle. She's got two, a brother and a sister and neither one of them have had pertussis in their needles, they have both had the diphtheria and tetanus but not the pertussis because this is what is at the basis of her problem. She still (inaudible) medications for seizures but she's just out of control. She seizures every night. We spend at least, she has at least five to fifteen grand mals a night where she's right unconscious and seizing. She does attend school when she can. But she spends at least one week out of every month in the hospital because her seizures are so bad she goes into status. Which is the seizure just keeps on going and going and going. And, um she has to go on an intravenous (inaudible). Our doctor is battling this now, trying very hard to get it under control but it just doesn't seem possible. We put up with this for 13 years. Her life is ruined, ours is in shambles. And our other two children are suffering very badly over this. Hopefully something can be done so other parents don't have to go through this with their child. (inaudible)

Edda Goldman: Thank you very much. We have two parents here today whose children died subsequent to severe reactions after the vaccinations. I would like to introduce Marie Cowieson and Colby Bole. Would you please come up the two of you? Thank you. I would also like to mention that we have about 50 families across Canada now who have heard about our Association and who have been in contact with us and we do consider them to be members and many of those families are families who had children who died after vaccine reactions.

Marie Cowieson: My name is Marie Cowieson and my daughter Ruby died three years ago not long after her shot ... (inaudible) I feel discouraged when I warn other parents about the shot and they just go ahead and have their children immunized and don't take heed any heed to the warnings because I know that it's a very dangerous toxic (inaudible) small child's body. Ruby was my only daughter and it is unfortunate that I don't have to live like these people here and try to cope with the suffering of their child. Nevertheless, I did watch my baby's life drain out of her as a result of the shot and that uh, it is still painful today.

Colby Bole: My name is Colby Bole. I had a son and he was born in '67 and he died in '74. When Michael was four months old he received his shot – four hours after that he started convulsing really bad (crying) it was continual - going to the hospital - but what I really don't understand about all this is – that 17 years ago the Hospital for Sick Children the neurologist said to me, yes Mrs. Bole I know this happens 1 in 500 children are permanently damaged. Here we are 17 years later and where are we? They are still giving the shots. Children still get damaged. They still die. And what is being done? That's all I'm asking. What is anybody going to do about this? Thank you.

Marie Cowieson: I would like to encourage other parents who have children who have died from SIDS deaths or peculiar or unexplained causes to really consider the vaccination, the vaccination as a probable cause as there is no follow up on SIDS deaths and the likelihood is very high that the real cause is the pertussis vaccine. (inaudible)

Edda Goldman: I have one more family to introduce to you. This is Patricia Britt. Patricia .. Patricia's situation was written up in last Thursday's Toronto Star. Some of you might have seen it. And this is her daughter Jay.

Question from reporter: Excuse me could you just repeat the names of the other two mothers, I couldn't hear you.

Edda Goldman: Yes

Question from reporter: First and last names.

Patricia Britt: Should I go ahead? Thank you all for being here. I'm Patricia Britt and this is my daughter Jay. If I was to say any more it would be just what everyone else has said today except my daughter was diagnosed as a sudden infant death but revived. She was three and a half months old when she received her first needle, four days later she went into what doctors call sudden infant death and that is all of diagnosis I have ever received from any doctor. She is retarded, blind and unable to work without help. I don't know what else, if anyone else wants to ask me questions.

Edda Goldman: Maybe that's what we should do. Umm.. This has been a fairly long press conference and I'm sure everybody has many other appointments so perhaps we could just open it up to question and answer period. Some of you might want to direct questions to

some of the specific parents here. I think we should just wing it, and see, you know, who can stay and we're going to be here for a little while. We'd like, in a few minutes, to go back outside and to continue our demonstration in front of the Legislature, so you are free to certainly come out and talk to any of us and perhaps we will just be in here for another five minutes or so and then we will move outside. Thank you.

Question from reporter: Could you give us a brief description of what the status is regarding all the families with regard to lawsuits.

Edda Goldman: Okay I think that maybe the Rothwells could speak to that because they have been in litigation longer than any other family. Could you say a few words about....

Question from reporter: Is every family in litigation (inaudible)?

Edda Goldman: Oh, I see. I don't know that every family is.

Question from reporter: Ask for a show of hands?

Edda Goldman: A show of hands? [at least 5 hands raised]

Ed Tetu: (inaudible)... sue the doctor. The doctor, he tells you that the nurse is responsible. It's all going down to the little guy and what has to be understood it's the system – it's the system is coming from here. Mr. Epp, he told me that it's a provincial matter. You know, if the Ministry of Health doesn't want to look into it maybe the Attorney General's Office should look into it. I went and got myself a book - definition of criminal negligence, Section 201, everyone is criminally negligent who in doing anything or be, in omitting to do anything that is his duty to do, shows wanton or reckless disregard for the lives or safety of other persons. And I believe there is lots and lots of grounds for criminal negligence charges to be laid. Maybe that's what should be done and it will stop this (inaudible).

Question from reporter: Can I just get this straight then? You all have lawsuits before the courts right now?

Unknown speaker: Not all of us.

Unknown speaker: Just the ones that had their hands up.

Reporter: Well, who did, I thought everyone did. Sorry.

Unknown speakers: Colby Bowl doesn't, Colby Bowl doesn't, Marie Cowieson doesn't.

Unknown speakers: All of you up here do.

Edda Goldman: And Sylvia Ouimette over here as well as well.

Question from reporter: Can I ask you - for those of you have friends now and you are starting to say you want to inform the public about this have there been any more information given to parents about this now as a result of the [inaudible] that you have brought forward through public health officials and the doctors. Are you aware that any of your friends and family are being told more by their doctors office?

Unknown speaker: Uh, no.

Ed Tetu: Since we started, oh, I'm sorry. I was going to ... since we started at home our public health nurse, which I have a lot more respect for than our public health doctor, she came to our house for quite a few hours and went over Melanie's records and then she took the time to watch the show Vaccine Roulette and 20/20. She went to Kenora to a, to a conference that 22 health nurses were at and she took all afternoon and presented the vaccine case to them, showed them the shows, and she said that since we went public with it last year she has had five serious reactions and she will not give the pertussis anyone. And one of the other health nurses the other way from us has had one, which is six more than there would have been a year and a half ago.

Question from reporter: Are you saying that, that no one, there is no sort of official policy of nurses or doctors telling family (inaudible).

Unknown speakers: Absolutely not. No. No.

Reporter: No warning policy at all – so anything that is being done is done sort of at ad-hoc (inaudible).

Unknown speaker: That's right.

Edda Goldman: And that is what our Association is calling for is legislation. As a matter of fact, Ed Tetu has done a tremendous amount of work in his area up in Stratton through his member of Parliament Mr. Pierce - has introduced a private members bill asking for mandatory reporting of adverse reactions. Uh, the bill itself, in terms of any information other than what is listed here, seems to be very simplistic. Um, and I think on of, certainly one of the demands of our association is that we be involved in any legislative process that is going to undertake to try to correct the gap that seems to exist in the healthcare system in terms of mandatory reporting, recognition of adverse reactions, all of that, and of course that's all outlined in the briefing paper that you have all received. But it's a good start. I mean, it is at least showing that somebody is concerned about the issue and something is being done. So Bill 52 has had its 2nd reading, is that right Ed? But now there, there seems to be some stalling with the Health Committee. Ah, there... what?

Ed Tetu: Jack.... Jack was on the Health Committee, Jack Pierce, the one who presented this bill and this is what's going on is everybody is so afraid of their jobs or whatever. They won't stand

and do anything about it. Jack came down here and presented that, it had two readings, it had lots of good comments. He was on the Health Committee right after he presented this. And you can check into this. He was pulled off the Health Committee and he's now with Forestry.

Edda Goldman: So at this time our Association, the families of vaccine damaged children, have absolutely no representation into the process that is happening in terms of Bill 52 and we want representation in the process.

QUESTION from reporter: What reaction have you gotten, actually, from the Health Ministry, which is in charge of all the Health Public Health Units across the province? What have they told you?

Unknown person: (inaudible)

Edda Goldman: We haven't been told anything.

QUESTION from reporter: So, has the Association written the Minister a letter other than the letter you gave us today?

Edda Goldman: No, that is, unless, people I think have written individually. You must understand that this is very newly formed association. And, you know, the past time, we have tried to organize and figure out exactly how are we going to come to the public with this issue. So.

QUESTION from reporter: Can I ask a question about compensation and I need someone to go to the mike because we can't pick it up. Anyone. I understand that Quebec has a compensation fund for for some parents of pertussis damaged children. Is that something, I mean, is that the only way that you can be helped now is through some sort of comp ...

Colin Rothwell: Certainly it would be a step in the right direction. (inaudible) In Britain there is a compensation.

QUESTION from reporter: So is that what you parents want for your children then?

Colin Rothwell: It's not our prime concern but it is one of our concerns, yes.

QUESTION from reporter: I'd suggest, in terms of warning other parents um... I'm, I'm not clear sort of medically from what your research is and everything whether the problem was with giving the vaccine at all whether repeated, uh, uh, repeated administrations of the vaccine after your children had reactions. Is that was the problem was as opposed to the first time or would you tell parents not to reconsider (inaudible) for their children?

Ed Tetu: I think that the public health people should be honest with the parents. Dr. Gold and that fellow from down here somewhere (inaudible) and Pollock sat there with a smirk on his

face and he said there was one alternative he said. People can come to their public health units and we will tell them, we'll inform them. If the same thing is going on down here that I find going on at home, they are not going to find honest answers at the Health Unit.

QUESTION from reporter: So was the severity of your children's condition because they kept getting ...

Ed Tetu: Yes

QUESTION from reporter: ...kept getting the shots.

Colin Rothwell: Not necessarily.

Katie Kortekaas: It can happen anytime. It can happen after the first shot, second shot, third shot, fourth shot, you name it. And you run the same risk every time you get the shot. And the child gets four shots before the child is two years old. So that's four chances at those numbers that are always quoted of having the damage occur. It could happen the first time out, or it could happen after two years of enjoying a totally normally healthy child and then bang.

QUESTION from reporter: So you would like parents to be warned of the risk of the disease vs. the risk from the vaccination and let them judge then whether they want to (inaudible).

Katie Kortekaas: Yes, that is one of the numbers of steps in the right direction.

QUESTION from reporter: Are you saying that the risks are greater from the vaccine than they would be from whooping cough?

Katie Kortekaas: I'm not a medical doctor... I have no medical training, I can't say that.

Colin Rothwell: Look at my son, I think, you know, if I had a choice, I think I'd rather see him fight off a bout of whooping cough than wind up the way he is.

Ed Tetu: At the very least is we don't know what the risks are here. But they sure aren't what Gold and them guys are telling us. And when it does happen they refuse to admit it's happening. Even if they would say to a parent before that the vaccines were necessary, I'm not going to get into all that. But, but tell them, if your child reacts, come back – you know, let us know. If any time, if Melanie's shots would have been stopped there wouldn't have been near the damage. We had two brain scans done on her at three years old and two years ago and she's got more damage now than she had then.

Joe: There are many books on the market today such as "Don't Get Stuck, The Poison Needle", which indicates that the risks of taking the inoculations are greater than not taking them. My wife and I run a health organization called the Canadian Natural Hygiene Society and this is based on the total approach to healthful living. You need never get sick. If you, it's based on,

it's based on a proven science that if you, if you adhere to proper eating habits, getting enough rest, getting enough of the outdoor, uh, watching your food combinations, avoiding certain harmful foods that you need never, uh, have to get uh, take an inoculation.

Edda Goldman: Joe, I really appreciate you coming to support the group today but I think that the press has other questions that they want to direct to the parents themselves.

Joe: Okay, alright, thank you.

Edda Goldman: Thank you very much for your support.

QUESTION from reporter: Is it, is it the pertussis vaccine in particular that you object to or do the diphtheria, polio, tetanus because everybody refers to the DPT but the DPT does not include the pertussis necessarily.

Katie Kortekaas: The normal everyday version of the vaccines that the doctor keeps in his fridge is DPT.

Colin Rothwell: P being pertussis.

QUESTION from reporter: DPT-P

Colin Rothwell: Yes

Katie Kortekaas: Exactly, but it's the P portion of it that does the damage. P is

QUESTION from reporter: (inaudible)

Colin Rothwell: No, (inaudible) DPT-Polio is the shot is how it's referred to.

Katie Kortekaas: It's pertussis, it's whooping cough that causes the damage.

QUESTION from reporter: And you can get that?

Katie Kortekaas: Oh, yes because a number of children have since been vaccinated without the pertussis portion in the vaccine. But it takes a greater amount of effort on the medical practitioner's part to stock the version of the vaccine without the P in it because the common everyday version that everybody gets is the version with the P in it. But you can ask the doctor, to say, look, I'd like to have my child vaccinated but I don't want the pertussis in the vaccine. It sometimes takes a bit of time because he has to make the effort to get it. Some doctors keep it.

QUESTION from reporter: Do you know what the difference in the cost is?

Katie Kortekaas: What does it matter? I'm sure it's pennies, I'm sure it's nominal. What does it matter? I would have gladly have paid a hundred thousand times the difference.

QUESTION from reporter: And even though you've been inoculated against pertussis, against whooping cough, that does not stop you from... (inaudible).

Katie Kortekaas: I don't think cost should be a factor here at all. What is the cost?

Unknown person: the measles shot can be a problem too (inaudible)

QUESTION from reporter: Have the other elements of the shot – excuse me – have the other elements of the shot proven to cause damage as well or is it just the P part.

Ed Tetu: That's the, the pertussis is the one that has drawn the most publicity ...

QUESTION from reporter: But have the other elements of the shot been known (inaudible)

Unknown person: On rare occasions, yes.

Unknown person: On rare occasions, but yes.

Nancy Howes: We also have a mother in our group (inaudible)

Unknown person: We do have a member

Nancy Howes: for her needles and her daughter took a reaction to the MMR shot.

QUESTION from reporter: So it's not as though the other ones are 100% fail safe.

Nancy Howes: No, absolutely not. But it's the pertussis that does the most damage.

Reporter: That's the most damaging.

Nancy Howes: Ya, Ya.

Henry Kortekaas: I think it's safe to say that uh, that there is a greater risk of damage from the vaccine than there is from the disease. And there are several books out and a documentary out that support that viewpoint.

QUESTION from reporter: Do any of you have any doctors – you mentioned off that your doctor said off the record – that this is what caused your child's problems – do any of you have doctors that in trials that will testify that unequivocally this

Ed Tetu: I think our doctor would. He told me that (inaudible) you're right Ed (inaudible) I believe you're right but I can't say it in public.

Question from reporter: So none of you have doctors.....

Colin Rothwell: We do.

Unknown person: Dr. Mendelsohn would stand by

Colin Rothwell: We have a written diagnosis.

Reporter: That says....

Colin Rothwell: Pertussis was the cause of my son's problem. Unfortunately this is the subject of litigation so I can't really

Edda Goldman: I'd like to encourage anyone who is interested in this issue to get this book – it's out in paperback now - DPT A Shot In The Dark. It's a very well researched document that analyzes all of the political, economic, and medical implications that are involved in this issue. This is a very, very large issue. And we are several years behind the rest of the world in bringing this to public attention here. Please get this book, it's really, really worthwhile, very well researched.

QUESTION from reporter: What response have you had from the provincial Ministry of Health? Have you met with the minister today, are you planning to meet?

Edda Goldman: No. We don't even know if he would, if he came. We invited him to this press conference. We don't know if there has been a representative from his office here or not.

QUESTION from reporter: What contacts have you had with governments provincial or federal? Have you made overtures (inaudible) responses.

Edda Goldman: No, you have to understand our association formed this January and we have been planning and trying to think of ways that we can communicate our concern. And we feel that the best way to communicate our concern is to go directly to the public with this issue and then from there we will begin to follow through with the Ministries of Health. We had one communication with a member of the National Advisory Committee on Immunizations last November because we understood that they were meeting in Ottawa to begin to discuss compensation programs. We wanted very much to have input and representation to that Committee. We were told that the hearings and committee meetings are private, that we would not be permitted to come to any of those meetings and that our only recourse was to make our concerns known to the Ministry of Health which we are in the process of doing now.

QUESTION from reporter: Provincial Ministry of Health?

Edda Goldman: Both, Provincial and Federal. In the meantime Mr. Tetu has met with the Federal Minister of Health Jake Epp and has discussed this matter with him, our concerns and has represented all of the views of our group to Jake Epp.

QUESTION from reporter: What is your strategy for the immediate future?

Edda Goldman: That's a good question. I mean I think we've outlined our basic what our goals are. And um, I really don't know. I mean, does anybody have an answer to that? I am one of the spokespeople of this group.

Henry Kortekaas: I think our official goal is to stop vaccine damage. The best way to do it is to get this situation out to the public. That's why we're here today. We're not really talking about compensations or other issues. We're talking about getting this problem out to the public. That is our official goal, that's on our letterhead. That's why we're all here. We don't want new members. We want to stop vaccine damage. That is why we are here today. That's why we're here talking to you today.

Question from reporter: Can I just make a point. The pertussis vaccine is not a compulsory vaccine and I don't know if there is some (inaudible)

Henry Kortekaas: It's a package deal.

Reporter: But you can get it separately.

Nancy Howes: But doctors don't tell you that. And people are very ignorant about the situation. And I had one mother phoned me up – I'm a contact for this group and I had one mother phone me about ten days ago and asked her doctor, I want this needle but I want it without the pertussis and he said, there is no such thing. So there you go. And this is what we are up against. And this gentleman saying, about what is our plan of attack. Well, the preparation that has gone in to getting all of our children here today has just been incredible. You people nod your heads yes, but you have no idea what we've all been through this morning trying to get these children in their whatevers to get them here. Our lives are just incredible. And I think the fact that we have gone to this extreme to do this, to present it to people and say hey, somebody's got to sit up and take notice of what the hell is going on with these poor little kiddies. (inaudible) And I think now that we can sit back a bit and hope we get good response. No amount of money, no compensation act that is every put in place whether it's a multi, multi-billion dollar suit will get our children's health back. And that's all we want. We don't want any more vaccine damaged kids. And that's about my point.

Henry Kortekaas: Doctors aren't giving the information out. I have nurses that have called me and said I have given that shot for the last ten years and no one ever told me that this kind of reaction could happen. That is the member of the medical profession that is phoning up myself and stating that kind of thing? That's wrong.

Katie Kortekaas: We get people calling us the night before the shots. Saying should I give it to my child? The thing, I can't make up that person's mind out of the few recent articles, thank goodness, in the newspaper people have taken heed of the problem that could possibly happen and they are phoning and they are looking for advice.

Nancy Howes: And the doctor that inoculated Christine is not the doctor that inoculated Patricia. And he said to me when this first happened in January of '85, he said, I inoculated Christine, yes you're right, she is okay, but Nancy I'll tell you the truth knowing what I know about the DPT shot every time I administer (inaudible).

Katie Kortekaas: I'll tell you what else we get. We get somebody on the telephone saying but "Tomorrow is the day I have to take her for her shot. Nobody has to do anything. Just because the clock ticks over and it's that magic day that somebody has set in time doesn't mean you have to take your child down. You don't have to do anything.

Henry Kortekaas: I'd like to thank you all for attending.

- End of press conference -