



Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

Dickinson County

818 Pyle Drive, Kingsford, MI 49802
Ph: (906) 774-1868 Fax: (906) 774-9910
BRANCH OFFICE

www.didhd.org

Iron County

601 Washington Avenue, Iron River, MI 49935
Ph: (906) 265-9913 Fax: (906) 265-2950
MAIN OFFICE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joyce Ziegler, RN
Community Health Services Director
Phone: (906) 265-4156
Email: jziegler@hline.org

No Link Between Vaccines and Autism

Kingsford, Michigan, January 30, 2008 - The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department urges viewers to recognize the fictional premise of the television episode, "Eli Stone", airing on ABC-TV on January 31, 2008. There is no scientific evidence of a connection between vaccines and autism despite the fact that the title character in the episode successfully argues in court that a vaccine caused a child's autism.

In fact, despite the removal of the suspected vaccine component, thimerosal, from vaccines in 2002, statistics show that autism rates continue to rise. These statistics further support the evidence that a link does not exist.

Autism is a spectrum of behavioral disorders and can be a devastating disease to the individuals experiencing it and for family members responsible for their care. Research continues to add to our understanding of the causes of autism and the means to treat it effectively. In the meantime assistance for family members is available through community mental health agencies, support groups, educators, counselors, physicians and other health and human service personnel. Additional funding is needed both for research and for assistance.

Vaccines are the single most powerful, cost-effective public health intervention ever developed. They have reduced, and in some cases, eliminated serious infectious disease. False information similar to what is being provided on this television show could result in a decline in immunization rates. In the United Kingdom, erroneous reports linking measles vaccine to autism prompted a decline in vaccination and the worst outbreak of measles in two decades including the deaths of several children. A similar effect would be devastating to the health of our community. For further information regarding vaccines visit our website at www.didhd.org or call us at (906) 774-1868 or (906) 265-9913.

###