



Florida Chapter of the  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
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## **PHOTO RELEASE: Florida Pediatricians Advocate for Children's Health at Children's Week 2026**

*Pediatricians Speak Out Against Bill to Expand Non-Medical Vaccine Exemptions*

**Tallahassee, Florida** – Pediatricians from across the state gathered in Tallahassee this week to participate in the 2026 Children's Week and Children's Capitol for a Day events, and to remind Florida's legislators to keep the health of Florida's children at the top of their minds when considering legislation.

Each year, members of the Florida Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics ("FCAAP") travel to Tallahassee to talk with families, lawmakers, educators, and other stakeholders about the issues impacting children's health in the state. This year, the event coincided with a Senate Appropriations Committee hearing about a bill that would expand non-medical vaccine exemptions, and pediatricians voiced their opposition to it.

Pediatricians from every corner of the state shared with policymakers the dangers of expanding non-medical vaccine exemptions to Florida's longstanding school entry requirements. Florida's kindergarten vaccination [rate](#) of less than 89 percent is significantly below the 95 percent threshold needed to achieve widespread community immunity from the most infectious diseases. Adding additional non-medical exemptions to school vaccine requirements risks the return of dangerous and preventable diseases like measles, polio, and whooping cough.

"As pediatricians, our priority is to work with families to help them keep their children healthy," said FCAAP President Rana Alissa, MD, FAAP. "I am proud that pediatricians across the state are talking with parents and lawmakers about the importance of childhood vaccinations. Decades of scientific research confirms that vaccines are one of the most effective tools for preventing serious diseases. Schools are tight-knit networks of children, educators, and families, making it easy for contagious diseases to spread. Parents should be able to send their kids to school without fear that their child may contract a dangerous disease – and kids deserve to go to school to learn and play with their classmates and friends."



### **About the Florida Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics:**

*Through its more than 2,900 members, the Florida Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics promotes the health and welfare of Florida's children and supports pediatricians and pediatric specialists as the best qualified providers of their health care.*

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