

# New Jersey Rally for Conscientious Exemption to Vaccination

Trenton, New Jersey, October 16, 2008



BY TERI ARRANGA

We come to this State Capitol today to celebrate freedom of speech and participate in the democratic process. Representing three generations, we are standing publicly for the legal right to follow our conscience when making educated vaccine decisions for our families.

Among us are parents with healthy children and those whose children have been hurt by one-size-fits-all vaccine mandates that ignore the genetic and biological differences which make some people more vulnerable than others for having severe reactions to prescription drugs and vaccines.

No American should be forced by law to play vaccine roulette with a child's life.

*Barbara Loe Fisher, October 16, 2008*



Former Essex Assemblyman Leroy Jones, who introduced the first bill for philosophical exemption to legislation in New Jersey in 1995, and NVIC co-founder Barbara Loe Fisher at the October 16, 2008 Vaccine Freedom Rally in Trenton.

"As I looked out over three generations of young mothers and grandmothers, fathers and grandfathers, some of them with photos of vaccine-injured children or carrying them in their arms, I remembered the first march we held in Atlanta in front of the CDC in 1986. And I felt great sadness that, even though there is much more awareness today about vaccine risks, we had not been able to save more from being hurt by vaccines in the past two decades. But I also felt great hope because, at this first rally dedicated to freedom of choice, I saw hundreds of families standing up for the human right to be free to make informed, voluntary vaccination choices. And I knew that the freedom bell that those of us, whose children were injured by vaccines a quarter century ago, had been ringing all these years had been heard loud and clear by this generation."

These are the words of Barbara Loe Fisher, co-founder and president of the National Vaccine Information Center. Barbara had stated the following as part of her testimony before the US House Government Reform Committee on August 3, 1999:

"In 1982, when I joined with Kathi Williams, Jeff Schwartz, and other parents of DPT vaccine-injured children to begin this work, my first-born son, Christian, was just a toddler. Chris had started saying words at seven months and was speaking in full sentences by age two. At the time of his fourth DPT shot, when he was two and a half years old, he knew the upper and lower case alphabet, numbers up to 20, and was identifying words in the books we read together. His ability to concentrate was unusual for a toddler and one doctor told me he was gifted. Within four hours of his fourth DPT and oral polio vaccinations, I walked into his room and found him sitting in a chair staring straight

ahead, his face pale and drawn. I watched his eyelids flutter, his eyes roll back, and his head fall to his shoulder, and I remember thinking that I had never seen him suddenly fall asleep sitting up before. Not knowing that what I had just witnessed was a convulsion and collapse shock, two classic DPT vaccine reactions, I also did not know that his deep sleep for nearly six hours that afternoon and into the evening was not just a very long nap, it was a state of unconsciousness. Like most mothers, I knew absolutely nothing about vaccine reactions, and so I did not know that my son was in danger of dying that day....when Chris became a totally different child physically, mentally and emotionally, I believed the pediatricians when they told me it was just a stage he was going through and not to worry about it. Christian never returned to the child he was before the vaccination that changed his life forever....what happened to my son leaves a larger question unanswered: How many of the nearly three million learning disabled and ADD children filling the special education classrooms in America today can trace their learning and behavior disorders back to vaccine reactions that were not recognized by their mothers or their pediatricians? How many babies have a vaccine reaction in their cribs in the middle of the night and no one ever knows why they suddenly die, or stop developing normally, or change personality, or are one day diagnosed with behavior and learning disorders?"

I am crying as I write this. I am crying for Barbara's son, for the children whom you will read about following, and for all of the other children needlessly debilitated or deceased due to vaccine components, including my own son. And I am crying on behalf of people like Barbara and Lyn Redwood, past president of SafeMinds, who feel a great

sorrow that, having tried so hard for so many years, mothers' beloved babies are still being grievously injured by a dangerous lack of safety standards and open, honest dialog and reporting with regard to vaccines.

This October day in Trenton, Barbara continued, **"If we cannot be free to make informed, voluntary decisions about which pharmaceutical products we are willing to risk our lives for, then we are not free in any sense of the word. Because if the State can tag, track down, and force individuals against their will to be injected with biological products of unknown toxicity today, then there will be no limit on which individual freedoms the State can take away in the name of the greater good tomorrow."**

And she emphasized: "During the past 30 years, public health officials have persuaded state legislators to triple the number of doses of mandated vaccines for daycare and school entry. And now more babies than ever are dying as America has plummeted among nations in infant mortality and an epidemic of chronic disease is destroying the health of more children than any infectious disease epidemic in our history, including smallpox, polio, whooping cough and measles.

The response by health officials to this unprecedented national health crisis bankrupting our nation is to tell parents that, every time another child regresses into poor health after vaccination, it is just a 'coincidence' while quietly writing those children off as acceptable losses. It is this tragic moral failure and scientific miscalculation by doctors we have trusted that now threatens the biological integrity of future generations of Americans."

### Coming to defend the rights of our children, we now meet Louise Kuo Habakus.

Louise Kuo Habakus is a parent paragon of strength, intelligence, and tenacity. Louise and the New Jersey Coalition for Vaccination Choice organized this rally.

Louise told *The Autism File*:

"New Jersey's parents held a vaccination choice rally in Trenton for the same reasons shared by parents all over the country. We're struggling due to all the childhood shots. What's notable about New Jersey is that here there are more shots, more sick kids, and supportive legislation that languishes in the legislature, year after year.

New Jersey mandates more vaccines for



Left to right: Claudine Liss, Louise Kuo Habakus, and Manette Loudon

school attendance than any other state in the country. It has always been thus. But effective September 2008, Governor Corzine eschewed the legislative process and signed into law four *additional* mandates. Most controversial among them is the mandated flu vaccine for children 6 to 59 months of age as a requirement for daycare and preschool. If there was growing 'vaccine discomfort' before the summer, it quickly boiled into outrage as parents began receiving the new vaccine directives from school nurses and admonishment from their children's pediatricians. Parents started asking questions. The flu shot? A shot that still contains a known neurotoxin (thimerosal), supposedly removed from all pediatric vaccines? A shot that's notoriously ineffective and rejected by majority of health care practitioners? A shot that many claim made them feel worse? A shot they'd never get for themselves? Many felt that the government was really stepping over the line on this one.

Grassroots vaccination-related advocacy in New Jersey has been alive and kicking for well over a decade. But in February 2008, a number of likeminded organizations and activists came together to form the New Jersey Coalition for Vaccination Choice. The Coalition's stated objective is to obtain passage of the Conscientious Exemption to Mandatory Immunization, Assembly Bill 260 and Senate bill 1071. Parents and parent groups mobilized across the state to arrange meetings with legislators and obtain co-sponsorship for the bill.

I gave my first lecture on vaccination safety and parental choice in April. After several years focused on healing our two vaccine-injured sons, our boys were doing better than we ever dared to dream. My husband and I felt it was time to pay it forward. One seminar quickly led to more as parents offered to find venues and advertise the talks. And a great thing happened along the way: We

weren't merely filling an information void for parents -- we were creating an extraordinary experience of community.

The rally was a big success and not just for the awareness generated from extensive local and national press, including *ABC World News Tonight*. We came together, unified in purpose, and held our very first freedom of vaccination choice rally in the country. People across the country listened in on Autism One Radio live. And in Trenton, over seven hundred people stood in their integrity, offered testimony, shed tears, held their children close, hugged, and applauded and supported each other. It was a day I will never forget."

There were *three dozen* speakers at this rally that brought an impressive number of people from all sectors of society to the New Jersey capitol. Assemblywoman Charlotte Vandervalk, primary sponsor of the Conscientious Exemption to Mandatory Vaccination bill, A260/S1071, spoke, as did Dr. Larry Palevsky, board-certified pediatrician and president of the Holistic Pediatric Association.

Sue Collins of the New Jersey Coalition for Vaccination Choice also spoke, and she shared with *The Autism File*:

"My vaccination journey began when I was pregnant 13 years ago with my oldest son. I was reading and researching the issue and wanted to find other parents who were facing the same questions. I found that many people had questions and wanted answers and support. Ten years ago, I, along with several other parents, formed the NJ Alliance for Informed Choice in Vaccination as a way for parents to find vaccination information, as well as advocate for and protect the right to informed consent. There is no one path to optimal health. Each family must decide what is appropriate for their family and what path they are willing to take. Mandating that everyone take the same route with the same vaccine doses does not work. Each child is different and the journey to optimal health is going to be different, as well. The government and pharmaceutical industry have eroded public trust, and parents are no longer willing to sit quietly on the sidelines. We have found our voice and each other, and we will continue to fight for our rights and our families. **This country was founded on individual freedoms, and the right to choose to vaccinate, not vaccinate, or selectively vaccinate is imperative. We must have vaccination choice.**"



John Gilmore, Autism United & Autism Action Network

Valeri Sewald, a member of Holistic Moms Network and the United Methodist Church, who has two home birthed, healthy unvaccinated children, showed her support at the rally:

"I am proud to say that my church, the United Methodist Church, approved a resolution "Protecting Children from Mercury-containing Drugs" this past April. This resolution is the FIRST global and the FIRST faith statement on the issue of vaccinations. The United Methodist Church affirmed its commitment to safe vaccines and seeks to safeguard public confidence in vaccines by advocating the removal of mercury from vaccines. I agree with my church - mercury should be banned from vaccines."

Lou Conte, president of the Westchester County (NY) Chapter of Autism United and dad to two sons with autism adds:

"The rally was a gathering of hundreds of friends who were meeting for the first time. Everyone understood each other. Everyone respected how we all came to be at the New Jersey State House by different routes via the same painful road. The first speakers took to the platform and charged up the crowd, calling on Governor Corzine to come out of the State House and listen. Governor Corzine, did you hear the people shout? Then, parents told their stories about children injured and recovered. Then, at the end of the rally, some told of children lost forever because of a mandated vaccine. And when these stories were told, a silence fell on that busy street that will stay with me as long as I breathe. Governor Corzine, did you hear this silence? **But more than anything, everyone wanted what no government should ever take from its people: the right to decide what is in the best interests of their children's health.**"



*Now it is time for the especially painful part of this article that Lou referenced... the children lost....*

My name is Christina Liberatore. I am mom to five kids: Amelia, 11; Gabrielle, 7; Nicholas, 6; and Sean 2 1/2. My child Christopher died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome at 3 months in 2005. Sean was diagnosed with autism and autoimmune encephalopathy at 2 years earlier this year.

In researching how to help Sean, I learned how the toxins in our environment and vaccines could contribute to both of these tragic medical mysteries. I learned that these two possible factors haven't been sufficiently studied. The interventions we are implementing for Sean are working, and I believe it is because we are repairing his immune system.

As an educated mother and as an American, I feel I have the right to choose what is best for my children - not the government of New Jersey. **I have their best interests at heart because my children are what makes up my heart.** And I have done my research. If vaccines contributed to Christopher's death or Sean's autism, I don't want to my children to have any more. For my family, the risks outweigh the benefits. I cannot bear another tragedy. I choose to take a passive risk with the childhood diseases instead of an active risk with vaccine-injury. I believe that this is my constitutional right. I pray that the conscientious exemption becomes a Bill for families like mine.

My name is Robin Stavola. In 2000, my daughter, Holly, died of encephalopathy at the age of five after receiving an MMR booster, the DTaP, oral polio, and the Mantoux test. Holly was a completely healthy child with no prior hospitalizations, surgeries, injuries, or serious illnesses. Holly and I walked into the pediatrician's office for her 5-year WELL check-up with complete and total trust. I signed a form but was uninformed about the risks of the 8 different viruses she was about to receive. One week later, she became sick and, after 3 days of suffering, she was declared dead. My beautiful daughter Holly did not deserve to die in terrible pain and desperately frightened. Holly's death was reported and confirmed in the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System BUT there are many reactions that go unreported. I am not against vaccines, but I do believe there should be informed choice because the one-size-fits-all policy is not fair and should not be used for a medical intervention that is known not to be 100 percent safe. There are 48 doses of 14 vaccines now from birth to 6 years old, and I believe if parents had the discretion to individualize this vaccine schedule, parental trust in vaccines and doctors would return to our society.

I felt the Trenton Rally raised the awareness for informed vaccine choice and was an education for many parents, legislators, and doctors. I wanted to share Holly's story that day because I knew it could help others.

**On January 14, 2004, four days away from Holly's birthday and 4 years after her death, Holly's Law was passed. It is known in New Jersey as The Antibody Titer Law. It concerns vaccination of children with measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine. The law allows parents to seek testing to determine a child's immunity to measles, mumps, and rubella before receiving the second dose of the vaccine. For more information go to <http://nj.gov/health/cd/vpdphone.htm>.**

## RAGGEDY ANN AND THE RALLY The Real Story of Raggedy Ann

October 16th marked the day that America's little sweetheart revealed her true story to the world. So cuddled and loved by children across America as the triangle-nosed, redhead we so fondly call Raggedy Ann, this American icon





Kim Stagliano,  
Age of Autism

was created by a popular cartoonist who lost his own little girl to vaccine-injury. Marcella Gruelle, the only daughter of Johnny Gruelle and his wife, was repeatedly vaccinated at school without her parent's consent. The practice was customary at the time (1917). As a result of adversely reacting to the vaccine's toxins, Marcella lost her appetite. She developed high fevers and eventually lost all muscle control, becoming lifeless and listless like a rag doll. Rather than create a doll in the likeness of the popular, rigid, clay dolls of the time, in a fitting tribute to his daughter, Johnny Gruelle created Raggedy Ann.

Some time after Marcella's death, Johnny was asked to create a cartoon to accompany a magazine article titled "Vaccines Killed My Two Sisters." While the cartoon was a true reflection of Gruelle's satirical nature and wit, the editors of *Physical Culture* were not prepared for the terse remarks enclosed with Gruelle's cartoon. They read,

"Having recently lost our only daughter through vaccination (in public school, **without our consent**), you may realize how terribly HUMOROUS the subject of vaccination appears to Mrs. Gruelle and Myself. Of the seven physicians called in on the case, six pronounced it in emphatic terms, MALPRACTICE. The seventh did not commit himself, being the head of School Board and a firm advocate of vaccination."

It is we, the parents, who are held accountable for the decisions we make for our children. It is within that accountability that we examine risks. We accept or reject risks based on a comparable benefit. "Without our consent," is reproachful. If the risk is ours, then the choice is ours, period.

Maureen Drummond, New Jersey Coalition for Vaccination Choice.



Dr. Gary Null

For those of us whose children are vaccine-injured with autism, ADD, ADHD and other learning and sensory challenges -- we know that children, like Barbara Majeski's son, Max, are recovering. What can we do to try to reverse damage?

Barbara Majeski, Max's Mom ([www.TooManyTooSoon.org](http://www.TooManyTooSoon.org)), told us this:

"Max was born October 24, 2005. He was a healthy baby boy, measuring 9 on the Apgar scores with an immediate hunger to eat. He demonstrated a natural suck almost immediately. After his Hepatitis B vaccine was administered at the hospital, his perfect medical standing took a nosedive. He lost his ability to suck, he was inconsolable, and his days were filled with constant fitful crying and restless sleep. He was never awake and content. We changed formula, bottles, nipples, and pacifiers, and tried Zantac and Prevacid. Nothing helped. We resorted to dropper feeding to ensure he was getting food. At three-weeks-old, he turned yellow, his cries grew very weak, and the doctors were prompted to run a blood test. The results were precarious, and we were rushed to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. This was the first of several adverse vaccine reactions that went unrecognized until April 2007.

In April 2007, Autism Awareness Month, Max was 18 months old. By that time, he was a frequent overnight guest at the hospital. Max struggled with gastrointestinal distress, a weak immune system, failure to thrive, sinus infections, ear infections, abscesses and irritability. He was measuring at a seven-month level for social and emotional development. After hearing Katie Wright on TV talk about her son's autism, his medical problems, and the link to the

vaccines, I put it all together. Immediately I began researching everything vaccine/autism related. I found Dr. Kenneth Bock's book titled *Healing the New Childhood Epidemics* and began our recovery journey. We detoxified Max's gut from yeast, used vitamins and nutrients to help his digestion, strengthen his immune system, and help his body to excrete metals. One of the most important decisions we made was to turn down the MMR and discontinue further vaccinations. Our doctor questions if Max could have handled that vaccine. I shudder to think. Further vaccinations for Max would have unquestionable potential to induce a multitude of medical problems, none of which we will ever know. His body has clearly demonstrated the inability to metabolize and/or excrete the elements from vaccines."

Mary Holland, JD of the Elizabeth Birt Center for Autism Law and Advocacy and the Autism Human Rights and Discrimination Initiative summed up the day:

"The New Jersey Vaccination Choice Rally was powerful: powerful because of the numbers who showed up to voice discontent; powerful because of the many well-prepared statements from the platform; and powerful because of its impact, leading to articles and editorials in the *New York Times* and beyond. Perhaps the most powerful slogan of the rally became 'Our risk, our choice.' Parents alone bear the risks of vaccine-injury, so parents alone should have unfettered choice to decide what is best for their children.

Many thanks to Louise Kuo Habakus and the NJ Coalition for Vaccination Choice for leading the way to a powerful new kind of community organizing for vaccine choice."

**Photo credits:** Manette Loudon is an award-winning filmmaker who has produced documentaries with Dr. Gary Null, a speaker at this rally, regarding children's health issues, including the relationship between vaccines and other environmental triggers of diseases in children. Some of her credits include *The Drugging of our Children*; *Healing Autism Naturally*; *Prescription for Disaster*; and *Vaccine Nation*. Dr. Null and Manette's current film, *Autism, Made in the USA*, explores the causes of and recovery approaches for autism.

For more information, please visit: [www.nvic.org](http://www.nvic.org) and [www.njvaccinationchoice.org](http://www.njvaccinationchoice.org)

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