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As a school nurse my opinions and observations may differ from many of my colleagues. While I value immunizations, they are not without risks, and as a nurse I also value patient autonomy and informed consent. I think our role should be to educate not mandate; meaning that we should work with physicians and parents to help educate and provide informed consent NOT mandate vaccines. My personal experience after the vaccine mandate was passed was not higher immunization rates. Instead those parents of children who were not in compliance completely lost trust in the medical community, and simply withdrew their students from public school. And now I have no connection to them, although they still live in the community. I would like to see religious exemptions return. Being an American means freedom of choice, and freedom of religion. I've seen many patients who I felt needed surgery, decline it. I have seen many patients where the risk of surgery and success were very low still choose it. I have seen many patients with cancer choose to fight or choose not to. That choice is the right of every person. We can inform, we can educate, we can encourage, we can try to dispell fears, but we can't promise that it is 100% safe and therefore we can't make that choice for someone else.