

# ‘Vaccines Cause Autism’: District Attorney Nico LaHood

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Bexar County District Attorney Nico LaHood said Monday he’s ready for the backlash to his public comments that vaccines cause autism.

The father of a son with autism, LaHood voiced his opinions about the long-running issue for the documentary [“Vaxxed: From Cover-up to Catastrophe”](#) posted on the Autism Media Channel Facebook page.

Sitting in his office, LaHood introduces himself as the D.A., then said, “I’m here to tell you vaccines can and do cause autism.”

The theory has been debunked in the medical world, but many parents looking for answers, remain skeptical.

LaHood said he and his wife noticed a change in their son after he received his 18-month vaccination.

“We had a very different child,” he said.

Asked whether he should be voicing his opinion due to his political office, LaHood said, “My opinions are just my opinions. As a daddy, as a husband, who happens to be the district attorney. People are allowed to have a First Amendment right to an opinion. I know this is not a politically correct opinion.”

He said both President Barack Obama and former Gov. Rick Perry have publicly supported childhood vaccines, so he has the same right to speak out against them.

LaHood said, “I’m not forcing my opinion on you. I’m giving you my opinion and I think I’m entitled to it.”

Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff, who saw a preview of the film, said he agrees.

“He’s a terrific father. He’s concerned. He has a son with autism. I have a nephew with autism. I know what it’s like,” Wolff said.

However, a spokeswoman for the Metropolitan Health District said the public health agency believes all children should be vaccinated if they’re healthy and have the approval of their physicians.

“As a pediatrician, we stand for vaccinations. It’s one of the most important things we can do for children when they come to see us,” said Dr. Rob Sanders at the [pediatric urgent care clinic operated by University Hospital at the Robert B. Green campus downtown](#).

Sanders said they are safe and effective, so rejecting their use could have public health consequences.

“We’ve seen outbreaks of measles. We’ve seen outbreaks of mumps in the last 10 years in different parts of the country,” Sanders said, as the result of anti-vaccine movements.

LaHood said he urges parents to get educated about the issue.

“Let parents make their own decision on what they think is best for their child after they’ve done the research,” LaHood said.

But Suzanne Potts, [executive director of the Autism Society of Central Texas](#), said since there is no single cause and no cure, it’s more important to increase services for the estimated 300,000 Texans who have the disorder.

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