

Duke Pediatrician Stresses Importance Of Immunizations

By David Roberson
Duke Medical Center
Special To The Post

Durham - Recent lawsuits and other adverse publicity regarding children's immunizations may be obscuring the potentially life-saving effects of commonly used vaccines, according to a Duke University Medical Center pediatrician.

Despite some recent fears about side effects from children's vaccines, the benefits far outweigh the

potential risks, according to Dr. Samuel L. Katz.

"These vaccines have been very successful - so successful that many young parents have never seen these diseases and are unaware of them," Katz said. "That very success can be a liability when parents forget about the importance of proper immunizations."

Katz is Wilbert C. Davison Professor and chairman of the Department of Pediatrics at Duke and an

internationally known authority on the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases. He is currently chairman of the U.S. Public Health Service's Immunization Practices Advisory Committee.

Although most children have already received their immunizations before entering school, Katz said youngsters in highly mobile segments of our society - military families and migrant workers are examples - may not have fulfilled

their immunization requirements.

Many families also travel overseas, particularly during summer vacation months. Even though their children may be immunized, if the children are exposed to an infectious disease, they could pass it on to unimmunized classmates at school, Katz revealed.

Polio is now rare in this country, and only about 10 cases per year are seen in the U.S., informs Katz.

"But the virus is still widely present," he said, noting that outbreaks occurred in Finland this year, in Latin America in 1984 and in Taiwan three years ago. Cases also occurred in 1979 in Pennsylvania's Amish community, where children were not immunized.

"We need to maintain immunizations," Katz said. "Polio isn't a disease like smallpox that you can say is gone for good."



Gina Pettis
.....West Charlotte senior

Gina Pettis To Participate In Debutante Ball

Gina Pettis, a senior at West Charlotte High School, has been selected to participate in the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Debutante Ball, to be held in Raleigh, N.C. this November.

This will be the 47th annual AKA Debutante Ball sponsored by the Raleigh Alumni Chapter of the AKA. Through the ball, the sorority assists deserving young ladies to matriculate to an institution of higher learning by awarding various scholarships to the debutante participants.

Last year the sorority donated approximately \$56,000 in scholarships to participants.

Actively involved at West Charlotte High, 17-year-old Gina is a member of the Modern Music Masters, the Senior Class Council, the Red Cross, NAACP, Student Council, Future Business Leaders of America and the Keyettes.

She attends First Baptist Church, where she's on the Junior Choir and attends Sunday School.

As part of her effort to earn the title of Out-Of-Town Queen at the Debutante Ball, Gina will be hosting a fund raising disco party and dance at McDonald's Cafeteria on Saturday, September 28, from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m. Captain Rossi, DJ with WPEG radio station, will be spinning the latest and best recordings. High school juniors and seniors from throughout the city have been invited. Donations will be \$3.

Chandra Smith

Named Semifinalist

In NAS Program

Chandra Y. Smith of 1008 Squirrel Hill Rd., Charlotte, is one of 12 students at the N.C. School of Science and Mathematics to be named semifinalists in the 1986 National Achievement Scholarship Program for Outstanding Negro Students. Smith formerly attended West Charlotte High School.

Students selected from the state residential science and mathematics school are among some 1,500 semifinalists nationwide remaining in competition for about 700 National Achievement Scholarships, worth more than \$2 million, to be awarded next spring.

"The National Achievement Scholarships are among the highest honors a student can receive," school director Charles R. "Eilber" said. "We're very proud of these 12 young people, and I'm sure their former high schools are just as proud."

Semifinalists were chosen from among high school juniors, now seniors, who last fall took the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test-National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test and who requested consideration in the Achievement Program. In order to become finalists, semifinalists must document high academic performance as well as other accomplishments.

Achievement scholarships are provided by businesses, colleges and professional organizations. They range in value from \$1,000 to \$16,000 for four years of study.

The N.C. School of Science and Mathematics is the nation's first public residential high school for students gifted in science and mathematics.

I Can Cope Series

Begins October 1

Learning to live with cancer can be one of the most difficult problems individuals and families are facing today. To help relieve the fears and anxieties related to this disease, the American Cancer Society sponsors I CAN COPE, a patient education program for cancer patients and their loved ones.

The fall I CAN COPE series begins October 1 and will continue every Tuesday through November 12. The learning sessions are from 7:30-9 p.m. at Presbyterian Hospital (200 Hawthorne Lane).

I CAN COPE is a practical program which provides participants an opportunity to discuss problems encountered with their disease. It helps many of them become more successful and aware of their own strengths in coping with cancer.

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