

— TOP TAKEAWAYS —

## Vaccines and Measles Outbreaks



### MEASLES INFECTIONS ON THE RISE

- In June 2019, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention **announced** that 1,022 cases of measles have been reported in the U.S. this year (so far).
- That's the highest number of infections since 1994.
- These outbreaks have all been traced to unvaccinated individuals who contracted measles and then spread it within their communities.

### VACCINES ARE SAFE

- There is worldwide consensus from the science and medical communities that vaccines are safe.
- Studies from both government agencies as well as independent researchers have found vaccines to be safe.
- In the U.S., the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, and the Autism Society of America have all denounced any claims that the Measles-Mumps-Rubella vaccine causes Autism.

### LOWER RATES OF VACCINATIONS HARM THE VULNERABLE

- A recent dip in vaccination rates has damaged the nation's "herd immunity," which occurs when a large portion of the population is vaccinated, thereby hampering the diseases' ability to find a host.
- With measles, herd immunity is only achieved when at least 90-95 percent of the population is vaccinated.
- Without robust herd immunity, certain individuals who cannot receive vaccinations—newborns, the elderly and those with certain diseases—will be left vulnerable to these dangerous diseases.

### ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO VACCINATE

- Currently 17 states allow parents to opt out of vaccinating their kids before enrolling in public school if they have a "philosophical objection" to vaccines.
- These states should do away with this type of exemption and ban children from public schools if they have not been vaccinated.
- Federal and state governments might also consider attaching proof of vaccination to certain welfare programs, such as food assistance programs, housing allowances, and Medicaid.
- Proof of up-to-date vaccinations should also be a requirement for any individual entering the country on non-immigrant visas through U.S. ports of entry.