

Transcript from [“Everyone Can Do Something to Stop Autism Pseudoscience”](#): Interview with [Melissa Eaton](#)

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Audio Transcript by Julie-Ann Lee

(Theme song - soft piano music)

ABK: Welcome to Noncompliant: The Podcast. I’m your host **Anne Borden King**. **Melissa Eaton**, a parent of an autistic child, became aware autistic children were being abused with harmful pseudoscience and unregulated treatments in 2014, after her son was diagnosed. She joined other activists who were campaigning against it and she was one of the key figures in the movement to get phony MMS “bleach for autism” treatments banned, among others. Her work has been featured on NBC and other media and she recently co-wrote an Op-Ed for the New York Times about the impact of MMS marketers on the COVID crisis.

Melissa is one of the most organized and brilliant advocates I have ever known. She has incredible grit, thoroughness and determination to see that justice is served. I’m honoured to have Melissa on the show today. Welcome, Melissa!

ME: Hi Anne.

ABK: So, I thought maybe... Let’s break down for the audience what **autism pseudoscience** is. Basically it’s, in a nutshell, scammers. They are selling products that claim to cure autism and these scammers use social media. Places like Facebook – autism support groups on Facebook, and they do this kind of stealth marketing to parents where they promote their products as the answer to autism. Can you say a bit about how these scammers are using social media to pull the parents in to buying their products?

ME: Yes, all these promoters thrive on social media. They have private Facebook groups, and YouTube channels. Some of the ones that we’ve had success removing from these platforms have moved to like, the lesser known sites such as Brighteon and Telegram. But they are still very much able to reach an audience.

A lot of their success has been from this **multi-level marketing style**, where parents promote and share them in autism support groups. Moms are pulling other moms to these groups, inviting them into them or even responding to their questions they have about an autistic behavior that they don’t necessarily understand, and a lot of times the response is ‘well try this product or this product’ or ‘join this group’. Some of these moms even run autism pages, and companies give them a discount code that earns them free product or income. So, they heavily promote these products and, you know, they have testimonies of great results because they are generating an income from these followers.

And there is a huge intersection of **anti-vax** pages where we see grifters like **Larry Cook** who have a huge following from promoting anti-vax misinformation and they are able to market the products that they sell as their pages grow, their followers grow, and so do their customers.

ABK: Right so, there's definitely something in between the anti-vax and the kind of CAM – Complementary Medicine movement people like **Mercola** and **Del Bigtree**, are they kind of also part of it, or...?

ME: Yes, they are, because they are just continually feeding that narrative that there is a connection between autism and vaccines and they are creating this market for these products.

ABK: Could you outline a few of the most dangerous products – the products that are an immediate danger to kids.

ME: Yeah, there's three that we see as the most harmful and the most in need of attention, and that's MMS, GcMAF and chelation.

MMS stands for Miracle Mineral Solution or Supplement. It's a two-bottle product that when you combine creates Chlorine Dioxide – an industrial bleach. It is 28% Sodium Chlorite, mixed with an activator such as Hydrochloric Acid. They then mix the solution into water and it's given to children every 45 minutes, up to 24 hours a day sometimes. And then it's also administered rectally by enema once or twice a day, and this product is promoted with the false theory that autism is caused by parasites. The mixture is so harsh that the insides of these children's intestines shed. The promoters use this to convince parents that this lining is the parasites leaving the body, and then autism is going to go away.

GcMAF. It's a little more complicated. It stands for GC protein derived Macrophage Activating Factor. It's a protein that is naturally found in the blood. It's been promoted for autism and for cancer. One of the biggest concerns for GcMAF is it's peddled online. It's sold for around \$600 a vial, and there's no verifiable guarantee that it's been screened for transmissible diseases. So, you know, it's a very dangerous product. It's also – besides humans – it's also attained through bovine means where it's drawn from the cartilage of a cow. This blood product is then injected by parents...they take hypodermic needles and inject this into their autistic children. Sometimes they squirt it under the tongue. It's abusive. It poses a big risk and there's absolutely no evidence for its use in autism.

And then, lastly, **chelation** products. You know, these are drugs that are available via prescription and over the counter. They bind and remove metals from the body. It's promoted online as a treatment for autism through the false notion autism is caused by heavy metals from vaccines. This product doesn't discriminate which metals it removes and it can cause depletion of things like copper and iron from these children and other minerals that the body needs. It's given in IV drips, orally, rectally – by suppositories.

A lot of times the people who are promoting this are also connected with laboratories and they are doing these deceptive lab tests where they give the chelation agent and then they show the skewed result. It promotes false data and it helps them to continue selling this product as 'working' to these parents. The kids that are on the oral chelation protocols... they're given hundreds of rounds generally from one to five years. And a round consists of three days of giving the product, three days off – that's one round. And then the next round begins. There's no science warranting this dangerous treatment for autism but it still continues.

ABK: Yeah, and the interesting thing I think that some people might not be aware of is that even though these kind of sound like they are just coming out of the 'grassroots', that they're actually huge **income generators**. Like, for example chelation, if you're running a chelation in your shop... in your clinic, people are making tons and tons and tons of money on it. And, as well, there are many, many people doing this. This isn't as fringe as the average person might think. Things like MMS bleach are surprisingly common. Do you have a sense of... a ball park of how many people are buying these products and doing this to their kids?

ME: I'll say that there are a lot of doctors that are providing this treatment and there's even more parents that are leading these treatments on social media and online groups. The oral chelation products can be purchased on Amazon. There's plenty of moms that have YouTube channels where they're going through and they're showing you how to cut up these doses, how to divide them out, how to put them in the syringes and medical droppers. I mean they... some of these parents, it's so horrible – their children are sleeping and they just squirt these doses in their mouth while they're asleep. It's really horrible.

ABK: Yeah, that's the big picture part of it that I think a lot of regulators haven't really understood or aren't acknowledging – that this is being done **against the consent of the kids**. They are not giving informed consent to this. So, [this is] unlike someone who might just randomly decide that they need chelation because they are 35 years old and they have insomnia, and they go out and seek chelation. They are an adult making decisions for themselves. But, given especially the risk of chelation which of course, many people have had cardiac arrest from chelation, and it's certainly very unsafe for children. Yet, there doesn't seem to be a framework in law-enforcement and regulation to stop providers from selling this to parents, and to stop parents from giving this to their children against their consent.

And I guess, what I'm thinking I really want to talk about on this show is why... why has it been so hard? And you're the best person to talk to about this because you've been trying.

So, one issue you've been working on is stopping the bleach people... the MMS as we were talking about. Their claims are that it cures autism, that it cures COVID, that it cures diabetes and everything under the sun...and the people who are selling this are making a lot of money on this, is this right?

ME: Yes.

ABK: Can you describe who these people are that are marketing these products?

ME: Well it's again like the situation on social media, a lot of it is like a multi-level marketing – The **Genesis II church** has been the biggest leader with MMS stuff. Everything's pretty much grown from them. But you know, not only do they sell MMS but they also sell other products and tools to administer MMS. They also travel worldwide conducting seminars. These seminars we've seen it only takes like 30 people to attend and \$15,000 is in their pocket. They live lavish lifestyles – they're constantly dining out, you know things like that. They also, you know, have these memberships where you can become a member of their organization – their church for \$600. So, you know, they're making a profit there.

They're not just profiting from the profit of the MMS but the way in which they go about growing this church. It's in 139 countries. So, they have a lot of reach, and they have a lot of income.

ABK: And do they claim, or try to claim non-profit status by calling themselves a church? Like, do they pay less taxes and there's...?

ME: I don't- I couldn't answer that for sure but I don't believe that they pay any taxes on this. I know that they are definitely using the guise of the church to try to avoid being stopped with this.

ABK: Do you... when you first started taking on MMS who did you report to and what kind of response did you get?

ME: The very first person that I reached out was to the **Department of Justice**. Conversations with them, pretty much they told me that the Department of Justice will prosecute a case, but they don't just pick their cases. Another organization--another federal organization--has to bring the case to them, and in the case of MMS they told me that the FDA has to bring the case to them and say, 'here's our case and we want you guys to prosecute it.' And so, the Department of Justice prosecutes but these other organizations like the Federal Trade Commission, and the FDA, they have to build these cases and bring them to them.

ABK: Right, and then has this happened? Or, what has this process been like in terms of getting these cases brought from the FDA to the Justice Department?

ME: We really haven't had any luck with that until recently this year.

ABK: Mm-hmm. What would happen when you try to speak to the FDA about it? Did they...were there, kind of, regulatory loopholes or ways that these companies were getting around it so the FDA couldn't take action? Or do you feel like the FDA was alert to this? Or are they more alert to it now than they were before?

ME: I definitely think there are some loopholes. One of the biggest issues I see with the FDA is the **dietary supplement industry** has grown tremendously, and they used to only monitor a thousand or so products when this started and now they have all these products to monitor and they're not necessarily on your store shelves. They are online. They're promoted in places that the FDA, you know, they don't inspect. They don't go to and things like that. I feel like they don't have a good reach on the areas where these things are being promoted for one, and then when they are notified, I feel like they're very slow to act. I just don't think they're doing enough. They haven't. And I'm hoping that we're going to see that change soon.

ABK: Right. Now recently they did take some action against MMS sellers. Can you talk a little bit about how that happened and what the status in terms of the FDA or the Justice Department going after some of these people?

(14:46)

ME: Well, the FDA really didn't get involved until 2010. In 2010 they issued a public warning on MMS and then in 2013, the FDA brought a case to the Department of Justice and **Daniel Smith** and four of his accomplices were charged for selling the product. This was only after a lady by the name of **Sylvia Nash** consumed the product. She immediately fell ill and she died that day. She was on an international selling trip with her husband, and someone had convinced her to take this product to prevent malaria. Then in, 2015 Daniel Smith was convicted and sentenced. He received four years in Federal Prison, and three years supervision following his release.

Around 2017, we noticed that that 2010 warning on MMS had been removed from the website. So, we started trying to get the FDA to get that warning put back up. We thought that it was important that this... hadn't went away, it had grown and it needed to be back up there, and Robert Gehrman launched a successful campaign in 2019 which caused the FDA to issue a public warning again on MMS, and they did that; I believe it was August 2019. And we really didn't have much happen the rest of that year.

And then we had – COVID happened. And on April 8 of this year the FDA issued the Genesis II Church a warning letter for their unapproved and misbranding drugs for COVID-19 and it had 48 hours to stop or face injunction. They didn't, and on April 17 the Federal Civil Court granted the FDA a temporary restraining order barring them from their promotion and from their sales. They continued to disobey that temporary restraining order and then on May 1 the judge filed a preliminary injunction. The case is still ongoing. It's civil. This week the prosecution submitted something – a default judgement, and it has a proposal in there for the products to be recalled, and this would include all the way back to any sales that were from as far back as January 2010.

ABK: Wow.

ME: It also calls for the destruction of the products and the materials and for [Genesis] to be audited for five years and a few things like them notifying all their members and bishops and posting the document on their websites. Right now, we're waiting on the judge to grant that order and, I mean, I foresee they haven't complied so far so I feel like when we get this judgement granted and signed by the judge that we're most likely going to see some contempt charges in the future.

ABK: Mm-hmm. And do you think that- I mean they're a US-based organization so in their case they can be charged with contempt and finally the Justice Department is taking action. It seems to have taken COVID for them to really spread their net to include this product in a really forceful way. I'm wondering about people that are living outside the US such as **Kerri Rivera** and some of the other people selling MMS. Is there any way to stop those sales when they're coming from outside of the US?

ME: Well, there's definitely ways that the FDA can stop... They do these import alerts. They stop imports of products if they are aware of these situations. They can stop them from being imported. As far as prosecuting, the Department of Justice can't prosecute outside the United States. The problem with Kerri is she ...reportedly has stopped selling it. She's moved on to just only recording it. So, right now, as far as the MMS issue there's not much that our FDA can do to her, because the FDA – they look at two things. They look at the promotion and there has to be the selling as well. Promotion, selling and then the claim. You have to have those three things.

With Genesis II we have those three things and that's why we're seeing the action with them with the FDA.

ABK: So, people could get in cahoots with each other where one person is promoting it, or they have a pyramid scheme where they're getting other people to sell it, right?

ME: Yeah.

ABK: What about... [it] seems that there's different avenues that one can take to try to stop this kind of thing from happening. One we just talked about was regulation, which is to go through the FDA and the Justice Department--or in Canada it would be Health Canada--and to try to get the products banned for false marketing claims or for a variety of different reasons. Another avenue was to report the people directly to, for example, law enforcement or Social Services because what they are doing falls under the category of **child abuse**. You can't do that to your child. There's no excuse or reason under any legal framework for doing that to one's child and so it would be logical of course to call in the authorities if we know anyone who is doing this to their children.

Do you have any insights, or can you share what that is like when people get reported to Social Services for administering bleach for example on their autistic kids?

ME: Yes, the responses with that have not been good at all. Often, we really don't know what happens after we make a report because there are varying disclosure laws by state. Sometimes parents will post responses in the group and boast, you know, that nothing was done... the case has been closed. And [parents will] just continue on with the abuse. Sometimes we have a case that is assigned to an investigator and they do everything right and then action is stopped above them at a point past that.

One case in particular, we had this overwhelming evidence on two children. They were four and six years old. They had been given MMS enemas... there was evidence that included a testimony--a videotaped testimony from the mother admitting that she had administered over 500 enemas to these two children. One of the children was even present during the filming of this testimony and cried while it was being discussed. It was a really **heartbreaking** case.

The District Attorney would not pursue the case that the Investigator had prepared because the parent had stopped, and there was a time frame between the last time she had given him an enema and they just didn't pursue charges against the parent. And she basically was let go. She was not monitored. We found her... we found her in the groups several months later. Reported her again, and again nothing was done. So, no. The response hasn't been good at all.

ME: Why do you suppose that is? Why aren't they taking these complaints seriously?

ME: I think these aren't typical cases that fit nicely into one specific category of child abuse. And also, often the products aren't familiar to investigators. Sometimes parents are able to convince the authorities by showing them these pseudoscience websites that say 'hey, this is okay'. And we have doctors with phony diplomas such as Kerri Rivera who doesn't have any medical degrees, but yet claims that she does. You know, and YouTube videos, you know, things like that and we're seeing that... like a case that NBC had reported on.

There were two disabled adults that were made to drink the oral solution by their mother. The police did nothing and she's now back to using on them again, and she even this year hosted a talk on **Autism One** at their conference and promoted it to thousands of other parents. There's no child advocacy organizations helping with this issue.

There's **no training** in Child Protective Services or police about these products and their harm. And lastly, there's no legislation that specifically prevents this type of abuse.

ABK: Right. So without some kind of a framework for them, some kind of training, they get snowed, I guess, by what they're shown by the parents...or maybe there could be other reasons as well why they just don't pursue it. It's really shocking that it isn't pursued, and like you said, there need to be all these things put into place to kind of mandate that they take action on it, or it doesn't seem like there's hardly ever any real consequences for people that do this.

ME: Right, and you're correct – there isn't, and that's what we're hoping to change.

ABK: You mentioned YouTube a second ago and I wanted to talk about social media, cause that's kind of a third avenue for taking on this pseudoscience that if you can go to a platform and say 'hey' (like YouTube or Facebook) and say 'these videos are playing, telling people to feed their kids bleach for their

autism, take it down!' What's it like when you approach a platform to **de-platform** some of this- these marketing efforts?

ME: Most of the time, when these things are reported to these social media and tech companies that are platforming these things, we get like a blanket response back. Facebook generally sends you back one rather quickly that says this has not violated our community standards. Twitter, when we see things like this on Twitter, you know, it's 30 days before generally we get a response. More needs to be done as far as content management for things that are harmful to children. They wouldn't allow child trafficking and pornography of children on their site, but they allow this.

ABK: Why? I mean, is there just a... I mean coming from a disability rights perspective, my impulse is to say that it's double standard that somehow because it's being done to children, or disabled children that [some platforms] are not able to discern that it's a human rights issue in the way that they would for some other things that they do take down. Do you think there's an element of that – that they are just simply very, very ignorant about the fact that this is a violation of rights?

ME: I do.

ABK: Mm. How about YouTube? Has YouTube responded differently than, for example, Facebook or some of the other platforms?

ME: Yes. YouTube actually, I believe was the end of last year they actually wrote into their terms of use specifically a statement on MMS and other products so that it kind of left it open for other things that they would not allow that content on their site and they have taken a lot of it down. There's still a lot that remains and, you know, we report this content but like I said before what we're seeing is even though we have it removed say from YouTube, they're popping up on these other lesser-known sites. And most of these, especially Brighteon...Brighteon is owned by **Mike Adams** and, you know, he protects content like that and he's not gonna pull it down.

ABK: Right.

ME: Things are just kind of being, you know, they're getting away from more the general public but they're still very much present online.

ABK: So is it...it's still powerful to de-platform them on some of these major platforms but it doesn't do anything to solve the problem because they're just migrating to other platforms that are kind of extremist and don't have any sort of complaint procedures at all, right? There's no way to complain about Brighteon, right?

ME: Yeah.

ABK: How can we combat that in terms of... is there a regulator or someone that could be approached about these other platforms?

ME: You know, I don't know. I do know that some countries have been successful at getting legislation. Germany, I believe, is one of them. They have this technology law for the category of hate speech that, you know, if a platform allows this content to remain after it's been reported, if it's not removed within 48 hours, then a civil action can be taken against them. So, it's you know... it's a touchy area because of **copyright** and things like that, but it's really not. I mean, copyright doesn't allow you to go into a crowded movie theatre and shout, "Fire!" and it not be against the law.

ABK: Right.

ME: I think we have to be, you know, have some **common sense** smarts about the way that we go forward with legislation and content management with some of these companies.

(29:03)

ABK: I think that's the term of the hour for me, *commonsense*, because that's what's completely missing from this and then I ask myself why. Like, we talked a few minutes ago about bias against children and bias against disabled people, especially **bias against disabled children**. Our society has a huge bias about that, and cannot conceive of the idea, I think in some cases, that disabled children have the same rights as other people and so, if you're looking at someone you're trying to report to, and they kind of in their heart feel like, 'well maybe, maybe these kids do need to be cured, maybe it is worth it?' and they have these kind of attitudes that are really based around not just ignorance but also around a type of bias that is a part of the ignorance.

Then we have to educate on two levels, we have to let them know that, 'hey, this is a bunch of BS' which you know, apparently there has to be like a *huge education effort* on that part and then secondly [there's] also the **idea of curing** autism, you know this idea of cure it at any cost- try anything. We have to abandon that idea as a society. And that's a deeply, deeply entrenched idea within our society because that's why people turn their head and don't take any action where they would take action if it was being done possibly to a child who isn't autistic and, especially I'm thinking in terms of social services.

So, there's a huge...it seems like there's three, kind of, components from what we've been talking about. There's public education which would include educating policy makers and regulators and law enforcement and social services. Those are all places where we need to do education so that people have a really basic ethical understanding that this is wrong. That is still missing, I think. Maybe that's one of the missing pieces. What do you think?

ME: I would definitely agree with you and I would want to bring up one case that I have--and this is not an MMS case but the GcMAF, the blood product that is injected into autistic children. I had made a report with Child Protective Services on a family that was injecting their child with this product and right from the beginning the person who took the call was just so underprepared for the amount of information I was giving her about this product. And she said, 'I'm not sure if we'll be able to move this case along. Let me get my supervisor.' So, you know, then I explained the whole situation to the supervisor.

And what really, really concerned me is that, they would not even take that case at all. The supervisor argued that giving this child a blood product that had been bought off the internet from Japan that had no screening, no verifiable reason that this product should be given- he used the comparison of a parent choosing to do chemotherapy or choosing not to do chemotherapy on a child with cancer. He completely missed the point. He completely failed to see that autism isn't cancer. Autism isn't a disease.

ABK: And that GcMAF isn't chemotherapy.

ME: And that chemo is an approved treatment! And I argued and I argued, and I argued and there was no budging with this guy. The case did not even get investigated, sadly.

ABK: Yeah, it's really, really frustrating. I mean, I had a case here...I have a case ongoing in Ontario of there's a doctor who's doing chelation among other things on autistic kids and I filed a complaint with it, and first of all, the regulating medical college that I filed the complaint to, I think they didn't understand that an ordinary person could be bothered by something like this enough to file a complaint. So, there's almost this immediate kind of suspicion like someone put me up to this. I don't know who they thought would put me up to it, but there was kind of, 'you can't possibly just doing this on your own'. Well, yeah, I am 'cause I'm in a- I was in parent groups, I'm not anymore, and there's a reason for that too, but I was in parent groups and I was hearing about this and it did seem a bit off.

And I was naïve enough to think that if I called it in that they would say, 'Oh wow, like we didn't know this was happening. We're going to take action to stop this.' Like, that was a long time ago in my consciousness...

ME: I had the same naïve experience too, because you know when **Emma Dalmayne**, she's one of the first people that compelled me to help fight this. I was like, *oh this is going to be so easy. I can't believe this is happening. I'm going to make some phone calls and this is going to be done with.* And you know, that shocking realization that it wasn't that simple was, [that] is really hard for me to grasp because I agree with you on many other points that autistic children are often seen as less, and that education piece is missing...missing greatly and is an area that we've got to address.

ABK: It's really a **devaluing**. My process with this chelation [case] is a good example where it's taken me three years. The original medical college whatever... they didn't pay any attention to it, they didn't investigate it. They blew it off, in my opinion. Then it went to appeal- on appeal they spent [months]

then said 'nothing we can do' for a variety of reasons that are absurd in my opinion and now we're going to a judicial review where the judicial system will look at "was it really fair that they weighed no consideration on the **welfare** of kids here?". They did none. Zero. This topic is not even part of their conversation that these supposed self-regulatory bodies are really seen to be having.

Because, anyone, again, with any commonsense would say, 'Oh, you know, this is no evidence of benefit and clear evidence of harm. The evidence has been presented and this is obviously not something we should condone.' But it doesn't- they *don't* say that. It goes on and on and on and on. So, it's three years now and you have to say: well, *who's* going to have the tenacity out of all the people that see these things happening to try to do something about it? They're not going to have any confidence or faith in the system. Not in the health care system, not in the welfare system, not in the judicial system. It's very disheartening these kind of stories and it shows us great need for reform to all these systems.

So, I agree with you. It's very surprising but then you look at kind of why it's happening and some of it is just lassitude...but behind all of that is just kind of a sense that autistic kids are just not as important as other people.

Then we have to connect it into the neurodiversity movement. That's why in the UK, **Autistic Inclusive Meets** and in the US, **Fierce Autie** and in Canada **Autistics for Autistics** – that's why these three self-advocacy organizations run by autistic people have integrated fighting autism pseudoscience into what they do, because it's a huge part of the problem.

It's so interconnected with **autistic acceptance**, that until we really get people to understand the humanity of autistic people, these roadblocks are just going to continue.

ME: Yeah. And I definitely agree with you. I mean, if you look at like the intersections of the huge issue that we have even with the anti-vaccine movement, you know, that was fueled by this fraudulent MMR-autism study by **Wakefield** and it's just continued on with this narrative by organizations that aren't autistic-led, painting this tragedy...this *fear narrative* about autism and that fear and lack of education about autism has caused all of this.

I think we all have a unique perspective that we can't always seem to get across to others....there needs to be this education piece.

You can't fight this whole situation just one way. You can't. You can't just try to, you know, fix the vaccine issue, you can't just try to report these sellers. It's just- it's a large area where multiple things need to be done.

ABK: Right. And it's very telling, I'm glad you brought up the sort of autism establishment, or whatever you want to call it, because of course, Autism Speaks spent years and years researching "whether or not" there was a link between autism and vaccines, and every year that they spent researching that they were reinforcing the myth, because so many donor dollars were going into this kind of discussion that it

just reinforced the vaccine-autism myth.

And then if you look at who's doing the work to stop what's happening to these children... autistic children are being tortured – Where are the autism organizations? Where are they?

ME: Exactly.

ABK: They are nowhere...because somewhere deep inside of themselves, they can't make that leap towards acceptance, and it shows that autism organizations are really broken.

The people who are going to bring about human rights for autistic people are the **autistic led organizations** because they're the only ones who are even doing anything about autism pseudoscience. Even making a statement, I mean, I've tried to reach out to organizations myself, and like you said- child welfare organizations, they almost can't go there. So, it really shows how far we have to get before we get any understanding of what appears to us to be like really basic concepts, and then we have to ask ourselves: "why?" Why won't they take a stand on this?

ME: Yes. They just continue to collect money from communities. This money could be going to things that actually help autistics, and they're not addressing the problem of autistics, like autistic-led organizations are doing. Autistic-led organizations definitely have the grasp of what needs to happen and the supports that are needed within their community, yet they are overshadowed by these bigger organizations who do not have autistic interests in mind.

ABK: Right, right. It's a whole system overhaul to happen and it's a long- long kind of a challenge to overtake and there are--as obvious from our conversation--there are a lot of letdowns and there's a lot of heartbreak and there are a lot of kids who **need protection now** and it's extremely painful to not be able to have systems in place to protect them.

So, I guess my question for you is how do we keep the energy going and how do we keep faith and how do we keep hope as we're moving forward on this issue?

ME: I think we just have to continue what we're doing. We have to learn from the things that did give us success, and we just have to continue to grow. There's so much that can be done, you know, as far as just the education on autism. You know a lot of people don't want to get involved in the things that we do as far as reporting parents – they don't feel like they can, you know, *see* this abuse happen or they can't make phone calls to report this. But there is still plenty that can be done as far education because, like we discussed, such a big key.

ABK: That's right **everybody can do something**.

ME: Everybody can.

ABK: So, where do we go from here? What's next for the movement?

ME: Well, now that we have some action by the FDA and the Department of Justice against Genesis II, I feel like we need to devote more time to Kerri Rivera who is the main promotor of MMS for autistic children. She operates worldwide, she has parents that she communicates and teaches in 77 countries. The FDA recently issued her a warning for her supplement line here in the US, but we're having a really difficult time getting action against her in Germany. She's operating there under the false representation that she's a doctor, and that is illegal in Germany. And despite the police being aware of that, and her crimes, no action is being taken. We really need to get, you know, some media pressure there in Germany for her promotion of MMS because she's not only promoting it for autism, but she's also promoting it for COVID.

And then, we talked about legislation, I think that's really the second phase that we need to move towards and we need to get legislation in place here, in Canada, in the UK and everywhere that protects autistic and disabled children and vulnerable adults. They have no protection from their parents' proxy consenting them to these unregulated treatments that are proven to be dangerous and harmful and we need for that to change. We need to get legislation that protects these children.

ABK: Yeah, I'm really happy to hear that for example the Labour Party in the UK is making- they're meeting and they're talking and they're working toward something like that which is really exciting because that could be a model for Canada and the US and other countries. Now, they've really clued in and they have **NeuroDivergent Labour** which is within the Labour Party, kind of a neurodiversity wing and they are looking at this issue- this pseudoscience issue which is really, really positive and something to watch, for sure.

ME: Yes, definitely. Yes. I'm familiar with that, and I think they've done a great job so far. And I know that they're going to continue to push for the same things that we're trying to push for and yeah, I hope they're successful and that we can learn things from their activism.

ABK: That's great. It's so great to talk to you Melissa, and I'm so thankful for all the work that you're doing and everything that you've done in terms of getting attention to this, getting media attention, de-platforming, regulatory action.

The FDA and Health Canada are making the connection, I think, more because of what's happening with COVID. So, there's also a possibility of being able to get some kind of legislation around COVID "cures", getting other "cures" kind of put into that legislation, so there definitely is movement in the right direction.

The only reason we're moving in this right direction is because of people like you, working at the grassroots and even working when there is so much disappointment, and it's such an uphill battle but continuing on. So, I'm really, really inspired by that and thank you very, very much for coming on and talking about some of it.

ME: Thank you for having me on.

ABK: Awesome. Thanks!

(Theme song - soft piano music)

ABK: We were speaking with children's rights advocate, Melissa Eaton. She spoke to us from South Carolina. You've been listening to Noncompliant: The Podcast. I'm your host Anne Borden King. Noncompliant is recorded at MCS Recording Studios, engineered by TJ Liebgott and Nathan Gravette.