



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
COMMUNITY AND FAMILY HEALTH
Olympia, Washington 98504

June 1, 2006

Katherine A. Tylczak

Federal Way, Washington

Dear Ms. Tylczak:

Governor Gregoire has asked me to respond to your letter regarding male circumcision. Thank you for sharing your research and views with us.

Circumcision of the male infant is a complex and controversial issue. Over the last twenty years, the medical community has moved from promoting circumcision on all male infants in the newborn period, to not routinely recommending the procedure. This has led to questions and varying responses from parents throughout the country.

In response to questions posed by parents, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued the policy statement regarding circumcision and referred to in your letter. In their policy, the AAP states, "...to make an informed choice, parents of all male infants should be given accurate and unbiased information and provided the opportunity to discuss their decision." The policy continues, "It is legitimate for parents to take into account cultural, religious, and ethnic traditions, in addition to the medical factors, when making this decision." The AAP also recommends if neonatal circumcision is to be performed, adequate analgesia should be provided.

Given the complexity of the issue, the AAP policy is widely supported, allowing parents to make the decision in concert with their own views and traditions. I appreciate your sharing your views and the continued public discussion of this very important issue.

Sincerely,

Kathy Chapman, R.N., M.N.
Program Manager
Maternal Infant Health

cc: Governor Gregoire

