



Interview with United Kingdom spokespersons Marcel Albós and Jordi Deu ▶ The group exp



Jordi Deu and Marcel Albós, last week.

MARCEL ALBÓS

JORDI DEU

United States spokespersons

«Our fight is for the kids, so they don't take away their rights depending on whether they're vaccinated or not.»

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The Parents United group was formed at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year to defend the concerns of some parents about the pandemic management measures that were being implemented regarding schools and students. Marcel Albós and Jordi Deu are two of the spokespersons, and they explained to EL PERIÒDIC that one of their main current concerns has to do with the vaccination of children between 5 and 11 years old.

–How did the platform come about?

–Marcel Albós (MA): It was on the initiative of a group of people who were concerned about how the pandemic was evolving and its repercussions on children. We were not there at the time of its formation, but we entered it in mid-December, as a result of the collection of signatures that has been promoted by the group.

–Jordi Deu (JD): Its constitution was on September 19th, 2021. And for me, the most important thing is the fact that in a short time 700 signatures were collected and now we are

around 900, despite the difficulties of doing this action given the current context, which makes it mainly driven by word of mouth.

–How many people are currently part of it?

–MA: The platform currently represents the nearly 900 citizens who have signed up, in addition to the 891 people who have signed up for the Telegram and Facebook groups. Also, we invite all those interested to join.

–And what interaction do they have between the members?

–JD: Telegram and Facebook report on what is being done to the working groups and the meetings that have been held. Beyond that, and for people like us who are not involved in social media, there are administrators, who are the people who coordinate the group and pass the messages through WhatsApp, email or making calls directly. The contact is to pass on publications that we find interesting with related information, because what we want to do is that, based on the fact that it is a new phenomenon and that we are all learners, we are collecting infor-



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mation to assess the strategies that are being taking. In short, we are a group of parents who dedicate part of our time to informing ourselves so that we can contribute our grain of sand in a constructive way, with the desire that the people who make the decisions listen to our proposals, which are well-founded and reasoned.

–They have acted such as collecting signatures or sending letters to political representatives. How have they been?

–MA: All this is a lot of bureaucratic work. But for now, the path is being satisfying because we are seeing interest. The feeling is that the Executive feels that what we are proposing can be beneficial, and that is the will of all the people who are part of the platform.

–The first goal of the group is to stop vaccination. What is your concern about this?

–MA: There are several countries, such as Japan, Finland and Norway, that have stopped vaccinating children. We ask the government to investigate these cases and find out why it has stopped.

–JD: Childhood vaccination is very new, and the country with the most data around is the United States, where about 8.3 million doses have been given to children between the ages of 5 and 11. From there, a collection of results is made, taking into account the adverse effects and the effectiveness of the vaccines. We have studied these official data from the basic parameter in epidemiology which is the number needed to treat, which indicates how many children we need to vaccinate to avoid a very serious case or death. Thus, more than a million children have been vaccinated in the United States to prevent a very serious or fatal case. In contrast, there are about 0.7 deaths, 24 cases of serious side effects and 1,000 cases of mild effects per million due to vaccination. This is due to the fact that only about 10% of the cases are reported, so perhaps these figures should be multiplied by two or 10. Therefore, from our point of view, the benefit-risk balance is unbalanced, and it is not advisable to vaccinate children if the vaccines cause more serious harm to the child population. We do not find the meaning and we would like to discuss it with the Ministry of Health.

-Did you express these doubts to Minister Benazet?

-JD: Not this part in particular, because there was no such information, but many states are making the decision to vaccinate children without having this affected data. Even against the World Health Organization (WHO), which calls on countries not to vaccinate children. And the same government adviser, Dr. Federico Martinón, has just published a statement stating that, and I read verbatim, «Universal vaccination of children has a marginal benefit. Deciding is complex, and other scientific, ethical, political, economic, and epidemiological factors need to be considered. Leaving them as a reservoir will make it easier for the infection to be mild and for adults with natural immune boosters.

-However, they do open the door for vaccination to be carried out under medical prescription, right?

-JD: Yes. We suggest that children be vaccinated under a pediatric prescription and in some cases where there are previous conditions. Pfizer itself, the owner of the childhood vaccine, is asking on its website for the vaccine to be inoculated with a prescription, and this is not being done. We have to see what the government decides in this regard, but we believe that it is very important that this is the case and not in a general way.

-MA: In fact, any vaccine given to children should be prescribed by a doctor. And if a pediatrician has not endorsed it, the nursing professional will not vaccinate the child. I also think that other elements should be taken into account, such as an antibody test and that it weighs in whether or not to recommend the administration of the vaccine.

-Do you feel compelled to vaccinate their children?

-JD: In a way, there is pressure. And I want to remind you that we are talking about a vaccine that is not sterilizing, so in the same way that it happens with the covid certificate in adults, the disease can still be transmitted and so it has happened,



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because even though it is in force, they have multiplied the cases.

-MA: It's a bit like in the case of the condition of passing the weekly screening to be able to attend extracurriculars or the canteen. I think they could have implemented other options, such as joining those students who are not screened instead of discriminating against them.

-JD: In the end, it feels like the states want to punish people who haven't been vaccinated, and in this case we're afraid that the children will be punished as well. But it is an unjust and arbitrary punishment, like the way President Macron spoke about the unvaccinated. This encourages discord and social division.

-MA: And all this in a country where the shield has the expression that the union is the force. So, the opposite is happening for an absurd issue, with no scientific basis, no health, nothing.

-This argument can lead to you being labeled as anti-vaccine. How do

they defend themselves in this regard?

-MA: I think they do this to discredit us. I don't think many people have read the opinion piece in EL PERIÒDIC that we did where we reasonably exposed our uncertainties. But we can assure you that we are not vaccinated, because there are people in the group who have been given the covid vaccine. Our goal is to prevent global and over-the-counter vaccination of children between the ages of 5 and 11.

-JD: We insist, we are not vaccinated because we have our children vaccinated with the vaccines that are usually given to them as they grow up. It is in this particular case that we think things are going very fast and we want to see it clearly.

-MA: Our fight is for the kids, so that they are not deprived of their rights depending on whether they are vaccinated or not, and because they are too young to be given a vaccine that is being tested.

-JD: And from an ethical point of view, if vaccinating children is to protect the elderly, we think it is not acceptable. Other strategies need to be adopted that do not affect the development or schooling of children.

-You also referred to the use of the mask. Do you not consider it appropriate?

-MA: Well, the issue of the pandemic needs to be contextualized here.

-JD: Yes. The whole group understood, from another variant where the contagion was not so high, that it might be appropriate for the children not to use the mask in the classroom. It has been shown to be beneficial for their education, especially for the little ones and for their good language development. But now we know that with the omicron the contagion is explosive, so we understand that in the current situation it is necessary to have the mask, but we ask to be the minimum necessary. In any case, we advocate that the decision be made by specialists, but we would like to have access to the scientific information they are using to define the measures. We want them to give us the



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arguments because we believe that not enough pedagogy is being done.

-You also commented that they find the TMA and TRA tests invasive. Why?

-MA: My particular view is that the management of the incidence in schools was better at the beginning of the pandemic than now. To take the TMA tests you went straight to the car, and now you have to queue for two hours with a child who will soon be nervous. We also know that there are tests that are done with saliva and that are very effective.

-JD: There are children who have a lot of animosity to do this. From a medical point of view, there are already several professionals who say that this system is very invasive for the child, and having seen that there is the option of saliva, we proposed to the minister that they analyze the possibility of introducing them, as we know it has been done in Germany and Galicia.

-MA: In addition, we also advocate

that the whole population be screened, not just the children. I think it should be expanded, because if you only do it to the kids, you're pointing them out as if they were the ones transmitting the virus. We all carry the virus, young and old, but if you only screen children, it will be their fault when it is not, and I think we can blame and scare them.

-So, what is your proposal for the management of the pandemic in children?

-JD: We have proposed a fairly extensive battery of measures, but for the time being, we do not want to give it to public information. We prefer to wait for the government to give us an answer first, and in case they don't answer us, then we will make it public. We are interested in the outcome, and if this does not hurt sensitivities on a political scale, it is the line we have decided to take rather than demonstrate. In any case, we have been able to verify that some of the cases we raised in the proposal have been fulfilled.

For example, in the meeting with the Minister, we mentioned the possibility of seeking natural immunity in children as an alternative strategy to the vaccine, given that the impact of the disease on children is very low. In this regard, when we met with the Minister in mid-December, he acknowledged that he believed that by the end of the sixth wave, the children's group would already have around 40% immunity. We have not yet reached the peak and we are already at that figure. Instead, we told him that by our calculations, we thought he had fallen short, and we told him that by the end of the sixth wave we would be around 60%.

For practical purposes, our argument is gaining strength, because the proposal we made and which we will detail later will seek the natural immunity of children, taking advantage of the fact that we are one of the countries that is later in this regard. In addition, it is an opportunity to be a pioneer and to have a number of advantages from the strategic point of view of the country. ≡



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