

January 28, 2025

Dear Dr. Susan Kressly, Dr. Andrew Racine, CEO Mark Del Monte, Dr. Nathaniel Jones, and other AAP Committee and Board Members,

We, the undersigned organizations, write on behalf of medical and Jewish organizations to express our disappointment and grave concern about the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) leadership's letter to former Secretary of State Antony Blinken related to the wellbeing of Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya. According to Israeli authorities and other sources, Dr. Abu Safiya is a member of Hamas, the terrorist group behind the October 7th massacre and who is dedicated to Israel's destruction, reportedly holding the rank of colonel. The AAP's failure to acknowledge this vital detail is a serious omission, and does a disservice to AAP's mission and values, fundamentally compromising the integrity of the Academy.

AAP claims to support the professional needs of its members, but this letter represents a troubling departure from that commitment and is a deeply divisive missive focused on political activism. The letter has already been used to promote anti-Israel propaganda and is garnering widespread public attention. While we understand the AAP has framed this communication as an "inquiry," the implications and optics of such a statement are troubling, especially given the Academy's slow response to the kidnapping, captivity, torture, and murder of Israeli children by Hamas, an internationally recognized terrorist organization, on October 7, and the ongoing humanitarian crisis facing victims of these attacks, including children.

The letter also undermines your members' ability to effectively serve their patients. Parents who bring their children to the doctor are now having to worry that they may face antisemitism from their family's health care provider. Groups like the American Jewish Medical Association (AJMA) have worked closely with AAP for months to address the urgent need for a strong and unequivocal stance against antisemitism. This effort included the release of AAP's statement against antisemitism in October, alongside attempts to counter hate-filled proposed resolutions. The release of this letter subverts those efforts.

To address this matter and restore trust, we strongly urge the AAP to take the following actions immediately:

- **Issue a Retraction:** Publicly clarify that AAP does not condone terrorism or support individuals associated with or applauding terrorist actions.
- **Implement Antisemitism Training and Oversight:** Accelerate the formation of an AAP Antisemitism Committee, and institute mandatory training for the AAP Board, staff, and committee heads to address antisemitism and anti-Zionism within the Academy.
- **Strengthen Policies on Hate Speech:** Establish guidelines to monitor and address antisemitic or anti-Zionist comments on AAP listservs and other forums, and include the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism and its contemporary examples in the guidelines.

The public backlash to this letter is growing, with calls for leadership changes at the highest levels of AAP. We believe these recommendations can help address the concerns of members, restore faith in AAP's leadership, and reinforce the Academy's commitment to ethical and inclusive practices. Following the antisemitic attack on a synagogue in Poway, CA in 2019, Dr. Kyle Yasuda, President of the Academy at the time, stated, "We must stand together and speak out not just when anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim or racist acts lead to deadly violence, but also when they manifest subtly in our day-to-day lives. We must be just as intolerant of hate when it impacts another group as we do when it impacts us." We ask that AAP, and its membership, return to these roots, in person and on its listservs, and to listening to one another and to standing in solidarity against hate.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss these recommendations further and collaborate on ways to ensure AAP remains a leader in promoting dignity, equity, and justice for pediatricians and the millions of children under their care. Please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

Sincerely,

*ADL (Anti-Defamation League)*  
*American Jewish Medical Association (AJMA)*  
*Hadassah*  
*The Women's Zionist Organization of America*  
*StandWithUs*