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NEWS

I lost my child to measles

SUE DUNLEVY, The Sunday Telegraph

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IMMUNISATION advocate Cecily Johnson takes a photo of her daughter Laine and her death certificate to anti-vaccination meetings to fight their message that "immunisation harms" after Laine lost her life to complications from measles.

Laine should have turned 30 last week, but she passed away in 1995 from subacute sclerosing panencephalitis, an infection related to the measles that left her blind and unable to walk or talk.

Seven years after she contracted measles as a 10-month-old baby, Laine told her mother she felt "dumb" - it was the first sign of a complication caused by the measles virus that afflicts two in every thousand.

Laine had not been vaccinated against measles as the first jab is only given at 12 months of age.

Mrs Johnson says she's worried parents who attend anti-vaccination meetings aren't given the facts about the deadly effects of not vaccinating their children.

At meetings, she questions their claim that no children have died from measles and then "I pull out a picture of my daughter in a coffin to shock them", she says.

