

## COVID-19 Related News Items

**August 2020**

Victor Armstrong is a member:

[Anxiety, depression among North Carolinians has 'tripled' during pandemic, health leaders say](#)

WBTV

**Victor Armstrong, director of the NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, Substance Abuse Services**, says leaders must enhance outreach efforts to marginalized communities. "During the COVID-19 pandemic, symptoms of depression and anxiety have tripled," said Armstrong, who is working with the state to increase access to mental healthcare. "We have also seen a 15-percent increase in emergency department visits of opioid overdose."

Bruce Buchanan was a member; he passed away last month:

[Iowa Press Special: Coronavirus | Mental health, food insecurity & agriculture economy](#)  
Iowa PBS

On this *Iowa Press Special: Coronavirus*, a panel of experts participate in a live discussion of the pandemic's impact on mental health, food insecurity and the agriculture economy, answering viewer questions submitted via email, phone and social media. The panel includes Michelle Book, president and CEO of the Food Bank of Iowa; **Bruce Buchanan, president and CEO of Compass Clinical Associates**; and Chad Hart, associate professor of economics at Iowa State University. Joining moderator David Yepsen at the *Iowa Press* table is Kay Henderson, news director for Radio Iowa.

Sherri Lau is a member:

[Interpreting your child's nonverbal cues](#)

Daily Herald (IL)

**Sheltering in place during the COVID-19 pandemic** has forced parents to juggle work and home in new and unexpected ways. With so much going on, even the most attentive parent can sometimes miss what their children are trying to tell them, especially when they may be at a loss for words. Children express many of their feelings with nonverbal cues. Here are some common nonverbal cues, what they mean and what you can do to support your child through this difficult time.

Lauren Zingraff is a member:

[In harm's way: NC homes for frail, disabled fail to prepare for foreseeable disasters](#)  
The News & Observer (NC)

The possibility of colliding disasters has **Lauren Zingraff, executive director of the advocacy group Friends of Residents in Long Term Care**, "gravely concerned." "We do not have in place the type of emergency preparedness, safety plans, funding and resources to adequately prevent a repeat of what we experienced in 2018," she said. "It's scary to think about what the nursing shortage will look like when you have the devastation of a hurricane and a pandemic on top of it."

## [Learning Curve: Prioritizing Students' Social And Emotional Health Needs](#)

### **CBS Sacramento**

What's different this year in Natomas is that each school is getting a new employee. **Social workers will soon be hired and assigned to every elementary and K-8 school in the district**, on top of the school counselors and psychologists that already operate within. The goal is to connect with students on an individual level virtually, and in more extreme cases, make home visits when it's safe.

## [State and local governments employ the highest share of essential workers. Congress is failing to protect them.](#)

### **Brookings**

But what if we told you the single biggest group of essential workers could find themselves without a paycheck at the end of the month? That's the situation facing 23.2 million essential workers employed by state and local governments. With tax revenues rapidly disappearing, a quick economic recovery out of reach, and no choice but to balance their budgets, public officials have already laid off at least [1.5 million of these workers](#). **Teachers, firefighters, social workers, construction workers—no job is untouchable.**

Tracy Greene Mintz is a member:

## [Nursing Home Residents Moved Out To Make Way For COVID-19 Patients](#)

### **KUOW**

Sudden relocations can be dangerous for older adults, says **Tracy Greene Mintz, a licensed clinical social worker** who focuses on a well-documented syndrome called transfer trauma. "The shorter-term consequences are disability and death," Mintz says. There are a lot of mental and emotional consequences, too. "More severe memory impairment, where there was only a mild one before the move," Mintz says. "Also emotional symptoms: sadness, anger, irritability."

NASW-AR is mentioned:

## [Teacher Protests Erupt As #DemandSafeSchools Takes Off](#)

### **Common Dreams**

**The hashtag #DemandSafeSchools lit up Twitter on Monday** as teachers and students in districts across the country took part in protests over plans for in-person learning in fall despite safety concerns from Covid-19. Actions took place in dozens of major cities including Milwaukee, Chicago, Phoenix, and New York, with some advocates joining the day of action with virtual displays of support.

Kevin Polky is a member:

## [Tips For Managing Back-To-School Stress During Pandemic](#)

### **q985online**

**Kevin Polky, the executive director of KP Counseling, is a clinical social worker** who always is generous with his time and allows us to ask what everyone else is questioning - how do we get through this without losing our minds. The answer involves communication with each other and our kids, most importantly, listening. As far as the

potential stress related to wearing face masks, Kevin suggests trying different kinds of masks until your child(ren) learns which she or he likes best.

Maurya Glaude is a member:

[\[Video\] Americans skip more outpatient procedures and health screenings, doctor says](#)  
**WWL**

But Dr. Ziedan found something else. Mental health doctor visits didn't decrease as much and rebounded fast. **Tulane social worker Dr. Maurya Glaude** said the need is tremendous, and thanks to telemedicine treatments from home, people are getting help. "Lots of parents are asking for help with coping, because there's this new expectation to teach from home, to work from home, to manage all of the expectations while maintaining one's mental health," said Dr. Maurya W. Glaude, Tulane School of Social Work Director of Field Education, a professor of the practice, researcher, and licensed clinical social worker.

Warren Graham is a member:

[Dealing with psychological toll of the coronavirus pandemic](#)

**Long Island Herald**

Another aspect of the pandemic's mental health crisis is what **clinical social worker Warren Graham** described as a "dual consciousness," in which people are striving to balance their need to practice social distancing with their need to socialize. "It's causing a lot of internal conflict for people who want that human contact and connection," Graham said, "but they also want to be safe at the same time." Graham, who has a private practice in Merrick, said he believed more people should be talking about the mental health effects of the pandemic. "We might not even know the depth to which people are affected until we come out about it," he said.

NASW is cited:

[As COVID-19 crisis raises risk of suicide and mental illness, Americans deserve more help](#)

**Roll Call**

For these reasons, our legislation has been endorsed by organizations that assist with crucial mental health support, including the American Psychiatric Association, the National Alliance on Mental Illness and the National Association of Social Workers. At a time of elevated risk of suicides and mental illnesses, we must do more to connect those struggling with resources that can help. It must be addressed head-on. We are committed to working with our colleagues to advance this legislation and provide Nebraskans, Minnesotans and all Americans with relief as they tackle the unprecedented levels of stress and anxiety that have resulted from this pandemic.

Josh Cutler is a member:

[Healthcare Looks to Telehealth to Address Physician Burnout, Stress](#)

**mHealthIntelligence**

The Washington-based health system, with more than 50 hospitals in eight states, rolled out its Telebehavioral Health Concierge program in January 2020, offering virtual care visits with a counselor within two days. They've since renamed it the **Behavioral Health Concierge** program and expanded its reach to include caregivers and family

members in Oregon, California and Montana. “We wanted to build something dedicated to caregivers,” says **Josh Cutler, a licensed clinical social worker** who helped launched the service. “Before and especially during (COVID-19), we have been at the center of an epidemic of burnout and suicide in healthcare. We needed to give (providers) something that would address that on their terms.”

Montrella Cowan is a member:

[40% of Americans struggling with mental health amid COVID-19 pandemic: CDC](#)  
**KOMONews**

The disproportionate impact on communities of color has raised concerns among some mental health professionals that people who need help might avoid seeking it. “When you talk about communities of color, minorities, certainly it's bigger because there's that stigma and sometimes out communities consider it a sign of weakness or vulnerability,” said **Montrella Cowan, a licensed therapist and clinical social worker in Washington, D.C.**

Lindsay Meyer-Thein is a member:

[Counselor Helps Children Deal With School Anxiety And The 'New Normal' We All Face](#)  
**The Monmouth Journal**

If you or your child are struggling with the “new normal” or there is anxiety in your home regarding the upcoming start of the new school year, **Lindsay Meyer-Thein may be able to help**. Thein recently opened a mental health therapy practice in Red Bank and has been working in the social work field for 15 years in different settings and capacities. But her most recent tenure has been working in the school setting with all age levels. Although Thein admits she is “newer” to the private practice world, she has extensive experience in the social work world.

[COVID, cash bail and ‘drive-by therapy’: a deadly combination](#)

**CT Mirror**

**Ocasio’s death made national news because of the way he died** — using a tool intended for protection as a means of his own destruction — but what it ultimately illustrates isn’t at all unusual but, rather, achingly familiar, say criminal justice advocates. Ocasio’s death, they say, highlights the danger of combining the cash bail system with strained mental health monitoring amid the pandemic – which, like many [aspects](#) of Connecticut’s [criminal justice system](#), disproportionately [affects](#) people of color.

Elizabeth Lacasse is a member:

[Many months at home could spark new fear, uncertainty about 'new normal' for youngsters](#)

**The Sun Chronicle**

**Elizabeth Lacasse believes it stems from the ways the pandemic disrupted the family system.** “Parents have taken on a different role as parent, teacher, coach and sometimes friend,” said Lacasse, a clinical social worker in Plainville. “The pandemic has definitely increased the dependence on the family system.” While children generally look to adults for guidance, they typically gain multiple perspectives from other avenues — school, daycare or play dates — Lacasse said.

Lisa Smith is a member:

[Alumna takes action to aid her community during COVID-19 pandemic](#)  
[Colorado State University](#)

As a social worker, solving problems to help others comes naturally to Lisa Smith (BSW, '13). **“I am a social worker. We are the helpers of the world,”** Smith said. “We are not meant to sit around and do nothing. That isn’t who we are. During a pandemic, this rings true more than ever.” The Colorado State University School of Social Work alumna and Air Force veteran had been working with Team Rubicon, a nonprofit in Arvada connecting veterans with first responders to deploy emergency response teams, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

Chase Holleman is a member:

[Pandemic leads to disconnect for some struggling with addiction, including 24-year-old Greensboro woman who fatally overdosed in July](#)  
[Raleigh News & Record](#)

Data tracked by N.C. Detect reveals 172 opioid overdose emergency department visits in Guilford County through June, compared to 164 at the same time last year. Across the state, 824 emergency department visits have been tracked this year, up from 641 during the same time last year. The data, however, likely undercounts the problem, said Chase Holleman, program coordinator for Guilford County Solution to the Opioid Problem. “I think the majority of folks are refusing transport after overdose,” said Holleman, who has been in recovery for over seven years.

Jan Struyde is a member:

[Man remembers wife's courage as she faced COVID-19](#)  
[Newburyport Daily News](#)

**Jan Struyde lost his wife to COVID-19 in July after 33 years of marriage and wants people to know about her courage and that of her caregivers.** "She was my mentor, she was my hero, she was my everything," Struyde said of his wife, Deborah Sheridan, 65. "Her doctor was so pregnant that she went out on maternity leave the day that my wife died," he added. "But she still took the risks. She still applied herself 100% and I would bet all of the ICUs everywhere else are all the same. We need to understand that these people are real heroes and we are blessed to live in the Boston area."

NASW-WV is mentioned:

[WV foster parents aren't being given final say on whether kids return to classrooms](#)  
[The Herald-Dispatch](#)

“Because the foster family is putting their family at risk, they are the one that should be able to make this decision and, if they need help, they can reach out for it,” said Marissa Sanders, director of the WV Foster, Adoptive & Kinship Parents Network. She’s also a former foster parent who has now adopted. The WV United Coalition — which includes Sanders’ group and others, such as the NAACP’s Charleston branch and the state chapter of the **National Association of Social Workers** — wrote a letter last week to Gov. Jim Justice asking him to change the policy.

Mitch Leppicello is a member:

[\[Video\] Back to School Week: Returning to learning for those on the autism spectrum](#)  
[Mass Appeal](#)

Parenting and care giving of a child or young adult with ASD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, needs more than traditional parenting skills. As we begin our back-to-school week of information, [Mitch Leppicello](#), a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, is here to share his expertise on ways of returning to learning for those on the Autism Spectrum.

Kyle Hillman is director of Legislative Affairs with NASW-IL:

[Home Alone for Remote Learning?](#)

[Alton Daily News](#)

**Kyle Hillman, director of legislative affairs at the National Association of Social Workers, Illinois Chapter**, said it is legal to leave a minor home alone during the workday because of the phrase “for an unreasonable period of time” in the state law. “Under Illinois law, that is perfectly legal to leave that child home alone as long as it’s a reasonable amount of time and you took care of their health and wellbeing,” he said. Hillman said he opposed Sosnowski’s bill. He said the bill removes a weapon in a prosecutor’s arsenal to properly punish negligent parents. A better solution, he said, would be for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to clarify what is safe and what isn’t safe.