

## COVID-19 Related News Items, February 2021

Erin Brandel Dykhuizen is a member:

[Your thoughts are lying to you \(And so are mine!\)](#)

Community Reporter

**Right now, it feels like the pandemic will never end**, my kids will be trapped in the house with me forever, and my husband and I will never have a date night ever again. Luckily, what I have learned in my years of training as a psychotherapist sometimes has some application to my own life. One tool that can be helpful in this kind of situation is thought diffusion. Thought diffusion is a way for us to get some distance from our thoughts, so that when they are not helpful we don't keep buying into them.

Wendy Barth is a member:

[\[Video\] Boise marriage counselor says more people dating online due to pandemic](#)

Idaho News

"I do think it makes sense that people are going more online to find a long-term relationship or hookups or all of those things during the pandemic, probably more than they normally would," **Wendy Barth, a licensed clinical social worker** said. Barth said even before the pandemic, online dating was becoming more prevalent in the couples she works with.

Poppy Connor-Crouch and Paula Marcus-Platz are members:

[Maine volunteers ready for a crisis](#)

CentralMaine.com

**Poppy Connor-Crouch and Paula Marcus-Platz** know what it's like to talk with people who are stressed. As licensed clinical social workers, they spent their careers helping people cope. Now they're doing the same thing for free. Connor-Crouch and Marcus-Platz volunteer to staff the [Maine FrontLine WarmLine](#), a confidential help line for stressed out frontline workers, first responders, and health care workers.

Algeria Wilson is the director of public policy for NASW-MI:

[Phone calls, questionnaires used to treat inmate depression during pandemic](#)

Spartan News Room

Prison social workers have always had challenging jobs, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. Now with tough rules and regulations aimed at keeping staff and inmates healthy, prison social workers have become imperative for monitoring the mental health of isolated inmates, according to **Algeria Wilson, the director of public policy of the Michigan chapter of the National Association of Social Workers**.

Sonya Belletti is a member:

[Kids getting worse about chores during the pandemic? Here's how to turn things around](#)

The Seattle Times

"When you are doing activities and going to school, your chores are time-limited. When you are at home, there is always something to do. It's almost never-ending. It feels

pointless. I'm doing this now, and it's going to be there again to be done in an hour. It's like a never-ending loop," says **Sonya Belletti, a clinical social worker in Coral Springs, Florida.**

Wendy Barth is a member:

[REBOUND: Fewer Idaho couples divorcing since start of pandemic](#)

**Idaho6 News**

The pandemic is putting relationships to the test. From postponed weddings to months-long lockdowns, some places across the country are even reporting a rise in divorce filings. But in Idaho, it seems married couples are working through their troubles.

"There are tons of new couples reaching out to me," **licensed clinical social worker Wendy Barth** said. "There are a lot of pressures on people right now."

Tracie McKinley-Lux is a member:

[The unintended consequences of school closures](#)

**News-Register (OR)**

"Prolonged social isolation is deadly. **We have already lost one child to suicide in this county because of it.** I am not willing to lose another, which is why I have made it my mission to advocate for our youth — especially those in already vulnerable situations." I wrote the preceding excerpt on Jan. 21 in an exasperated and desperate social media post. Tragically, five days later, a 17-year-old, three-sport athlete from Sheridan died in an apparent suicide.

Brittany Cruickshank is a member:

[\[Video\] School social worker and psychologist talk about students' mental health amid pandemic](#)

**Poughkeepsie Journal**

Video interview with Brittany Cruickshank, a school social worker, on the effects the pandemic, social isolation, and distance learning has had on students.

Paula Zerfoss is a member:

[Dating apps and COVID-19: what does virtual romance mean for relationships?](#)

**The Blue Banner**

**Paula Zerfoss, a licensed clinical social worker and couples therapist in Asheville,** said dating relationships have changed depending on if people met before or during the pandemic. The couples therapist said she sees people rushing relationships because of the quarantine and it leads to positive or negative outcomes for couples.

"Because of the suddenness in which everyone had to go inside, you know — indoors, people were forced into making decisions that they likely would not have made until maybe a year or two years down the road," she said.

Roxroy Reid is a member:

[Pandemic amplifies sleep loss](#)

**Albuquerque Journal**

Dr. Shanna Diaz, medical director of the Sleep Disorder Centers at of the University of New Mexico Hospital, says the COVID-19 pandemic has more people experiencing

insomnia and increasing numbers taking sleep medications. **Roxroy Reid of Bosque Mental Health** recommends cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia: “Change your thinking, change your behavior.”

Donna Goings is a member:

[New call for teacher vaccinations before returning to classroom](#)

WMC

“Think of it as a car, you wouldn’t put your child in an unsafe car before fixing it... please fund and help us get back,” said **Donna Goings, a clinical social worker with SCS**. School leaders said vaccinations are necessary for teachers before heading back. An SCS survey showed 4,600 of the district’s 6,000 teachers are willing to get the vaccine.

[A Parallel Pandemic Hits Health Care Workers: Trauma and Exhaustion](#)

The New York Times

There is no comprehensive federal government count of worker deaths. But according to a tally by Kaiser Health News and the Guardian, **more than 3,300 nurses, doctors, social workers and physical therapists have died from Covid-19 since March. Experts say the death toll is most likely far higher.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [counts 1,332 deaths](#) among medical personnel, which is striking given that its sister agency, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, lists [roughly the same number](#) of deaths just among nursing home workers — a small portion of those employed by the nation’s hospitals, health clinics and private practices.

Timothy Wade is a member:

[Police calls regarding mental health continue to rise as pandemic drags on](#)

The Westerly Sun

The department has partnered with several organizations, including a regional partnership with the Providence Center, which provides clinical support to several southern Rhode Island communities, including Richmond, South Kingstown and Narragansett. In addition, the department has obtained grant funding to retain the services of **Timothy Wade Jr., a licensed clinical social worker with Gateway Health Care in Charlestown.**

Alison Stone is a member:

[Feeling a Little Bit On Edge? You're Probably Dealing With 'Pandemic Paranoia'—and Trust Us, You're Not Alone](#)

Parade

**Alison Stone, LCSW**, a New York-based holistic psychotherapist, adds that as human beings, we rely so much on facial expressions and body language to help us read the room. “Without these opportunities for connection, it can leave us questioning our sense of emotional safety and security.”

Shana Schwartz is a member:

[The pandemic is exacerbating a shortage of child therapists](#)

The Philadelphia Inquirer

On top of that, said **Shana Schwartz, a licensed clinical social worker in Ardmore**, quite a few practitioners are parents themselves and are precluded from taking on new cases because they need to spend time with their own children who are out of school and unsupervised.

Anna Usher is a member:

[How To Help Teens And Young Adults Struggling With Mental Health During COVID](#)  
[The Weekly Post \(NC\)](#)

Social isolation is particularly difficult for teens, for whom socialization is key to their development and identity. “Teens are in this really interesting part of their life where they’re wanting to become more independent outside their family unit,” says **Anna Usher, Licensed Clinical Social Worker Associate at [Matone Counseling and Testing](#)** (formerly Thriveworks Counseling and Coaching).