



US FORUM CONNECTION

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Philadelphia Forum

US FORUM

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Interested in Legislation?
U.S. Forum is looking for a dedicated U.S. Connection Editor. For details contact Kathy Davis at Kldavis52@gmail.com

History begins in May
The Three Sisters is a 1998 statue created by sculptor Ted Aub. It depicts the May 12, 1851 introduction of Anthony to Stanton by Bloomer. Left to right: Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Amelia Bloomer.



Three sisters statue in Seneca Falls, NY

Women hit hard by Covid-19

Health Care and Social Workers
Women comprise the majority of health and social care workers, and are on the front lines of the fight against COVID-19. Statistics show that 78% of all healthcare and social assistance workers are women. Data states that 77% of all hospital employees are women.

Child Care

Mass school closures have particularly affected women because they still bear much of the responsibility for childcare. Our childcare system was not supporting women and families prior to Covid-19. With the additional burden of closed businesses, at home work and children needing educational support, the primary responsibility is placed on women.

Food Insecurities

Households headed by single women and women living alone display food insecurities. Food insecurity has been reported as higher in households located in nonmetropolitan areas. Regionally the food insecurity rate was highest in the South followed by the Northeast. Between 2016-18 the following states had above average food insecurity: Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas and West Virginia.

Employment and Earnings

Women have been hit hard by the coronavirus labor market. Women are most likely to be laid off or given shorter hours during the crisis and post crisis. More than ever, we need to support legislation that assists women in these areas.

<https://www.eforeum.org/agenda/2020/03/the-coronavirus-fallout-may-be-worse-for-women>
<https://www.healthcareers.com>, Joyce, Trish; Does Healthcare have a Gender Problem, 4.24.18
[https://www.ers.usday.gov/Household Food Insecurity in the United States in 2018](https://www.ers.usday.gov/Household%20Food%20Insecurity%20in%20the%20United%20States%20in%202018). Sources:
<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/why-gender-matters-impact-and-recovery-covid-19>

“Taking Care of yourself doesn’t mean me first, it means me too.”

-L.R. Knost, Author and Political Activist

Pandemic shows how important public schools are to their communities

As states closed public school systems, the nation saw the wide range of necessary services schools provide to students in addition to instruction. Public schools, serving 50 million students, also provide meals, health and social support essential to child welfare and development. School districts are now attempting to deliver instruction from a distance, but also to maintain the vital personal connection teachers and other staff provide, especially to their most vulnerable students. Teachers read bedtime stories online, tutor students from outside the students' front doors and drive by students' homes to check in. Counselors make themselves available through any electronic means possible.

Wendy Lecker. "A daily decay of American education during coronavirus." *Samford (CT) Advocate*. April 4, 2020

<https://www.stamfordadvocate.com/news/article/Wendy-Lecker-A-daily-decay-of-American-education-15177716.php>

How much federal funding is needed for schools to survive fiscal blow

The \$13.5 billion federal CARES Act will not be enough to spare school districts from painful budget cuts. America's public schools will need \$70 billion for three consecutive years in the next round of federal stimulus spending to avoid painful cuts such as teacher layoffs, according to a new analysis. That level of spending would help blunt the dramatic budget cuts that districts will likely be forced to make because of the pandemic.

Daarel Burnett II. "How Much Federal Money Do Schools Need to Survive the Coming Financial Blow?" *Education Week*. April 20, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/04/20/how-much-federal-money-do-schools-need.html?cmp=e-ml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59521771&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

U.S.E.D. releases \$13.5 billion more in coronavirus education aid

The \$13.5 billion in emergency coronavirus funding for K-12 schools was included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act signed into law last month. The money will initially go to states, but at least 90% ultimately must be passed along to school districts via the Title I formula designed to help schools with large shares of students from low-income households.

Andrew Ujifusa. "Betsy DeVos Releases Billions More in Coronavirus Education Aid." *Education Week*. April 23, 2020

<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign12/2020/04/betsy-devos-releases-billions-coronavirus-education-aid.html?cmp=soceml-twfdbltz-ewnow>

Mental Health Issues and Young People **Daphne Cagle, U.S. Forum SW Representative**

Background

According to the Mayo Clinic "Mental illness, also called mental health disorders, refers to a wide range of mental health conditions — disorders that affect your mood, thinking and behavior. Examples of mental illness include depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders and addictive behaviors.

Many people have mental health concerns from time to time. But a mental health concern becomes a mental illness when ongoing signs and symptoms cause frequent stress and affect your ability to function."

Key points

- Project Aware (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) has as its goal to increase awareness of mental health issues among school aged youth, to provide training for school personnel, to detect and respond to mental health issues, and connect school age youth with serious mental illness and their families with needed services. S.1122 (listed below) aims to provide grant funding for this program. US Department of Health & Human Services <https://www.hhs.gov>
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 1 in 5 children are diagnosed with "mental disorders such as ADHD, Tourette syndrome, behavioral issues, mood and anxiety disorders, autism spectrum disorders, or substance abuse disorders."
- In the United States one of five adolescents age 15-24 experience serious mental health disorders, and one in eight have been diagnosed with depression. (NAMI)
- States with mandated mental health policies in public schools have significantly lower adolescent and young adult suicide and substance abuse rates. The policies that lead to lower suicide and substance abuse rates include

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school mandated mental health centers, social emotional curriculum, and school professional development in suicide prevention. Syracuse University Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion

- Schools with mandated school family engagement programs and anti-bullying programs also have significantly lower adolescent and young adult suicide rates than states without these programs. Syracuse University Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion

Current Federal Legislation

H.R. 4194 National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2019 Introduced 8/20/19 By Representative Stewart (R-UT)

This bill requires the Federal Communications Commission to designate 9–8–8 as the universal telephone number for a national suicide prevention and mental-health crisis hotline. **Current Status:** Referred to the subcommittee on Communications and Technology.

S. 2661 National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2019 Introduced 10/22/19 by Sen. Gardner (R-CO) To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to designate 9–8–8 as the universal telephone number for the purpose of the national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system operating through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and through the Veterans Crisis Line, and for other purposes. **Current Status:** 12/11/2019 Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.

S.1122 Mental Health Services for Students Act of 2019 Introduced 4/10/19 by Senator Tina Smith, (D-MN) This bill provides specific statutory authority for the Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) State Educational Agency Grant Program that is administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The program supports school-based mental health services, including screening, treatment, and outreach programs. **Current Status:** 4/10/19 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

S.1668 Defending Access to Mental Health Care Act Introduced 5/23/2019 Sponsor: Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) This bill expands the National Health Service Corps Program to include service in pediatric inpatient mental health facilities (such facilities may qualify as health professional shortage areas under the program). **Current Status:** 5/23/19 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

S.1642 Increasing Access to Mental Health in Schools Act Introduced in Senate. 05/23/2019 by Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) This bill directs the Department of Education (ED) to award grants to partnerships between educational agencies and graduate institutions to increase the number of school-based mental-health services providers employed by low-income local educational agencies (LEAs). Grant funds may be used for specified purposes, including to provide student-loan forgiveness and tuition credits and to support recruitment, hiring, and training. In addition, ED shall establish a program to provide student-loan forgiveness for individuals who (1) are not, and have never been, participants in the grant program established by the bill; and (2) have been employed by low-income LEAs for five or more consecutive school years as mental-health services providers. **Current Status:** 5/23/19 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 4381 Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Act Introduced 09/18/2019. Sponsor: Rep. Katherine M. Clark (D-MA) Cosponsors: (1) Committees: House - Education and Labor This bill directs the Department of Education to award grants to state educational agencies to support school-based, mental-health-services providers at public elementary and secondary schools. **Current Status:** 09/18/2019 Referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor.

S.2499 — 116th Congress (2019-2020) Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Act. Sponsor: Sen. Merkley, Jeff (D-OR) **Cosponsors:** (8) **Committees:** Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. A summary is in progress **Current Status:** 09/18/2019 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pension.

VOICE YOUR OPINION

Information supplied here is intended to inform you of pending legislation and issues related to women, children, and education. Our intent is to provide you with information to assist you in making an independent decision on the issues and having the option to contact your Legislator regarding your stance.



Opinion: Postcards that matter

Write your senators regarding promoting any of the bills listed. For every 5 continuants they hear from action is taken.

Now that most of us are sequestered it might be that opportunity for you to pursue a legislative issue that you are concerned about. Connecting with your legislators during Covid-19 has generated new challenges. Email messages and connecting to the legislator's website messages have now taken priority. Contact to local offices and District offices for Congress often generates quicker responses. More than ever, your physical address and area code are factors in receiving responses from these offices. These offices will respond to phone calls and emails. Mailing postcards is still a way to address concerns but be aware that many are working remotely. Information regarding your legislators can be found at congress.gov and local county, city and town websites.

To learn more about your legislators, what committees they serve on, floor proceedings and what issues they are supporting, use these links: <http://www.house.gov/> for members of the House of Representatives and <http://www.senate.gov/> members of the U.S. Senate. White House 1-202-456-1111.



You are invited to join us **on Saturday, July 11, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. for the US Forum session** that features **keynote speaker Sam (Siobhan) Bennett**, and elections for the 2020-2022 U.S. Forum Steering Committee.

Interested in being a U.S. Forum Representative or Chair for 2020-2022?

Consider being a candidate for the 2020-2022 US Forum Steering Committee. The US Forum Steering Committee consists of a Chair and four regional representatives: Northeast, Southeast, Northwest and Southwest. All United States DKG members are part the Forum and any member has the opportunity to be nominated and elected to a position on the Steering Committee.

As a Regional Representative your role, will be to identify and address major issues of concern to DKG U.S. Forum members, and to provide current information regarding pending federal legislation affecting women, children and education. Representatives work with regional state US Forum representatives, interested members and state presidents. The Steering Committee will work together to organize the 2022 National Legislative Seminar.

Interested members can download the form at www.usforumdkg.org and email it to **Chair Kathy Davis** at kldavis52@gmail.com no later than **May 15, 2020**.