

## News and Updates

### COVID-19

**A message from the RI Department of Health:** People age 40 and older who live, work, or go to school in Rhode Island are now eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. If you are eligible, you can schedule an appointment at the State-run vaccination site by visiting [www.vaccinateRI.org](http://www.vaccinateRI.org) starting April 13th at approximately 9am. For help, call 844-930-1779. Visit [C19vaccineri.org](http://C19vaccineri.org) for more information.

### The Work of Anti-Racism

There will be a brief initial presentation on our survey results at the **April 22, 2021** full member meeting.

### Federal Government

#### Unaccompanied Children

The next meeting of members potentially interested in serving Unaccompanied Children (UC) from the southern border will be this Wednesday, April 14th from 11:30-1pm. The federal Administration for Children and Families and the Office of Refugee Resettlement are seeking short and longer term residential and foster care support, land and facilities, and case management workers nationally. Representatives from Seneca Family Systems which is subcontracting with providers nationally will join from 12-1pm. We are coordinating with DCYF who maintains licensing responsibility.

### State Government

#### General Assembly

There are a several important hearings this week. Our priorities among the week's hearings include: **Tuesday** on a dedicated stream of funding for **Housing**, and **Thursday** evening on **Behavioral Health rates** and **Telemedicine** (second hearing so we have testimony). We will be holding a Legislative Briefing in **May** (date to be announced).

Agency representatives have been asked to provide examples of the direct impact of behavioral health insurance rates that are under costs on member client's, staff, and agencies. The bill would increase rates over the next several years.

Thanks to our partner the **Protect our HealthCare Coalition** for the helpful summary below:

**HOUSING: Tuesday, at the Rise**, both the dedicated funding stream legislation (both Speakman, 5687 and Slater, 5456 - versions), and [budget article 16](#) are up for hearing in House Finance. The Commerce Secretary position is also on the agenda – Homes RI does not have a formal position on this, although in general, we support the need for more leadership at the State level. Written testimony is strongly encouraged and may be submitted, **by 1:00 pm Tuesday** via [HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov). The deadline for **verbal testimony** was at **4:00 PM Monday**.

#### DOULA Medicaid COVERAGE

**Wednesday, 4pm in House Finance Article 12 and House Bill 5929** for coverage of **Doula Services under Medicaid** will be heard. The deadline for written testimony is 1:00 pm on Wednesday and should be submitted as a PDF to: [HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov) -  
- Indicate your name, bill number, and viewpoint (for/against/neither) at top of the message. While it is not a high priority of RICCF, the Doula bill, which is a priority bill for women of color

who are extremely vulnerable to childbirth complications, is up on Wednesday, and I hope to submit a letter of support.

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE in SENATE HHS Thursday:** The bill to increase reimbursement rates for behavioral health providers ([S591](#)) will be heard in [Senate HHS](#) on Thursday. To provide **verbal testimony** to the committee, register through the following link: [VERBAL TESTIMONY](#). Requests to provide verbal testimony must be submitted by **4:00 PM on Wednesday, April 14, 2021**. **Written testimony** is encouraged and can be submitted to the committee by emailing it to: [slegislation@rilegislature.gov](mailto:slegislation@rilegislature.gov) **prior to 2:00 PM on Thursday, April 15, 2021**, in order for it to be provided to the members of the committee at the hearing and to be included in the meeting records.

#### **TELEMEDICINE**

**Thursday at the rise in [House Finance House Bill 6032](#) on**

**Telemedicine** is scheduled. This bill mirrors Senator Miller's bill S0004A2 that has already passed the Senate.

**DEADLINE: Requests for verbal testimony must be submitted via the link, by 4:00 PM on Wednesday, April 14, 2021.**

For verbal testimony requests, [CLICK HERE](#). The deadline for written testimony is 1:00 pm on Thursday and should be submitted as a PDF to: [HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov) -  
- Indicate your name, bill number, and viewpoint (for/against/neither) at top of the message.

#### **DCYF**

##### **Strategic Dashboard**

The DCYF Strategic Monthly Dashboards for [April 2021](#) can be accessed here.

#### **Foundations**

Darren Walker, President of the Ford Foundation was interviewed on CBS' 60 Minutes.

[To view the nterview- click here.](#)

#### **Media**

Gina Raimondo, the former Rhode Island governor is one of five cabinet secretaries tasked with pushing Biden's \$2 trillion American Jobs Plan over the finish line. Watch the newsconference [video](#) from 4/7/2021.

**Sojourner House-** Executive Director Vanessa Volz of member Sojourner House wrote an Op-Ed in the March 23rd Providence Journal, "**After 45 years, Sojourner House still evolving to meet its mission.**" [Click here for full text article.](#)

**Ocean Tides -**Brother James Martino, FSC, President of member Ocean Tides, penned "**Ocean Tides staff buoyed boys' lives during pandemic**" in the Providence Journal as well. [Click here for full text](#)

#### **Partners**

**Rent Relief RI** launched last week and the [application portal](#) is now open. Yesterday, a new Call Center opened to assist applicants with questions. The Call Center is 1-855-608-8756, open M-F 8:30-5:30 and Saturdays 8am-1pm. Please spread the word! RIHousing has created several outreach materials, including an engagement toolkit, one-pager, graphics, and landlord FAQ to promote the program which you can access [here](#). There is also a [Rent Relief RI FB page](#). RIHousing is aware of and

responding to tech issues and other questions that applicants have. Folks can contact the Call Center for help. It is important that community partners also keep track of any issues you are seeing with people being able to access the application.

## **RICCF**

### **RICCF Office**

We continue to work remotely. If you have scheduling or programmatic concerns, please contact [lisa.kahn@riccf.org](mailto:lisa.kahn@riccf.org)



## **Trainings, Webinars, Conferences, and Forums**

### **Upcoming Trainings**

#### **NAMI Rhode Island Support Groups**

NAMI Family Support Groups are free, peer-led support groups for family members, caregivers, and loved ones of individuals living with a mental health condition. Gain insight from the challenges and successes of others facing similar experiences. Most groups meet for about 90 minutes. For more information you may call 401-331-3060 to join weekly Zoom meetings or click on the [link](#). Zoom links will be sent to those who express interest.

**Behavioral Health & Homelessness Prevention (BHHP) is initiating a new training series.** For now, the trainings will remain virtual, although the hope is that at some point this summer BHHP will be able to conduct some in-person trainings. In the meanwhile, check out the training offerings at the BHHP website: <https://www.cabhiriverwood.org/bhhptrainings>

#### **Child Welfare Information Gateway (CWIG)**

"**What did Child Welfare learn from 2020?**" is a new podcast series. "With so much happening in our lives during the last year, it's important to pause and take stock of what we have learned from all these challenges. How has the fog of stress, uncertainty, and fear impacted the child welfare field? What can we do differently with the wisdom we have gained?"

**Listen to three episodes** on the podcast to hear experts from the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP), the Quality Improvement Center for Workforce Development (QIC-WD), and the University of Colorado School of Medicine discuss topics including systemic racism, mental health, and new agency precautions and partnerships. [Episode 58-Caseworker Care](#), [Episode 59- upEnding Systemic Racism](#), and [Episode 60 Child Welfare as Public Health](#).

**CWIG Bulletins for Professionals Series.** Publications for caseworkers, adoption professionals, and other child welfare professionals covering research, practices, and policies can be viewed by following this [link](#).

**RISAS(Rhode Island Student Assistance Authority) will hold "Making Lemonade Out of Lemons: Working with Anxiety and Uncertainty During COVID-19"** on April 13, 2021 at 6pm on Zoom. "Our brains are set up for survival, yet at its worst, this same mechanism can lead to anxiety and panic if left unchecked. At other times, we find ourselves eating more or constantly checking our news feeds as a way to cope. Learning how your mind works helps

you learn to work with difficult emotional states and habits. Using examples from his clinical experience and laboratory research, Dr. Brewer will unravel these mental mysteries so that we all can develop resilience." [To view PDF](#). [Click here to register](#).

**TASP \_The Association for Successful Parenting: "Working Successfully with Parents with IDD."** This training is designed to build on helping professionals' skills when working with families where the parents have intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disabilities. This is a live, interactive online training via Zoom. Your registration includes the 2-part training (delivered over 2 afternoons), training materials, and an opportunity for questions and live engagement with the presenters and other participants. **Date: April 22 & 23, 12-3:30pm EST (must attend both days)**. Tuition for this training is \$300, and includes: 60-page training guide, provider toolkit additional resources, live Q&A, interaction with participants across the world, certificate of attendance, and a reduced rate on purchasing A Fair Chance (a training video that shares parents' experiences) [Register here](#).

**The Center For Advanced Practice's** at Adoption Rhode Island is holding it's Spring Discussion Series:

**May 7th from 12pm-1pm. A virtual panel discussion to explore various aspects of the search and reunion process.** Adoptees and their birth parents and relatives who were separated by adoption may decide to search for each other at some point during their lives. This discussion will cover the various aspects of the search and reunion process and outcomes. For more information and to [Register](#).

**May 14th from from 12pm-1pm: A virtual panel discussion to explore various aspects of youth permanency.** A primary goal for children and youth in foster care is to achieve permanency. Permanency may be defined by two separate but related dimensions: legal and relational. It is ideal for youth to experience both, achieving a sense of belonging with enduring family relationships. Panelists will explore what is permanency, who defines it, how do you get it and what roles do the youth, caseworker, court and system play in permanency achievement? For more informaiton and to [Register](#).

**The Mental Health Association of RI and Thundermist Health Center** are collaborating to provide a **FREE Mental Health First Aid Training. Monday May 10th from 9:30am-3:30pm**. Mental Health First Aid is a class that teaches attendees to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training provides participants with the skills needed to reach out and provide initial assistance to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis. As a bi-lingual, bi-cultural professional, the session's lead facilitator, Jennifer Gaviria, is able to help address a broad range of concerns and questions from participants working in racially and ethnically diverse communities that face unique challenges to mental and emotional well-being.

**All participants are required to complete the 2-hour self-guided coursework and take a quiz before they may participate in the virtual real-time class. The self-guided work must be completed no later than Monday, April 26, 2021. The virtual real-time class is 6 hours long and includes a lunch break. [Click here to register](#).**

### **National Partner Trainings**

**CWLA WEBINAR "Maintaining Financial Stability for Non-Profit Organizations during Uncertain Times" (Part One) Tuesday, April 20, 2021 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm**

"The impact of COVID-19 over the past year, the continued uncertainty around its full impact, and the potential ensuing budget cuts have created significant stress for many non-profit organizations. The pandemic has been particularly challenging and has required many

organizations to amend their budgets. Additionally, the pandemic has resulted in reduced public and private funding and will impact many organizations and non-profits going forward. State efforts to implement the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 have created further financial challenges and uncertainty. Members of the CWLA Board of Directors, in partnership with CWLA staff, have put together this special two-part webinar series to provide support for and share their wisdom and strategies with leaders of CWLA non-profit member agencies. The webinars are intended to create a safe and meaningful way to share best practices and short- and long- term strategies that have worked through other economic downturns and uncertain times." [Register here.](#)

### **National Family Support Network Virtual Trainings**

**Virtual Standards of Quality Certification Training April 26th-27th.** "The newly-revised nationally-adopted Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support are used across the country by public departments, foundations, networks, community-based organizations, and families as a tool for planning, providing, and assessing quality practice." [Click here for more information and registration.](#)

**Developing and Sustaining Effective Parent Advisory Committees Training April 29th-30th from 11:30am-5pm. The National Family Support Network** "has developed the Developing and Sustaining Effective Parent Advisory Committees Training to address these challenges and maximize the great potential of Parent Advisory Committees. Whether Programs are exploring setting up a new Parent Advisory Committee, or seeking to strengthen an existing one, this training will provide staff with the strategies and tools to maximize the great potential of shared staff-parent leadership." [Click here for more information and registration.](#)

### **National Family Support Network Webinar Wednesdays**

**April 14, 2021, 2:30pm - 3:45pm.**

**An Overview of the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support.** "In 2020, the National Family Support Network conducted a review and revision process to update the nationally-adopted Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support, engaging its Member Networks across the United States, parent leaders, and representatives of Family Strengthening and Support organizations in Canada, to provide input and feedback. The thoroughly revised Standards reflect an enhanced focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion and addressing community conditions that impact families' healthy development." [Register here.](#)

**April 21, 2021, 2:30pm - 3:45pm**

**Uncovering America's Best Kept Secret: Family Resource Centers and Family Support & Strengthening Networks.** This webinar will shed light on the often under the radar work and impact of the more than 3,000 Family Resource Centers organized into Family Support and Strengthening Networks in 31 states and the District of Columbia that support more than 2 million people annually. [Register here.](#)

**April 28, 2021, 2:30-3:45pm**

**On the Same Page: Family Resource Centers Co-located in Libraries.** This webinar will highlight Family Resource Centers (FRCs) co-located in public libraries in Pittsburgh, PA, Gainesville, FL, and Phoenix Arizona. Each of these unique FRCs will share how their partnership were initiated and evolved over the years and provide recommendations for other communities interested to explore developing similar partnerships. [Register here.](#)



April is the month when our state commemorate's the work of National Child Abuse Prevention and Sexual Assault Awareness! Please share members' posts and educational materials widely!

