Adolescent Health Advocacy in the Age of COVID-19

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The Need for Advocacy Has Never Been Greater

**POLITICO**
Trump called PPE shortages ‘fake news.’ Health care workers say they’re still a real problem.

**The Washington Post**
Young adults are also affected by Kawasaki-like disease linked to coronavirus, doctors say

**CNBC**
State and local governments face budget crunch, hurting hopes for a quick economic recovery

**Los Angeles Times**
Trump administration skimps on coronavirus aid for Medicaid providers
## Bipartisan Congressional Response to Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Bill Name</th>
<th>What it did</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act</td>
<td>Initial funding to bolster key federal programs to address COVID-19 including vaccine and medical countermeasure development, global preparedness and response, public health programs</td>
<td>$8.3 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Families First Coronavirus Response Act</td>
<td>Supports for families dealing with the immediate economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic including increased support for Medicaid, nutrition support, strengthening state unemployment insurance programs</td>
<td>$100 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Recovery (CARES) Act</td>
<td>Sweeping legislative package providing direct relief to the health care system, families, and businesses including direct payments to families, provider relief, small business loans, additional $600 per month in unemployment insurance payments</td>
<td>$2 trillion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3.5</td>
<td>Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act</td>
<td>Extra money for Provider Relief Fund, Paycheck Protection Program</td>
<td>$484 billion</td>
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</table>
What’s Next from Congress?

- House Democrats believe that additional legislation is urgently needed and assembled a package containing top priorities.
- The **HEROES Act** (H.R. 6800), passed on May 15, is a $3 trillion bill to provide additional resources to states, health care providers, and families.
- The bill included a number of key provisions, including an increase in federal support for Medicaid, funds to help state and local governments address revenue shortfalls, and additional financial relief for health care providers.
Negotiating “Phase 4”

- The HEROES Act will not pass the Senate in its current form
- Republican leadership is wary of additional spending and feeling less urgency to pass additional legislation
- Can Democrats and Republicans meet in the middle?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Republican Priorities</th>
<th>Key Democratic Priorities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Liability protections for businesses and health care providers</td>
<td>Funding for state and local governments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic stimulus, such as payroll tax cuts</td>
<td>Direct payments for Americans</td>
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- Big infrastructure package?
- Small business support?
Key Advocacy Priorities

In this unprecedented crisis, advocacy continues to focus on ensuring that adolescent health providers have the tools they need to protect themselves, keep their practices open, and continue to care for adolescents throughout the pandemic.

- **Financial relief** for child and adolescent providers
- **Personal protective equipment** for frontline providers
- Increased federal support for **Medicaid**
- Bolstering **public health** infrastructure
- Supporting children, **adolescents**, and families
Take Action!

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to dramatic declines in patient volume as deferrable services and health maintenance visits are delayed, threatening the long-term viability of systems of care for adolescents. Child and adolescent health providers need **immediate financial relief**, but federal support to cover lost revenue and non-reimbursable expenses has left pediatric and adolescent medicine behind.

**Contact your members of Congress and ask them to urge HHS to send financial relief to pediatric and adolescent health providers immediately.**
Here’s How

If you’re an AAP member, you can be directly connected to your members of Congress through federaladvocacy.aap.org by clicking Take Action under “Provide Needed Financial Support for Pediatricians Impacted by COVID-19 Crisis.”

If you are not an AAP member, or if you are having trouble accessing federaladvocacy.aap.org, please contact Matt Mariani at mmariani@aap.org.
Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment

- In March, Congress reauthorized the Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment Program (PSLRP) for five years through the CARES Act.
- Once implemented, this program will help alleviate shortages of pediatric subspecialists, including adolescent health providers, by providing loan relief for pediatric subspecialists in exchange for practicing in underserved areas.
How can you help make PSLRP a reality?

• The next step in making loan repayment for pediatric subspecialists a reality is to secure initial funding for the program through the annual appropriations process.

• Please consider contacting your member of Congress to encourage them to prioritize $50 million in funding for PSLRP in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021.

• Visit federaladvocacy.aap.org and click Take Action under “Support Children's Access to Specialty Care.”
Hot Topics in Adolescent Health Advocacy

- Reproductive health
- Juvenile Justice
- Telehealth and COVID-19
- Gun violence prevention
COVID-19 Abortion Bans

- The COVID-19 pandemic has presented additional challenges in patient access to abortion care. Under the pretext of preserving hospital capacity and personal protective equipment, some states included abortion under orders that required “elective procedures” to be canceled.
- Though these COVID-related abortion bans have faded as many state begin to reopen their economies, access to abortion for some remains a challenge amidst the health concerns and economic uncertainty of the pandemic.
- SAHM and the AAP joined multiple amicus briefs urging federal courts to strike these bans down as a violation of women’s right to access abortion.

Source: Washington Post
Title X Gag Rule

- Abortion referrals (only misleading lists of providers)
- Funding to organizations that provide abortion services
- Comprehensive offering of effective contraceptives
- Natural family planning / fertility awareness methods
- Interference in patient-provider relationship related to parental involvement and sexual history screening for minors
Courts Consider Gag Rule

- SAHM and the AAP have joined numerous amicus briefs in federal courts considering the legality of the sweeping Title X Gag Rule
- The briefs highlight the critical role Title X plays in providing access to reproductive health care for adolescents and low-income adults and urge the courts to strike the rule down.
Litigation Continues

Though federal district courts initially blocked implementation of the Title X Gag rule, a federal appeals court allowed the rule to go into effect on July 15, 2019, pending further litigation. The Supreme Court – or the 2020 election – is likely to have the final word.
Title X Network Compromised

Numerous states and family planning clinics have withdrawn from Title X rather than comply with the gag rule, reducing access to care for those who depend on Title X.
Abortion Lands at SCOTUS

2016

**Whole Woman’s Health v. Hellerstedt**

*At Issue*: State law placing medically unnecessary restrictions on abortion providers

*Ruling*: Law constitutes an undue burden on abortion access and is unconstitutional

2020

**June Medical Services v. Gee**

*At Issue*: State law placing medically unnecessary restrictions on abortion providers

*Ruling*: Expected by June

Though the Supreme Court struck down nearly identical state restrictions on abortion providers in 2016, the Court’s composition has since changed, and the current panel of judges will determine the fate of the Louisiana restrictions.
Supreme Court Considers Contraception Mandate

• On May 6, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a state challenge to the Trump administration’s rules allowing sweeping religious and moral exemptions to the Affordable Care Act’s requirement that employers provide no-cost contraception coverage in employee health plans.
• A ruling is expected by the end of June.
• You can listen to a recording of the oral arguments online.

The New York Times

Supreme Court to Consider Limits on Contraception Coverage

The justices will weigh Trump administration regulations allowing employers to refuse to provide access to birth control on religious or moral grounds.
Juvenile Justice

• Detained youth are at risk of COVID-19 infection and negative consequences of policies—like isolation—that may be used in detention facilities to control spread of the virus

• Opportunity to advocate for release of justice-involved youth and invest in alternatives to incarceration

• Read the AAP’s new statement, Responding to the Needs of Youth Involved With the Justice System During the COVID-19 Pandemic, which outlines the most effective approaches to protect the health of justice-involved youth during the pandemic.
Telehealth and COVID-19

- To facilitate and expedite the uptake and spread of telehealth care while retaining appropriate linkages to the pediatric medical home, the AAP is advocating that all payers (private payers as well state Medicaid/Children's Health Insurance Programs (CHIP) and their contracted managed care organizations (MCOs)) should take steps to reduce or eliminate barriers to telehealth care.

- State Medicaid agencies continue to develop and update guidance and bulletins on the provision of services via telehealth care, including information on how to bill for such services and guidance for the provision of well-child visits via telehealth.
Gun Violence Prevention Research

• In a historic advocacy victory, Congress provided $25 million in funding for gun violence prevention research in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, split evenly between the CDC and the NIH, for the first time in over 20 years. SAHM and the AAP advocated strongly for this funding, which will be critical to identifying evidence-based interventions to reduce firearm-related morbidity and mortality.

• Our organizations have called on Congress to double this funding to $50 million in FY 2021 to build on this initial investment and help rebuild this long-dormant field of research.
Election 2020: Get Out the Vote

• Election Day: Nov. 3
• AAP campaign focused on connection between healthy equity & voting: Launching this summer
  – Applying lessons learned from COVID-19
• Ensuring members have tools & resources to safely cast ballot & encourage others to do so
• Partnership with VotER: Non-partisan voter registration effort
  – Health professionals encouraging patients/families to register to vote
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