

FROM KATHERINE B. MCGUIRE, APA CHIEF ADVOCACY OFFICER

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Driving Forward with APA's 2020 Advocacy Priorities

Under the leadership of APA's inaugural Advocacy Coordinating Committee, co-chaired by Antonio E. Puente, PhD, and Jennifer Kelly, PhD, ABPP, the association has developed its 2020 [advocacy priorities](#) to promote the discipline of psychology and the work psychologists do in scientific, educational, public interest, health service practice and applied practice settings. The priorities were determined with input from across APA's diverse boards, committees, divisions and state, provincial and territorial associations. Stay tuned to these weekly updates to learn more about how APA is addressing these priorities, which include reimbursement for professional psychologists, investments in psychological research, violence and suicide prevention, immigration, education, discrimination, climate change, and criminal justice. Next month, APA will launch a new initiative to expand our ability to mobilize psychologists to increase our impact on these critical issues.

For more information, contact Katherine B. McGuire, MS (kmcguire@apa.org).

Calling for More Support for Basic and Clinical Psychosocial Research

APA is urging the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to boost its support of basic and clinical psychosocial research, especially with underserved minority populations, as part of comments the association sent to the institute in response to its [draft strategic plan](#) for research. [APA's comments](#), which were developed with insights from expert members, also affirm the importance of research with non-human animal models and clarify support for prevention and treatment research with older adults who are at high risk of suicide and co-morbid mental disorders. APA is especially thankful for the expertise of APA Div. 12 (Society of Clinical Psychology) Sections 2 and 3, Div. 25 (Behavior Analysis), the Committee on Aging and the Board of Scientific Affairs. APA also worked with the Coalition for the Advancement and Application of Psychological Science and the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences to reinforce common concerns.

For more information contact Pat Kobor (pkobor@apa.org) or Howard Kurtzman, PhD (hkurtzman@apa.org).

Talking with Sen. Gillibrand About Health Confidentiality Issues

Following a Senate Armed Services Subcommittee hearing on suicide prevention among active duty servicemembers, APA's senior director of congressional and federal relations spoke with Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) and her staff about issues of behavioral health confidentiality and reporting requirements in the Department of Defense (DoD). APA asked experts from APA Div. 19 (Society for Military Psychology) to draft a primer on DoD's policy and practices and to recommend to Sen. Gillibrand any legislative changes that could enhance military personnel's behavioral health treatment experiences, widen military mental health providers' options and resources, and accommodate commanders' mission needs related to safety and readiness. APA shared the primer and recommendations with Sen. Gillibrand and looks forward to continued collaboration in this area.

For more information, contact Heather O'Beirne Kelly, PhD (hkelly@apa.org).

Hand-Delivering APA's Report on the Psychology of Immigration to Every Member of Congress

APA staff hand-delivered the immigration report "[Vulnerable But Not Broken](#)," about the psychosocial challenges and resilience pathways among unaccompanied children from Central America, to all 535 members of Congress. The goal is to educate Congress about the psychological impact immigration can have on unaccompanied minors and to build a personal connection with every member of Congress. The report's authors are Manuel Paris, PhD, Claudia Antuña, PhD, Charles Baily, PhD, Giselle Hass, PhD, Cristina Muñiz de la Peña, PhD, Michelle Silva, PhD, and Tejas Srinivas, PhD.

For more information, contact Serena Dávila, JD (sdavila@apa.org).

Addressing Rural Mental Health and Suicide Prevention with Senate Committee

APA's chief advocacy officer and senior advocacy and communications staff met with Senate Committee on

Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry staff to discuss ways to work together on rural mental health promotion and suicide prevention. Given high rates of stress and deaths by suicide among those in farming and agricultural communities, APA has committed more resources across the association to addressing these issues, such as by building partnerships with organizations like Farm Aid. Senate staff were very receptive to working together and discussed possible future projects such as hearings, briefings for members of Congress and their staff, and legislative work to address rural mental health challenges.

For more information, contact Katherine B. McGuire (kmcquire@apa.org), Laurel Stine (lstine@apa.org) or Heather O'Beirne Kelly, PhD (hkelly@apa.org).