

# Fairfax VOTER

February 2021

Volume 73, Issue 6

## The Impact of Childhood Trauma

This month, we focus on the impacts of childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences, which impact millions of Americans. We ask that you consider how Fairfax County, including its public agencies and schools, addresses these issues. Do the positions of LWV at various levels help us advocate for mitigating strategies to lessen childhood trauma and its long range impact?

### Calendar

#### Happy 101st Anniversary, LWV!

- 1 *Fairfax Voter* Deadline for the March issue
- 3 LWV-VA Women's Legislative Roundtable, via Zoom, 8:30 a.m.
- 5 LWNCA Virtual Board Meeting, via Zoom, 10:00 a.m.
- 6 LWVFA Briefing and At-Large Meeting, via Zoom, 10 a.m.
- 8-11 Units Meet Virtually
- 10 LWVFA Legacy Committee Meeting, Virtual, 1 to 3 p.m.
- 14 LWV's birthday (101st anniversary)
- 17 LWVFA Board Meeting, via Zoom, 10 a.m.
- 25 LWV-VA Board Meeting

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## Presidents' Message



Hello fellow Leaguers,

Warm February greetings and Happy Valentine's Day!

Though February is the month of Valentine's Day, many of our hearts are still very troubled by the events that took place at the Capitol on January 6th. This assault on our Democracy has shocked and angered us all. The desecration of our Capitol and the attack on the integrity of our electoral process will forever be indelible from our minds. The League of Women Voters has, at its foundation, the mission to educate and register voters, so it is especially distressing to see how some people refused to accept and respect the results of an election. Many Leaguers work as poll workers, ensuring the voting process runs smoothly, honestly and with transparency. The LWVFA supports people's right to vote. We encourage them to come out and vote and we educate them on issues so they can make informed decisions. This is what makes our nation a democracy where we have the right to self-determination. So, when we see this process, which is one of the pillars of our democracy, being denigrated and threatened, it sends shock waves! We fervently hope and will work hard to ensure that this was a one-off event and that it won't ever be repeated!

On a brighter note, we hope that many of you have been able to attend the Women's Legislative Roundtables (WLRTs) since they are all virtual. We have sent our testimony to the Fairfax delegation outlining our legislative priorities (see Page 4) and hope that our legislators will act on them. The Redistricting Commission has also come along smoothly, and it looks like we have a diverse group of citizens that well reflect the demographics of the Commonwealth. It is so gratifying to see the coming to fruition of the dedication and hard work put in by a dedicated group of people including several of our own League members.

Virginia is currently in Phase 1a and 1b of our COVID-19 vaccination plan and our fingers are crossed that we pick up the pace and move swiftly and efficiently. We really miss meeting in person and going to our Voter Registration events!

There is one thing we did want to bring up. Our League and

the State League are always looking for people to serve on the board and as observers. So, if you find that you have the time and the inclination please reach out to us. You don't have to wait to be nominated!

Also, do pick up that phone and call your legislators when you receive word from our Action and Advocacy chairs. We have been told a phone call carries more weight than an email which can be easily copied and pasted! Maybe even a handwritten letter. It's all a matter of showing the effort that has been put in, which in turn shows the extent to which you care about the subject!

Lastly, be on the lookout as we will soon be selling our T-shirts and coffee mugs on the website. We have short-sleeved as well as full-sleeved versions. If you are interested in purchasing any of these items, please email us at [President@lww-fairfax.org](mailto:President@lww-fairfax.org).

**Fairfax County 24-hr.  
Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline:  
703-360-7273; 711 TTY**

### LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2020 - 2021

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Please e-mail address corrections to the office  
or call 703-658-9150.

Until next time, we wish you a month that is full of friendship, love and joy. Stay safe!

*Anu and Nancy*

## Program Director's Notes

by Jessica Storrs

In December, the units discussed Program Planning for the League of Women Voters of Virginia (LWVVA) and the League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA). The issues that ranked highest for study/re-study or priority for action are:

- \* Health Emergency Preparedness/Pandemic Response (LWV-VA & LWVNCA)
- \* Reapportionment & Redistricting (LWV-VA)
- \* Women's Rights in Virginia Law (LWV-VA)
- \* Transportation (LWV-VA & LWVNCA)
- \* Fiscal Policy (LWV-VA)
- \* Controlled Substances (LWV-VA & LWVNCA)
- \* Alternative Sources of Energy (LWV-VA)

The LWV Fairfax Board will review the responses at the January meeting and forward our report to the respective Leagues. In May 2021, the LWV-VA and LWVNCA will each hold conventions and finalize the Program priorities for the next two years. Thank you to everyone who participated in these very important discussions!

## LWFVA MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Carol Bursik

On January 29, 2021, we had to drop from our rolls those members who had not renewed for the 2020-2021 membership year. However, lapsed members still have an opportunity to be reinstated for the remainder of the current year. Anyone who falls into this category may renew on the web site at <https://lwf-fairfax.org/join> by submitting the form and payment electronically or by printing the form and sending it with a check to the LWVFA office in Annandale. Members who are reinstated will have an expiration date of June 30, 2021, which is the end of the current membership year.

As of January 4, 2021, we had 532 members. Since the last *VOTER* we welcomed the following individuals:

Christine Caldwell  
 Patricia Casano  
 Hugh Haworth (reinstated)  
 Raul Tuazon (Bartoloni Household)  
 Ann Williams

We thank them for their commitment to the League of Women Voters.



“Abstract Acrylic Icon - Home is Where the Heart is” by Free Grunge Textures - [www.free-stock.ca](http://www.free-stock.ca) is licensed under CC BY 2.0<No intersecting link>

The following testimony was submitted to the Fairfax County General Assembly Delegation on the occasion of its Pre-2021 Session, scheduled for January 9, 2021.

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January 9, 2021

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA) is a long established, nonpartisan volunteer organization with more than 500 grassroots members and an outreach to thousands more. We provide reliable fact-based information about public policy issues, educate voters and empower them to vote their voice. This year, the mission of the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area is to support legislation that is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion and the principle to LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND. Generally, the LWVFA supports the 2021 Fairfax County Legislative Program. Specifically, in the continuing shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, our League's priorities focus on issues concerning election reform, campaign finance reform, expanded broadband coverage and behavioral health.

Elections: In this heartbreaking time of COVID-19, and for future election cycles, the LWVFA endorses legislation enabling convenient, safe and secure drop-off locations for absentee ballots, most specifically, locations that may be easily accessed by all members of our community. We seek consideration for more satellite voting sites for early in-person voting. Specific consideration is requested for improved logistics at the satellite sites, better signage and dedicated staff to facilitate curbside voting. Additionally, we support the removal of the witness signature requirement on absentee ballots. The Fairfax Area League also supports legislation which allows voters to correct minor procedural errors on their ballots in a way that ensures the rights of the voters to make sure their votes count.

Campaign Finance Reform: Public faith in our democracy can only be strengthened by the passage of campaign finance reform legislation. This legislation seeks to limit campaign contributions from individuals, corporations, parties and PACs, thereby eradicating undue influence on our political process and leaders. We urge you to respect your public charge as a representative of all the people and vote in favor of campaign finance reform, including support for a strong independent ethics agency to ensure government accountability.

Expanded Broadband Coverage: The LWVFA backs legislation that provides additional broadband coverage to people in disadvantaged communities. This is a matter of geographic equity in access to government, telehealth, education and economic opportunity and speaks to the groundbreaking Fairfax County policy on racial and social equity.

Behavioral Health: The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on those individuals with behavioral health issues is great and varied. We urge support for legislation that improves access to behavioral health care, provides diversion for individuals from the criminal justice system and enhances funding for affordable and permanent supportive community-based housing and residential services.

In closing, we draw your attention to our support for the placement of a statue of Barbara Rose Johns in the U.S. Capitol's National Statuary Hall.

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area urges you to act on these important issues. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony today.

Respectfully submitted:

Anu Sahai and Nancy Roodberg

Co-Presidents

League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area

# THE IMPACT OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

By Julia Jones

Childhood trauma impacts millions of Americans. As LWVFA members, we should learn more about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the response of Fairfax County's public agencies and schools. What is an ACE? What is the definition of trauma? How are children affected physically and educationally? Can trauma effects continue into adulthood? How does Fairfax County deal with this concern? Do the positions of LWV at various levels help us advocate for mitigating strategies to lessen childhood trauma and its long range impact?

## What Is a Traumatic Event?

According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (<https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma/about-child-trauma>), "A traumatic event is a frightening, dangerous, or violent event that poses a threat to a child's life or bodily integrity. Witnessing a traumatic event that threatens life or physical security of a loved one can also be traumatic. This is particularly important for young children as their sense of safety depends on the perceived safety of their attachment figures.

"Traumatic experiences can initiate strong emotions and physical reactions that can persist long after the event. Children may feel terror, helplessness, or fear, as well as physiological reactions such as heart pounding, vomiting, or loss of bowel or bladder control. Children who experience an inability to protect themselves or who lacked protection from others to avoid the consequences of the traumatic experience may also feel overwhelmed by the intensity of physical and emotional responses.

"Even though adults work hard to keep children safe, dangerous events still happen. This danger can come from outside of the family or from within the family."

## What Experiences Might Be Traumatic?

These experiences are often called ACEs. The more instances of trauma or the higher the severity, the greater the risk of adverse reactions. They include:

- Physical, sexual, or psychological abuse and neglect (including trafficking);
- Natural and technological disasters or terrorism;
- Family or community violence;
- Sudden or violent loss of a loved one;
- Substance use disorder (personal or familial);
- Refugee and war experiences (including torture);
- Serious accidents or life-threatening illness;
- School shootings;
- Military family-related stressors (e.g., deployment, parental loss or injury);
- Divorce;
- Changes in where they live (homelessness) or attend school;

- Bullying, harassment or discrimination;
- Criminal or civil proceedings.

When children have been in situations where they feared for their lives, believed that they would be injured, witnessed violence, or tragically lost a loved one, they may show signs of child traumatic stress.

## What Is Child Traumatic Stress?

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network ([www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)) offers this explanation: "Children who suffer from child traumatic stress are those who have been exposed to one or more traumas over the course of their lives and develop reactions that persist and affect their daily lives after the events have ended. Traumatic reactions can include a variety of responses, such as intense and ongoing emotional upset, depressive symptoms or anxiety, behavioral changes, difficulties with self-regulation, problems relating to others or forming attachments, regression or loss of previously acquired skills, attention and academic difficulties, nightmares, difficulty sleeping and eating, and physical symptoms, such as aches and pains. Older children may use drugs or alcohol, behave in risky ways, or engage in unhealthy sexual activity.

"Children who suffer from traumatic stress often have these types of symptoms when reminded in some way of the traumatic event. Although many of us may experience reactions to stress from time to time, when a child is experiencing traumatic stress, these reactions interfere with the child's daily life and ability to function and interact with others. At no age are children immune to the effects of traumatic experiences. Even infants and toddlers can experience traumatic stress. The way that traumatic stress manifests will vary from child to child and will depend on the child's age and developmental level.

"Without treatment, repeated childhood exposure to traumatic events can affect the brain and nervous system and increase health-risk behaviors (e.g., smoking, eating disorders, substance use, and high-risk activities). Research shows that child trauma survivors can be more likely to have long-term health problems (e.g., diabetes and heart

disease) or to die at an earlier age. Traumatic stress can also lead to increased use of health and mental health services and increased involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Adult survivors of traumatic events may also have difficulty in establishing fulfilling relationships and maintaining employment.”

### Risk and Protective Factors of Stress

From [www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org): “Fortunately, even when children experience a traumatic event, they don’t always develop traumatic stress. Many factors contribute to symptoms, including whether the child has experienced trauma in the past, and protective factors at the child, family, and community levels can reduce the adverse impact of trauma. Some factors to consider include:

- **Severity of the event.** How serious was the event? How badly was the child or someone she loves physically hurt? Did they or someone they love need to go to the hospital? Were the police involved?
- **Proximity to the event.** Was the child actually at the place where the event occurred? Did they see the event happen to someone else or were they a victim?
- **Caregivers’ reactions.** Did the child’s family believe that he or she was telling the truth? Did caregivers take the child’s reactions seriously?
- **Prior history of trauma.** Children continually exposed to traumatic events are more likely to develop traumatic stress reactions.
- **Family and community factors.** The culture, race, and ethnicity of children, their families, and their communities can be a protective factor, meaning that children and families have qualities and/or resources that help buffer against the harmful effects of traumatic experiences and their aftermath.”

### Understanding Trauma: Learning Brain vs. Survival Brain

James Ham explains how trauma effects us all, especially children, in a five-minute video on YouTube. With a “learning brain,” we are open to new information, we can accept vagueness, we are calm, peaceful, and curious, and we are not afraid of making mistakes. With a brain experiencing trauma or stress, the “survival brain” takes over. We focus on the threat. We don’t like ambiguity and think in black and white. We panic because we are afraid of making mistakes or appearing stupid. If the stress can be controlled and we are safe and accepted, we learn better.

### Some of the manifestations of trauma:

- Unexpected reactions/overreactions (anger, hostility);
- Distractibility (jittering, fidgeting, difficulty focusing);

- Anxiety or irritability;
- Difficulty regulating emotion;
- Avoidance of people/places/situations.

Behaviors related to a trauma history are often interpreted as deliberate. Caregivers should rely on positive behavior management techniques rather than harsh punishments that may escalate a situation and trigger fear and anger.

### The Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on Our Children

By FCPS & Fairfax County Government from their podcast *Healthy Minds* February 13, 2020.

“Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have gained increasing attention from health, human services, and education professionals. ACEs are events that someone believes are highly negative or even traumatic. Typically, the event is one that threatened the individual’s emotional or physical safety. It is important to remember that we all experience things differently and therefore may have different beliefs about the significance of an event. In the case of ACEs, it is the individual’s belief about how negative an event is or was that matters most. . . We are learning more about the impact that these experiences—and the toxic stress that they create in the brains and bodies of youth—have on outcomes like physical, behavioral, and emotional health; and academic achievement.

“A child’s resilience is pivotal to the ability to cope with ACEs, both now and in the future. Resilience, or the ability to overcome challenges, is influenced by one’s own skills as well as by the world around them and their relationships. That means resilience can be fostered and grow stronger! As much as we know about how being exposed to ACEs may negatively impact children, we also know that the more support youth have from caring adults to buffer their exposure, the better off they will be.

“There are things parents can do to build resilience in their children to better equip them should they be exposed to a traumatic event in the future or to help them recover if they have already had a highly negative experience. Here are some suggestions:

- Reflect privately on your own past experiences, and about how you deal with stress. Children learn a lot about managing stress responses from their adult role models. Work together on practicing things like taking deep breaths to calm down.
- Make time to connect with your children. Reading together, eating family meals, and enjoying time in nature or doing other activities the whole family enjoys can help everyone build resilience and get through tough times.

- Remember that each child expresses his or her emotions differently and that how a child expresses emotions may change with age. Some children prefer to talk, while others prefer to write, draw, listen to music, or exercise.
- Help your children learn to identify and talk about their emotions. If something scary happens, children will be better off if they have the language and skills to express themselves.
- Being resilient relies on feeling safe, capable, and loved. Tell your children that you love and support them. Create opportunities for them to set and achieve goals to build their confidence and sense of self-worth. You are your children's most important confidence builder.”

### The Long-Lasting Effects Of Childhood Trauma

From the Sylvia Brafman Mental Health Center [www.mentalhealthcenter.org](http://www.mentalhealthcenter.org) (Originally published on June 7, 2016, and updated April 3, 2019.)

The effects of child trauma are many, and they are nuanced depending on the trauma and the child themselves. If a child comes from a home that does not provide a sense of security and protection for that child, they may resort to developing their own forms of coping mechanisms allowing them to function day-to-day just to survive. They may live on eggshells, having become accustomed to a parent or caretaker lashing out. The result is sensitivity to each interaction and the moods of others, fearful that the individual will fly into a rage. These children learn to adapt by withholding their own emotions and not making waves, masking their fear, anger and sadness. According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), strong connections exist between childhood trauma and high-risk behavior such as smoking, having unprotected sex, and experiencing chronic illness such as heart disease and cancer.

### Childhood Trauma and its Impact on Adults

PBS *NewsHour* on December 14, 2020, began a series on “*Invisible Scars: America’s Childhood Trauma Crisis.*” Those experiencing high levels of trauma can see dramatically lower life expectancies, and the CDC estimates it accounts for billions of dollars in healthcare costs and lost productivity. ([www.pbs.org/newshour](http://www.pbs.org/newshour))

Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, a pediatrician and California's first surgeon general, was interviewed for the program. She said: “If we want to be preventing mental health concerns, if we want to be preventing substance dependence, if we want to be preventing cardiovascular disease and cancer, we see that adverse childhood experiences is a root cause for all of those things. That understanding is largely the result of a landmark study by researchers from Kai-

ser Permanente and the CDC in the late '90s. They looked at 17,000 patients' histories of adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, 10 potentially traumatic early life events, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse, exposure to domestic violence and divorce.

“Having four or more adverse childhood experiences is associated with more than double the risk of ischemic heart disease, the number one killer in the United States of America, two-and-a-half times the risk of stroke, triple the risk of chronic lung disease. In fact, having four or more ACEs is associated with significantly increased risks for at least five out of the 10 leading causes of death in the U.S. But how exactly can adverse experiences cause these disparate health effects? The answer is in the science of stress.

“When we experience something stressful, our body releases stress hormones. Prolonged activation of the biological stress response, that can lead to long-term health problems, changes in brain structure and function, changes in our immune system, our hormonal system, and even the way our DNA is read and transcribed. We see MRI studies that show that for children who are exposed to high doses of adversity, there are structural and functional changes in their brains.”

### Trauma's Effect On Adult Stability, Guilt And Shame

From the Sylvia Brafman Mental Health Center [www.mentalhealthcenter.org](http://www.mentalhealthcenter.org) (Originally published on June 7, 2016, and updated April 3, 2019.)

“Childhood trauma chips away at a child’s stability and sense of self, undermining self-worth and often staying with the child into adulthood. This trauma can also impact a person into adulthood as they experience feelings of shame and guilt, feeling disconnected and unable to relate to others, trouble controlling emotions, heightened anxiety and depression, anger. Let’s take the case of complex trauma that occurs directly to the child and disrupts their sense of safety and stability. If a child is abused emotionally, physically or sexually, by someone close to them, often a caregiver, it can condition the way the child forms attachments later in life. They may start to see protectors and caretakers through a different filter, no longer trusting those individuals to keep them safe or even “care about them.” Once a child’s sense of identity is fractured, it takes years of work to rebuild those broken pieces and have them regain trust.”

### The Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy and Practice

([www.ctipp.org](http://www.ctipp.org)) The Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy and Practice (CTIPP) was created in December 2016 by 25 representatives from diverse sectors, includ-

ing education, mental health, justice, and government. Its mission is to create a trauma-informed society where individuals and families have the supports necessary to thrive. “We share a common commitment to inform and advocate for public policies and programs at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels that incorporate scientific findings regarding the relationship between trauma and related social and health challenges across the lifespan.”

### **A Trauma-Informed Approach during the COVID-19 Crisis?**

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network ([www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)) has this advise for schools: “For most students, educators, staff, and school administrators, COVID-19 raises concerns related to danger, safety, and the need for protection. For some, this danger is added to pre-existing trauma, adversity, and disparities. For others, the pandemic brings new grief, loss, and trauma, which may include increased risk for violence and abuse in the home. Many families will experience secondary adversities related to their isolation, economic hardship, and unmet basic needs. A trauma-informed approach is essential to help school communities feel safe and supported during times of danger and adversity. This approach is needed so that students can learn, educators can teach, and staff and administrators can connect and provide needed structure. Using this approach will assure parents and caregivers that the school community is strengthening their child’s well-being, thereby allowing families to reinforce the importance of learning.”

### **Fairfax County designated as a trauma-informed community (TIC)**

From *Voices’ Blog* Posted by Cassie Price: December 15, 2017. Written by Mary Beth Testa, *Voices’* Northern Virginia consultant. On Nov. 21, 2017, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved a resolution to designate Fairfax County as a trauma-informed community (TIC). Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross introduced the resolution, signaling a commitment to help vulnerable children and emphasizing the urgency of this work for local families.

Chrissy Cunningham, prevention coordination specialist with the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, said: “We believe that the implementation of trauma-informed care, and the resilience-building strategies that are such an important part of that work, are not the responsibility of any one agency, organization, or discipline. For Fairfax County residents to have the best experience of service delivery across our system, we all need to have a common understanding and a shared language when it comes to adverse childhood experiences, toxic stress, and resilience.”

“While many of the children, youth, and families we serve have stories of traumatic experiences to share, we know that living in conditions of poverty and exposure to discrimination and racism create the very same stress responses in [people’s] bodies and brains ... as more commonly understood traumatic experiences do. We cannot build a trauma-informed system without the spirit of One Fairfax behind us, and we cannot implement One Fairfax without considering the impact of trauma and the historical and generational trauma created by racial and social inequities.”

### **Trauma-Informed Community Networks**

From <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/prevention/trauma-informed-community-network>

Recognizing childhood trauma has become a necessary component of shaping policy to improve child outcomes. Many child-serving systems now aim to become trauma-informed and are putting measures into place to strengthen youth resilience, thereby helping improve outcomes for children from early childhood education, to K-12 schools, to foster care and the juvenile justice system.

The Fairfax Trauma-Informed Community Network (TICN) is one of nine such networks across the Commonwealth working to implement the principles of trauma-informed care across our health, human services, and education systems. Fairfax County Public Schools, health and human services agencies, and many nonprofit and private provider partner organizations are participating in the Fairfax TICN.

Organizations from across the County and region added their support to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors’ trauma-informed community resolution (November 2017), thanking the Board for its commitment to building lasting foundations for County residents through trauma-informed practices and service delivery models.

### **Fairfax County builds self-healing communities through new ACE training**

([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/community-services-board/prevention/ace](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/community-services-board/prevention/ace)) On May 16, 2020, the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board announced a presentation for the local community. In recent decades there had been an explosion of new understanding – beginning with the Adverse Childhood Experience, or “ACE” study – about how and why adversity and trauma can reliably predict risks for mental, physical, behavioral health and productivity in the population.

Because of recent discoveries in neuroscience, epigenetic,



epidemiology, and resilience studies, we can understand how protection, prevention, and resilience promotion can profoundly improve health, safety and productivity, and reduce public and private costs now and for generations to come.

Fairfax County's ACE team provides a presentation "Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences" which includes in-depth information about:

- The neurobiological effects of adversity on development;
- The impact of childhood adversity and trauma on population health;
- Resilience - what we can do to improve health and well-being across the life span.

### Position of The League of Women Voters of the United States

**Position in Brief:** As stated in *Impact on Issues 2018-2020* Support policies and programs that promote the well-being, development and safety of all children.

#### Details:

Statement of Position on Early Intervention for Children at Risk, as adopted by the 1994 Convention:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that early intervention and prevention measures are effective in helping children reach their full potential. The League supports policies and programs at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development, and ensure the safety of all children. These include:

- child abuse/neglect prevention;
- teen pregnancy prevention;
- quality health care, including nutrition and prenatal care;
- early childhood education;
- developmental services, emphasizing children ages 0-3;
- family support services;
- violence prevention.

### Position of The League of Women Voters of Virginia

(*LWV-VA Positioned for Action*, Spring 2019)

The League of Women Voters of Virginia believes that the State government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to meet the basic needs of at-risk children. The State government should establish a policy defining and supporting a minimum quality of life, with the legislators defining standards to meet the basic needs of these children.

We believe the basic needs to be: shelter, family/commu-

nity support, health care (including mental health care), food, education (including vocational training), and physical safety.

The League supports:

- Funding priorities in the following order of importance: preventive services (including rehabilitative programs), family support services, crisis services, court costs and detention (secure and other);
- Evaluation of services and program effectiveness, determination of overlapping services, gaps in services, or unmet needs of children by citizens committees/task forces;
- A State mandate directing communities to develop case planning and case management systems to assure timely access to services. The case management process should include representatives of local and state agencies, guardian/parent, court intake officers, court child advocates, and the non-profit sector.

### Position of The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area

**Position in Brief:** *Juvenile Justice* (1994 and edited 6/2018)

Support measures for youth whereby the major goal of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court for Fairfax County/City is the protection and rehabilitation of youth. Support for alternatives to detention and a variety of individual and group homes located throughout the County/City, in preference to institutions. These facilities should provide for separation of various types of juveniles according to their individual needs. (Edited in 2018 to remove the word "problem" from title and text when referring to "youth.")

### HELPFUL RESOURCES

Adarsh Trehan, in a short article in the January 2021 *Fairfax VOTER*, presented some information from the United Nations and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

*Healthy Minds* is for parents, educators, and community-based providers who are interested in supporting student mental health and wellness. It represents a collaboration between FCPS' Office of Intervention and Prevention Services and the Fairfax County Government. <https://www.fcps.edu/blog/healthy-minds-podcast>.

Voices for Virginia's Children has information about opportunities to promote resilience and address childhood trauma. Sign up for legislative updates.

*Resilience - The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope* (a documentary) reveals that "toxic stress can trigger hor-

mones that wreak havoc on the brains and bodies of children, putting them at a greater risk for disease, homelessness, prison time and early death.” While growing up in poverty can increase the risk, no segment of society is immune. (A showing of this documentary can be scheduled for groups.)

ACEs Connection Network ([www.aceconnection.com](http://www.aceconnection.com))

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network ([www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org))

TED Talks: Nadine Burke Harris - How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime

Center on the Developing Child ([www.developingchild.harvard.edu](http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu))

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Are you now more familiar with the effects of childhood trauma. In what ways?
2. Do you have a personal story that you are willing to share?
3. Was it surprising to see that childhood trauma affects adults? In what ways?
4. In your opinion, why is this topic important to the school community and local government?
5. Are the LWV positions sufficient for advocacy or is more needed?
6. Would you be interested in having the County present a program on this topic? Would you like to see the documentary *Resilience*?

### *Did you know?*

In 2018, poverty rates for children ages 0–17 living in metropolitan areas in the United States was 17%, and 23% for children living in rural areas.

In 2018, maltreatment rates for children living in metropolitan areas was 8.1 per 1,000 children and 13.0 per 1,000 in rural areas. Neglect is by far the most common form of maltreatment, with three-fourths of all maltreated children found to have been neglected and nearly identical percentages across metropolitan, micro-politan, and rural areas. The percentage of reports involving physical (18%) and sexual (9%) abuse also were similar across geographic areas.

In 2018, the percentage of children in households that were food insecure was higher outside metropolitan areas (18%) than in metropolitan areas (15%). The percentage of children in food-insecure households in metropolitan areas decreased from 2017 (17%) to 2018 (15%).

Children faced more housing problems in principal cities of metropolitan areas (46%) than elsewhere in metropolitan areas (37%), or rural (32%) areas.

In 2018, the high school completion rate for young adults in metropolitan (94%) was higher than the completion rate for young adults in nonmetropolitan areas (89%).

*Source: ChildStats.gov*

## Environmental Update: 2021 is a Year of Transitions

By Elizabeth Lonoff

If anything, climate change accelerated in 2020. Slowing the global economy didn't slow the overall buildup of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), which reached its highest level in millions of years. But maybe there isn't as much CO<sub>2</sub> in the pipeline as estimated earlier. Recent research suggests that lowering carbon dioxide to net zero - a significant global challenge - could result in leveling off the warming so the climate could stabilize within a decade or two.

How will the new **Biden Administration** decide to approach climate change? The Climate 21 Project's more than 150 experts have developed recommendations for a U.S. Governmentwide mobilization on climate change using existing tools. The Environmental Protection Network similarly has prepared a report entitled *Reset the Course of EPA* with advice on EPA's transition between administrations. Forbes proposed promoting innovation in "10 Actions Climate Envoy John Kerry Can Take To Win The Climate War."

The **Virginia General Assembly** showed new interest in the environment last year. Watch for a push this session for a cleaner transportation system since nearly half of the State's carbon emissions come from vehicles. Such pollution disproportionately impacts communities of color and low-income households.

**Ready to replace your car?** More electric vehicles keep entering the market, avoiding tailpipe emissions. Many get 200-400 miles per charge. Fast chargers take only 20-30 minutes. Find charging stations at [plugshare.com](https://www.plugshare.com), safety ratings at [nhtsa.gov/ratings](https://www.nhtsa.gov/ratings), and incentives at [plugstar.com/tools/incentives](https://www.plugstar.com/tools/incentives). There's even the world's first fully solar-powered electric car: Aptera Motors' three-wheeler charges while you drive.



Photo: Aptera

Energy Masters identifies three things you can do to most **impact your residential energy use:**

- **Seal** air leaking through holes and cracks using latex

caulk for dry areas and silicone for wet; spray foam and/or backer rod to fill gaps around junction boxes, places where water pipes go through walls, and cracks around window frames; and install foam gaskets to insulate switch plates and outlets on exterior walls. (If you have any gas appliances, have an expert check that you maintain adequate ventilation.) You can borrow a thermal camera from your library to look for leaks.

- **Improve the energy efficiency of lights and appliances** by replacing incandescent light bulbs with LEDs; using a smart power strip to cut off power to any devices in standby mode; using a utility brush once or twice a year to remove dust from refrigerator coils; and installing a programmable thermostat to lower the temperature when nobody's home for hours and when everyone's asleep while trying to set it at 68 in the winter and 78 in the summer. Also, set ceiling fans to run clockwise in the winter to circulate warmer and the reverse in summer while closing off any unused rooms during the heating and cooling seasons and run the dryer and dishwasher in the evening during the summer.
- **Reduce water use** by replacing showerheads and aerators when flowrate exceeds 2.0 gallons per minute for showerheads, 1.5 gpm for kitchen faucets, and 1.0 gpm for bathroom faucets based on rating or color coding.

Energy Masters started training community and student volunteers to install energy and water efficiency equipment in affordable housing and to educate Arlington tenants a decade ago. It expanded into Alexandria in 2015. Each family served typically saves \$152 in utility bills annually. More than 1,000 families were helped last year. See [ecoactionarlington.org/energy](https://www.ecoactionarlington.org/energy) to volunteer.

### Transform your landscape:

February 1: Jim McGlone, Urban Forest Conservationist, Virginia Department of Forestry, takes your questions about choosing and planting native trees for curb appeal, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Recordings of Plant NOVA Natives' previous "Ask the

Expert" events similarly can be found at Start here! on <https://www.plantnovanatives.org/>.

February 2: The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District's (NVSWCD's) Annual Seedling Sale (<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation/>)

opens online-only, featuring small shrubs and trees for gorgeous flowers and fruits that are important food sources to birds and pollinators. These native species clean our water and air, prevent soil erosion, provide valuable habitat, and add beauty to your property. Pickup is on April 16-17 at Sleepy Hollow Bath and Racquet Club in Falls Church.

February 20: Learn to integrate stormwater into your landscaping design at Green Spring Master Gardeners' EcoSavvy Symposium (<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sites/parks/files/assets/documents/nature-history/greenspring/2021-ecosavvy-symposium-flyer.pdf>), 9:30–12:30, \$26, which will include a presentation on NVSWCD's Conservation Assistance Program.

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## CEDV Reviews 2020 Work

By Adarsh Trehan

The Fairfax County Council to End Domestic Violence (CEDV) held its virtual quarterly meeting on October 22, 2020. Stacy Ziebell, County-Wide Domestic Violence Coordinator and a CEDV staff member, presented an overview of the workgroups and their recommendations. Theresa Brion, our Domestic Violence (DV) Committee Chairperson, and Judy Helein, Committee member, represented our organization.

The Step Up 4 Kids (SU4Ks) Coalition acknowledged the importance of reminding adults of their critical role in responding to children who have experienced DV, as businesses, organizations, and activities that children frequently use start to reopen. It created a social media toolkit to support outreach efforts to adults, which is available on the Step Up 4 Kids website (<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/domestic-sexual-violence/step-up-4-kids/community-engagement-toolkit>). This toolkit includes social media posts, images, and infographics to assist in informing the public about the impact of exposure to DV on children and some ways by which a caring adult may help.

A Step Up 4 Kids Day (SU4Ks Day) was held on October 1, 2020, via social media. The Coalition created a series of videos titled "Caring 4 Kids," available in both English and Spanish, discussing four topics: childhood trauma, child exposure to DV, child abuse and neglect, and children's mental health. These short informational and training videos connect the four issues with each other and explain how unaddressed adversities can affect children for a lifetime. They also highlight the role of caring, supportive adults and emphasize that adults do not need special train-

ing to make a difference. The Coalition will continue to work to expand allied professionals' capacity to screen and identify children exposed to DV while creating additional tools, e.g., resource cards.

The Court Process workgroup is collaborating with the Firearms workgroup to conduct a systems walkthrough/mapping exercise of the process of filing for a Protective Order in Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court and General District Court. Technical Assistance from the National Council of Family and Juvenile Court Judges (through the Office on Violence Against Women) is supporting the group to complete the walkthrough.

The Underserved/Under-represented workgroup is on pause. Currently, several activities with a focus on underserved populations in Fairfax County exist. The Partner Abuse Intervention workgroup adopted a name change (previously called the Offender Services Workgroup) to better reflect the focus of its work. It suggests two overarching objectives: increasing community awareness and improving access to comprehensive services for abusive partners. It seeks to identify ways in which the workgroup can improve access to services for abusive partners and develop action steps. Gretchen Soto, a program manager in the Department of Family Services' Domestic and Sexual Violence Services office, noted the absence of an integrated and coordinated community response for abusers. Throughout Virginia, Batterer Intervention Services widely differ in terms of how they are offered because of differences in the structure of particular codes, legislation, and probation agencies. Without reciprocal information sharing, it is difficult to help people because there is no accountability on the other side. The group is working to balance accountability and safety. Former Supervisor John Cook (Braddock District) and CEDV Chairman, emphasized the importance of rehabilitation in the society, keeping families together when possible, and helping people to start moving on a better path.

James Walkinshaw, current Supervisor, Braddock District, was elected as the new council chairman. Joe Meyer, Executive Director, Shelter House, expressed his appreciation to Mr. Cook, the outgoing chairman, for his many years of leadership and service to the Council. Stacy Ziebell presented the CEDV Kudoboard to him on behalf of CEDV and community members.

## Spotlight on Life Member

### Anne Andrews

Interviewed by Cindy Kalkwarf and Julie Jones (12/9/19)

Anne Andrews's grandmother was a charter member of League! Although her mother was minimally involved in the League, it was a part of Anne's life. Her father always treated her as an equal. She had a girlfriend who loved coming over to her house, because Anne's father listened to her opinions, and her own father did not. Anne's husband, a WWII Vet, likewise recognized her as an equal partner.

Anne joined the North Springfield Unit of the Fairfax County League in 1957 when she retired right after her first child was born. She became chair of the local government committee which led her to being active in many ways. She edited the monthly Bulletin (which later became the *Fairfax VOTER*). She was VP of League and in charge of Programs and helped write Studies. At one time she must have been a Unit Chair, but she is not sure. The family moved from North Springfield to the Mt. Vernon area where she joined the Mount Vernon Day and Evening Units before she moved to Greenspring.

She graduated from college at twenty and moved to Washington, DC in 1952. But because she wanted to vote in the 1952 Presidential election, she voted back in New Jersey. [Cindy's historical note: On November 3, 1964, residents of the District of Columbia cast their ballots in a Presidential election for the first time. The passage of the 23rd Amendment in 1961 gave citizens of the nation's capital the right to vote for a commander in chief and vice president].

She passed the Junior Management Assistant Program Federal Examination and worked in various Federal Government agencies in HR: Civil Service Commission (now Office of Personnel Management - OPM), Children's Bureau, Department of Aging, Office of Technology Policy, and Department of Defense. Anne stopped working only one week before the first of her three children was born. She went back to half time work for the Federal government when her youngest was five. She used to take summers off to be with her kids, but as they got older, she converted to full time. She was proud to focus her efforts in the Civil Service Commission on recruiting the handicapped and offering them the highest salary for which they were eligible rather than the lowest that they would accept.

While working in the Federal Government she also worked

on County Boards. She was honored in 2008 as the Fairfax County Citizen of the Year (COY). Anne was recognized for her tireless efforts as a steady and effective advocate for community-based mental health treatment and community access to health care for the most vulnerable members in the community, mainly in the Route One Corridor of southeastern Fairfax County.

Anne is most well known for her 34 years of dedicated service as the "Convener of the Route One Task Force for Human Services" (The name was later changed to South County Task Force for Human Services) which she established to provide a forum for over 40 community and government representatives and community-based organizations to address issues of human services for low-income and homeless people. Largely through Anne's efforts, the Community Health Care Network (CHCN) was established in 1989 and the first homeless shelter in Fairfax County was established in the Richmond Highway Corridor.

Quoting from Gerald Connolly in the Congressional Record, "There are few people who take the time and energy to affect a community so greatly and as positively as Anne. Due to her outstanding contributions and persistent efforts, Fairfax County is a healthier community, . . ." The Fairfax Area League is proud to count Anne Andrews as one of its members.



Photo by [https://unsplash.com/@daybrandon?utm\\_source=unsplash&](https://unsplash.com/@daybrandon?utm_source=unsplash&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=unsplash)

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By Lynn Stewart

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(Source: LWV.org)

# Unit Discussion Meeting Locations

## Topic: Childhood Trauma

Members and visitors are encouraged to attend any meeting convenient for them, including the “At Large Meeting” and briefing on Saturdays when a briefing is listed. As of January 1, 2021, the following information was correct; please use phone numbers to advise of your intent to attend. February Unit Meetings will be virtual. The unit leaders will send the login information to every unit member.

### Saturday, February 6, 2021

#### **10 a.m. At-Large Unit and Briefing**

Contact: Jessica, 301-704-7854 or [jessica.storrs@lwv-fairfax.org](mailto:jessica.storrs@lwv-fairfax.org)

#### **10 a.m. Mount Vernon Day (MVD)**

Contact: Diana, 703-704-5325 or [Jfdw1111@gmail.com](mailto:Jfdw1111@gmail.com)

#### **1 p.m. Oakton/Vienna (OV)**

Contact: Mary, 703-932-3665, [mmvalder@aol.com](mailto:mmvalder@aol.com)

### Monday, February 8

#### **1:30 p.m. Greenspring (GSP)**

Contact:

Pat, [pmcgrady308@gmail.com](mailto:pmcgrady308@gmail.com);  
Judy, [jjsmith64@earthlink.net](mailto:jjsmith64@earthlink.net),  
703-342-3353

#### **10 a.m. Fairfax Station (FXS)**

Contact: Bev, 703-451-4438,  
[rbdahlin@verizon.net](mailto:rbdahlin@verizon.net)  
or Sue, 703-266-0272,  
[sueoneill1@hotmail.com](mailto:sueoneill1@hotmail.com)

#### **7:30 p.m. Reston Evening (RE)**

Contact: Wendy, 703-319-4114,  
[wendy.foxgrage@gmail.com](mailto:wendy.foxgrage@gmail.com)

### Wednesday, February 10

#### **9:30 a.m. McLean Day (McL)**

Contact: Susan, 703-893-2229,  
[sfcowart@aol.com](mailto:sfcowart@aol.com)  
or Peggy, 703-772-4939,  
[peggyknight49@gmail.com](mailto:peggyknight49@gmail.com)

### Thursday, February 11

#### **9 a.m. Reston Day (RD)**

Contact: Barbara (703) 437-0795,  
[bseandlte@earthlink.net](mailto:bseandlte@earthlink.net)

#### **7:45 p.m. Mount Vernon Evening (MVE)**

Contact: Jane, 703-960-6820,  
[jane@hilderwilliams.net](mailto:jane@hilderwilliams.net)  
or Susan, 703-587-4790,  
[scash5002@email.vccs.edu](mailto:scash5002@email.vccs.edu)

#### **9:30 a.m. Springfield (SPF)**

Contact: Pat, 703-941-9210,  
[Pat.Fege@lwv-fairfax.org](mailto:Pat.Fege@lwv-fairfax.org)

#### **11:30 a.m. Centreville-Chantilly (CCD)**

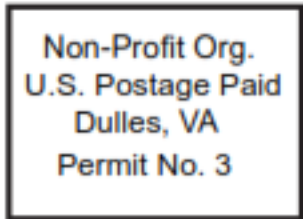
Contact: Susan, 703-391-0666,  
[sadill@cox.net](mailto:sadill@cox.net)

# March Meetings:

## Broken U.S. Treaties



The League of Women Voters® of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA)  
 4026-B Hummer Road, Annandale, VA 22003-2403  
 703-658-9150. Web address: www.lwv-fairfax.org



**The LWVFA Fairfax VOTER®  
 October, 2020**

Anu Sahai, Co-President  
 Nancy Roodberg, Co-President  
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The League of Women Voters® is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the public to play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, regional and national levels the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Any person at least 16 years old, male or female, may become a member.

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I am interested in becoming involved in (please indicate by circling the appropriate boxes(s)):

- Providing organization support (graphic design, website development/maintenance, fundraising/grant writing)
- Voter Services (e.g., voter registration drives, candidate forums, developing Voters’ Guides)
- Researching/writing about issues in which LWVFA has an interest (e.g., environment, firearms safety, mental health, schools, domestic violence, etc., or chairing an LWVFA study committee on voter turnout or human trafficking)
- Representing the League in governmental fora (e.g., serving as LWVFA representative on Fairfax County citizens’ committees and agencies such as affordable housing, or Fairfax County Public Schools).

Other \_\_\_\_\_