



## **CITY, COUNTY, AND STATE NEWS**

**VA: [Virginia announces new mental health program](#):** Governor Ralph Northam has announced a state-wide plan to increase access to mental health services. The Mental Health Access Program, or VMAP, will help take care of the mental health needs of children and teens in the commonwealth. The program is being administered by the Medical Society of Virginia Foundation with the help of the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the Virginia Department of Health, and others. “With VMAP, we can actually screen, diagnose, and treat children and adolescents sooner trying to prevent the more serious outcomes of hospitalizations, ER visits, substance abuse, and even more serious harm to themselves or to others,” VMAP’s Dr. Cindy Chung said.

**AURORA, COLORADO: [Children’s Hospital Colorado declares mental health state of emergency as suicide attempts rise](#):** Colorado children are attempting suicide and arriving in emergency rooms in psychiatric crisis at levels never seen in this state, while abuse of alcohol and drugs to cope with mental health struggles is also on the rise. The youth mental health crisis has escalated to the point this spring that hospital beds are full and more parents are sending kids out of state for treatment, according to a Children’s Hospital Colorado panel of experts who sent up a flare for help Tuesday.

**ONEIDA, COUNTY, NY: [County launches mental health initiative](#):** The Oneida County Department of Mental Health has launched its 2021 Innovation and Improvement Fund, which will distribute \$600,000 in awards to community organizations for innovative and improvement-oriented projects. “As we embark on this final week of Mental Health Awareness Month, I am pleased to announce the availability of this much-needed funding,” said Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. “The pandemic has caused tremendous strain on the overall mental health of our community. It has impacted our friends, families and loved ones and caused staffing shortages within many of our local clinics, hampering their ability to meet the skyrocketing demand for mental health services. I believe this fund will make a positive impact and provide organizations with an opportunity to be creative, collaborative and to work towards a full recovery.”

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CA: [Santa Clara County to enact Laura’s Law in forcing certain mental health treatments](#):** Santa Clara County on Tuesday became the fifth Bay Area county to enact Laura’s Law, which allows the courts to force people with severe mental illness and a history of violence or repeated trips to hospitals and jails to get outpatient treatment against their will. The law is named after Laura Wilcox, a receptionist killed by a man who had refused psychiatric treatment in Nevada County during a January 2001 shooting spree that left three people dead. The law was overwhelmingly passed by the state Legislature in 2002. Laura’s Law



was widely supported in part because it allowed counties to opt in or out of enforcing it but didn't impose a deadline. For years, mental health experts, elected leaders and community members debated the law's implications on civil liberties, its effectiveness in helping mentally ill people and the court's role in mandating treatment.

## **NATIONAL**

### **[Treating opioid addiction: Manchin teams up on LifeBOAT Act to combat substance abuse](#)**

Putting a 1 cent fee on every milligram of active opioid in prescription pain pills is the goal of a bill that would fund drug prevention and treatment programs addressing the nation's drug abuse epidemic and rising numbers of overdose deaths. U.S. Senators Joe Manchin, D-WV; Mitt Romney, R-UT; Amy Klobuchar, D-MN; Tammy Baldwin, D-WI; Angus King, I-ME; Jeanne Shaheen, D-NH; Maggie Hassan, D-NH; Richard Blumenthal, D-CT; Tina Smith; D-MN; and Sheldon Whitehouse, D-RI, recently introduced the bipartisan Life Budgeting for Opioid Addiction Treatment (LifeBOAT) Act, which would establish a stewardship fee to provide and expand access to substance use treatment. In 2020, over 90,000 Americans died from drug related overdoses – the highest year of overdose deaths ever recorded – with over half of those likely involving an opioid or synthetic opioid.

## **WEEKEND READING**

**[The Hill:](#)** The mental health cost of anti-Asian hate on the AAPI community

**[Forbes:](#)** How To Cultivate, Sustain And Discuss Mental Health In The Workplace

**[Oklahoma Watch:](#)** How Rural School Counselors Confront Life in a 'Mental Health Desert'

**\*\*The information compiled in this email originated from the following news sources: WHSV, Bluefield Daily Telegraph, Rome Daily Sentinel, Mercury News, Colorado Sun\*\***