

THE AMERICAN FEMINIST

 FEMINISTS FOR LIFE
OF AMERICA



PERSEVERANCE

Protect Our Daughters: Girls Deserve BetterSM



**You did everything you could to protect her
from the day she was born.**

Today, teens and young women are challenged in ways unheard of in the last decade, or even in the last century.

Our society oversexualizes vulnerable teens and young women.

Abortion providers, advocates, predators, teen media, entertainment industry executives, and their allies—including legislators—have worked hard to blur the margins of

what is good,

what is *acceptable*,

and what is *expected*.

Our daughters are put at risk of exploitation by their peers, lured into trafficking by friends and—if that wasn't enough—suffering abortions.

Maybe it starts with a kid at school pushing her for that nude on Snapchat, or worse, taken by organized gangs or used by notorious, powerful men and their surrogates. They are predators who see minors as easy prey.

Whom are our daughters—and we—up against?

- Imagery in music, videos, movies, magazines, online web spaces such as *Teen Vogue*, and the fashion industry.
 - Peers at school who have been trained to victimize others.
 - What is being taught in schools by some teachers, coaches, and scout leaders—who were supposed to protect them.
 - Planned Parenthood and for-profit clinics, and judicial bypass groups aimed at coming between us and our daughters.
-
-

What can parents do?

- Learn the threats to our teens.
 - See the signs of unusual behavior.
 - Educate our daughters.
 - Keep the focus on her future.
 - Know what is being taught to our children.
 - And know who is hanging around with her.
-
-

What can teens and young women do?

- Be aware.
- Listen to your instincts.
- Focus on school and extracurricular activities.
- Report anything that is “off” to parents, counselors, police.
- Find a mentor, especially if you don't have a strong female role model in the family.
- Recognize that true friends don't use and abuse you.

What FFL will do:

- Reach younger audiences with inspirational messages where they live on social media—before they become college-bound women who buy into abortion as the norm.
- Help them build their powerful pro-woman story on Instagram.
- Inform them of the insider tricks that are aimed at young girls—and boys.
- Give parents and teens tools and insights to protect them.
- Inspire them with pro-life feminist leaders of the past who speak to us today.
- Continue to educate them about pro-life feminism, our philosophy, and solutions through our College Outreach Program and NEW Teen Outreach Program.
- Provide internships to the next generation of leaders.
- Give you and your teen many more insights, info, and tools in the school year to come.



Check out our video honoring Alice Paul, one of many summer intern projects!

www.feministsforlife.org/AlicePaulEqualRights

Give to Our Year-End Matching Campaign!

1. Please make a tax-deductible donation by December 31 that will qualify for our year-end match led by the FFL Board and Friends (including former Board members). Gifts of stock are also appreciated.
2. Make a new or increased monthly gift, and your first gift will be **double**-matched!
3. If your employer matches donations, please include a corporate matching form to double your gift yet again!

The matching gift campaign ends December 31, 2020, so please go online now to www.feministsforlife.org/support, or use the enclosed envelope. On behalf of those we serve—future leaders and women at high risk of abortion—we thank you!

Feminists for Life is a 501(c)(3) organization. All contributions and donations to Feminists for Life of America and WomenDeserveBetter.com are much needed, deeply appreciated, and tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

She is still your little girl.

With your generous year-end gift, Feminists for Life will reach girls and young women where they are.



Look for the next great issue of *The American Feminist*, and watch us online for more components of College Outreach and Teen Outreach Programs, because she is still...

FOREVER
*Priceless*SM

THE AMERICAN FEMINIST®

A publication of Feminists for Life of America

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Tax-deductible donations may be given online at www.feministsforlife.org and www.womendeservebetter.com.

Established in 1972, Feminists for Life of America is a nonsectarian, nonpartisan, grassroots organization that seeks real solutions to the challenges women face. Our efforts are shaped by the core feminist values of justice, nondiscrimination, and nonviolence. Feminists for Life of America continues the tradition of early American feminists such as Susan B. Anthony, who opposed abortion.

Feminists for Life of America recognizes that abortion is a reflection that our society has failed to meet the needs of women. We are dedicated to systematically eliminating the root causes that drive women to abortion—primarily lack of practical resources and support—through holistic, woman-centered solutions. Women deserve better than abortion.

Feminists for Life of America is a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

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Fall/Winter 2020

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Cover photo of *Johanna E. Young and her then-unborn baby, Sheridan, provided by the model.*

PERSEVERANCE

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WHEN A MAN STEALS TO SATISFY HUNGER, WE MAY SAFELY CONCLUDE THAT THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG IN SOCIETY—SO WHEN A WOMAN DESTROYS THE LIFE OF HER UNBORN CHILD, IT IS AN EVIDENCE THAT EITHER BY EDUCATION OR CIRCUMSTANCES THAT SHE HAS BEEN GREATLY WRONGED.

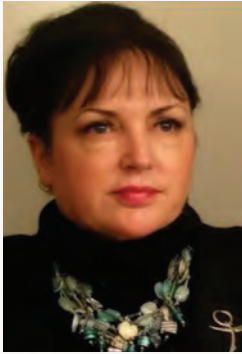
—Mattie Brinkerhoff,

The Revolution, September 2, 1869



FEMINISTS FOR LIFE
OF AMERICA

HASTEN THE DAY...



When we write an evergreen issue of The American Feminist, we speak beyond Feminists for Life of today. As our archives become available at the Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America at Harvard University, the most prestigious collection on women's history, we speak to the future. And generations from now, they will hear our voices, by then long past. In this special issue, we tell them how we struggled and hopefully learned from challenges during the pandemic of 2020.

While we counted down to the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment by sharing our rich pro-life feminist history through our 2020 Centennial Celebration calendar and subsequent publication of “Pedaling Toward Freedom,” the spring/summer issue of *The American Feminist*, **this year was not the Centennial Suffrage Celebration that we had long planned.**

But in so many ways, we are living through much of what our feminist foremothers experienced.

The suffragists started as abolitionists. We are then, as Feminists for Life, daughters and sons of abolitionists. When men voted against women participating at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London, they became determined to fight for women's right to vote. Still, there were intersecting issues of sexism and racism, documented and confronted in “Pedaling Toward Freedom,” which—along with abortion and other societal ills—we still struggle with today.

The leaders of the suffrage movement, who were largely based in New York, took a pause during the Civil War in support of the Union Army and in opposition to slavery. But half a century later, a new generation took over. World War I ensued. Instead of putting women's right to vote on hold, Alice Paul and other leaders became determined to “march forth” in major cities and became the first to peacefully protest in front of the White House.

They endured a period of violence from anarchists. They also suffered a pandemic in February 1918 that ended in April of 1920. With no vaccine, they too endured self-isolation and quarantines. Disinfection and good hygiene were the only available forms of protection. Group gatherings were limited, but these methods were applied unevenly, allowing this form of the H1N1 virus to spread, with devastating results.

An estimated 500 *million* people were infected with the flu. Fifty million people died worldwide, with 675,000 losing their lives in the United States.



Image: National Archives

That pandemic also nearly cost women the right to vote as time ran out for ratification. It was a close call. A note from a mother to her son, a legislator in Tennessee, made the crucial difference as he switched his vote to support women's suffrage. As a result, the 19th Amendment guaranteed American women the right to vote.

Mothers still make the vital difference today. And you and I make the vital difference to support them as we advocate for their unmet needs and as we reach those at highest risk through WomenDeserveBetter.com.

Equally important, Feminists for Life is also expanding our efforts to teach students wherever they are, using their favorite forms of social media—and much more.

Like women today, our leaders of tomorrow will likely be the primary caretakers of the young and the old, and they pass it forward when they teach their children the value of life.

So as we look ahead, with perseverance and much optimism, there will likely be a baby boom soon after Thanksgiving and into the new year. Helping these women now can make for the most joyful news of all.

Because women deserve better,



SERRIN M. FOSTER
PRESIDENT



In recognition of the insidious eugenic practices by the founder of Planned Parenthood, Margaret Sanger's name was finally removed from their Manhattan clinic, at the direction of the board of Planned Parenthood of Greater New York. FFL President Serrin M. Foster and Editor Damian J. Geminder contributed an article to *America* magazine about her history, and how changing the name hasn't stopped their practices, which disproportionately take the lives of children of color. "We hope it is the first step in their self awareness," Foster said. You can read it here:

www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2020/07/22/margaret-sanger-feminism-planned-parenthood-abortion-eugenics



CULTURE OF DEATH

CHLOE FOLMAR



As the coronavirus pandemic has swept across the world, it has affected not only countless lives but the cultures they collectively make up. Socially and economically, COVID-19 has altered life in the United States in irreversible ways. Uncertainty and fear have gripped many people, at every level of society.

The coronavirus poses a unique and formidable threat to the culture of life in America. The most obvious danger to life remains serious and pressing: the disease's death rate itself. Infection rates increased exponentially in the United States and around the world, with hotspots flaring up in various states and countries, and the elderly and those with pre-existing conditions suffered the highest mortality rates. In a culture where the values of dedication to life and respect for the elderly have already been driven down, there is growing concern for the protection of each unique life from the virus. Some people have ignored health warnings to avoid bars and other crowded indoor venues or chosen not to take basic precautions, such as wearing masks and practicing physical distancing to care for those around them.

As early as March 2020, hospitals were considering universal "do-not-resuscitate" orders for coronavirus patients. These DNR orders would be in place regardless of the wishes of the patient or the family. Clearly, these issues affect society's

most vulnerable more than they affect others. The novel coronavirus poses a disproportionate risk to the elderly and those with preexisting medical conditions.

People with disabilities have been particularly neglected during the pandemic. In March, the National Council on Disability wrote to the Department of Health & Human Services' Office for Civil Rights emphasizing the importance of non-discriminatory health care for the disabled. As people struggle with their own issues (learning to homeschool, transitioning to telecommuting, or worse—losing their income), many have been isolated and are totally unaware of the impact on the most vulnerable populations. (See page 13 about those caring for people with special needs.)

The threat of the coronavirus to life in America does not stop with the possibility of infection. The pandemic has set back the economy and daily routines of many Americans, which severely affects things like employment and mental health. Even with reopenings across the country, unemployment has remained high, and some jobs will not be coming back. These are not simply economic numbers—rather, they are individual people's livelihoods falling apart because of the effects of the pandemic.

Combined with the difficulty of social distancing, where people are isolated from social contact with friends and family, these insecurities have resulted in disastrous effects for Americans' mental health.

In May, medical professionals at John Muir Medical Center in Walnut Creek, California, remarked that they had "never seen so much intentional injury" and that they had seen "a year's worth of suicide attempts in the last four weeks." That same month, a study by the Well Being Trust linked deaths of despair, such as suicide and drug and alcohol overdoses, with triggers including "unemployment, fear and dread, and isolation." A number of suicides have been highly publicized, such as the terrible death of Dr. Lorna Breen, an emergency room doctor. In July, the CDC released preliminary data showing that the decline in

U.S. drug deaths recorded in 2018—the first such decline in a quarter century—was reversed in 2019. A record 72,000 people died, and that number was feared to rise with the pandemic in 2020. According to *The New York Times*: “Deaths from drug overdoses remain higher than the peak yearly death totals ever recorded for car accidents, guns or AIDS, and their acceleration in recent years has pushed down overall life expectancy in the United States.”

Another at-risk group comprises the vulnerable women and children living with their abusers. (See page 26.) Many societal solutions have eroded during isolation.

While the impact of COVID-19 has been widely discussed for some groups of people, the needs of pregnant women and their unborn children have largely been ignored. Despite some states banning nonessential medical care, including abortion, rates of abortion have climbed higher during the pandemic. A number of abortion facilities have doubled their intake from last year’s numbers. Women have traveled across state lines to obtain abortions when their own states have shut down facilities. Many have resorted to ordering abortifacient pills online through programs like TelAbortion, whose sales doubled from January and February in March and April. “Whenever there is a crisis, you can count on Planned Parenthood and other abortion advocates to stand by ready to profit from women’s misery,” said FFL President Serrin Foster. “Women deserve better.”

During this time, many pregnant women feel desperate. Alone at home, some of them feel they lack the support to provide for a baby. Some were overwhelmed when schools and day cares closed down. Others felt unable to care for another child, especially financially as their employers shut down, or they couldn’t work because they needed to stay at home with their children.

Some are terrified to bring a child into a world where she or he might suffer from the virus, or they are concerned that COVID-19 could affect the child in the womb.

OB-GYN Dr. Ingrid Skop answered this concern in a column for WomenDeserveBetter.com: “There is no evidence that COVID-19 will infect the baby in her uterus, nor any evidence that it will cause birth defects. In fact, the safest place for her baby is in her womb.”

It is crucial that these women are provided with the help and support they need, whether virtual encouragement and checkups or material aid of some sort, so they feel safe bringing the babies they are carrying into the world. With the reassurance and care they need, mothers will be able to see the beauty and value of the human beings in their wombs. This is why Feminists for Life made addressing the unmet needs of women during COVID-19 a priority on WomenDeserveBetter.com.

In many ways, the coronavirus pandemic has degraded the culture of life in the United States, but hope remains. In the midst of sickness and death, Americans can meditate on the preciousness and fragility of human life. Many have stepped up to help family, neighbors, and strangers in creative new ways. And after all is said and done, we will have learned many lessons on how to treat others better during a crisis—at every level of society. □



Chloe Folmar
Author



LOVE HAS EVERYTHING TO DO WITH IT

SAMANTHA KAMMAN

The human spirit demonstrated once again that we have the potential to triumph over adversity, and we saw this potential as people came together in service of others during the COVID-19 pandemic. Whether it's finding new ways to connect with one another, or going out of our way to help someone in need, in this era, technology met creativity and led the way to overcome many hardships during isolation.

Falling in Love

Social distancing might have altered the way we talk to people, but the increase in online communication may ironically lead to a revival of traditional dating. The inability to meet in person for a quick match-up encouraged people to once again learn more about their partners. When it came to virtual dating, individuals had real opportunities to build a genuine connection with someone.

Of course, caution should always be exercised when communicating through an online platform. But the alteration to most people's social structures reignited the need for slowing down when dating.

Tying the Knot

Throughout the country, we saw couples adjust their wedding plans, delay honeymoons, and find creative ways to say, "I do!" to one another. COVID-19 may have halted a traditional big wedding, but for many, it did not stop marriage from taking place. While social distancing guidelines prevented large gatherings, some creative planning allowed certain newlyweds to still have their wedding day by relying on technology to share the occasion with loved ones. The brides and grooms who went ahead with their weddings have certainly given a whole new meaning to "...in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health."

Stress on Marriage and Practical Tips

Finding time to be with one another can be important for any relationship, and quarantine forced some partners to hit the pause button and just be with each other. With COVID-19 compelling many people to discover the necessity of human contact, married couples were given the opportunity to strengthen their appreciation for their spouses' presence.

COVID-19 also reinforced the need for discipline in marriage. With lockdown orders keeping people inside, tensions rose, and some relationships sadly reached their breaking point. But for the majority who stuck it out, marriage often fostered personal growth. By working to accommodate one another's need for space and striving to resolve conflicts, partners learned how to truly invest in their marriage. A healthy starting point is honesty about fears and concerns. Other factors include making some space when spouses are not used to being with one another 24/7; collaboration, rather than winning an argument; finding a good time and space to talk; and focusing on the best qualities of your loved one (especially when she or he is grating on one's nerves!). Showing appreciation and respect goes a long way to solidify a relationship.

Video Chat After Delivery

Some pregnant women feared delivery day would be a secluded experience because of COVID-19 precautions. Hospital plans for some women had to be changed, as many could not have extended family with them in the delivery room or during the remainder of the hospital stay. Despite the distance, online video chat helped many introduce new babies as they came into the world—and many moms and dads found that they cherished the alone time meeting their little ones.

Adoption Love During COVID-19

The shutdown threatened to delay the adoption process for several parents who were eager to bring their adopted children into their homes. Even with the courts closed, the crisis could not stop new families from being created.

We will long remember 2020 for heartwarming moments of adoption, when a child was welcomed with loving arms into a forever family with a judge facilitating a legal adoption in a virtual ceremony.

In addition to the adoption of children, pet adoption and fostering also surged during the pandemic. For

many, furry friends were an important source of solace during this long period of isolation.

Family Love

The love we have for our families can be overpowering. Family is something we tend to cherish, and unfortunately due to COVID-19, some people have been distanced from their relatives.

This distance forced people to find new ways to reach their loved ones including children who missed a parent. While some people remained in contact with their family by phone, email, or social media, others relied on video chat platforms to see their relatives in the hospital. To prevent the spread of the virus, many hospitals were forced to enact no-visitation policies. The policies could be isolating, but technological innovation allowed family members to see their loved ones.

Love of Neighbor

A sense of community can be invaluable in moments of distress and need, but social distancing guidelines made it difficult to interact with one's neighbors. This has not stopped many people from finding new ways to demonstrate their support.

People who could not leave their homes or afford supplies had what they needed thanks to generous donations to community food banks. Teachers gathered their students and their families together for virtual story time to bring people together in a healthy way. One teacher visited every student's home to wave from her car. They knew she cared. Principals found creative ways to celebrate graduations, including some who put each graduate's photo on the football field—complete with a gown, cap, and tassel. One postal worker left notes in everyone's mailbox on his route offering to pick up groceries and prescriptions or whatever they needed. In many neighborhoods, people also drew positive messages in chalk on the sidewalk or painted the windows in their cars and SUVs to keep people feeling encouraged in this stressful time.



Small acts of kindness can make all the difference. In hard times, it's nice to know one has the support of a loving community. Being a good neighbor means more than just living side by side. It means coming together for each other and uplifting one another in a mutual time of need.

Serving Others in Challenging Times

The virus left many pregnant women feeling overwhelmed by their circumstances, especially if the pregnancy was unexpected. But they were not alone. Never forgetting their mission, dedicated pregnancy center volunteers and staff stepped up to provide support during the pandemic. They provided women with virtual consultations and material resources in their time of need—before and after birth.

As for Feminists for Life, our staff and nine interns rapidly stepped up to provide timely content on WomenDeserveBetter.com, offering real help and hope for caretakers in many families.

Lasting Effect

This novel coronavirus took so many loved ones. But looking back for those of us who survived, we will remember precious times at home and online with loved ones. What good experiences will you remember the most?. □

Editor's Note: See page 31 for more information about what is available to help women Work, Learn, Live, and Love better on WomenDeserveBetter.com.



Samantha Kamman
Author

A young boy with short brown hair, wearing a blue ribbed sweater, is leaning his head against a woman with long dark hair. The woman is wearing a grey top and has a wooden hair clip in her hair. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The background is a bright, colorful indoor setting with a tree and a striped ball.

CHALLENGING TIMES FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR CARETAKERS

MEGHAN MCGOLDRICK

The current pandemic has been difficult for everyone. Many of us are no longer able to do everyday tasks that we have taken for granted, such as going to work, running errands and attending social gatherings. But how has the pandemic affected those with disabilities and their caretakers, who may already have difficulty with these everyday activities? According to the Centers for Disease Control, one in four Americans lives with some sort of disability. The pandemic is affecting them, their families, and caretakers in a number of ways.

Like many of us, people with disabilities have also been greatly affected by the loss of a job. They are at a greater risk of losing a job as many of these employment opportunities have been deemed nonessential. Oftentimes, the significance of these jobs is more than a source of income, but also an important source of socialization. Many of these jobs may give those with disabilities a feeling of purpose, seeing it as their way of contributing to society. Many people with disabilities have also had to make adaptations to their work or move to working from home. At Art Enables, a Washington D.C. art gallery and vocational arts program for artists with disabilities, this has meant helping their artists set up studios at home, converting in-person gallery shows to an online format, and creating Zoom backgrounds from original works of art.

But as Women Deserve Better Contributor Tatiana Federoff-Durbin notes, many disabled people work in those jobs deemed essential, such as grocery stores,



cleaning and sanitation, and in the food service industry, which can put them at greater risk than those who can work from home. Federoff-Durbin, who has Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, a painful collagen disorder that results in arthritis-like symptoms throughout the body, explains, “A family friend has some intellectual

disabilities and works as a cart wrangler at a local store. He has to pick up the discarded single-use masks and gloves that customers just throw on the ground in the parking lot,” she says. “Doing that puts him at much higher risk of contracting the virus, since he is touching contaminated objects on a constant basis. He then goes home to a family that includes some elderly and immunocompromised people and must shower and wash his clothes before even saying hello. He isn’t able to have one of those ‘safer’ jobs where he can work from home or behind the safety of a plexiglass screen. If people were more considerate with their trash, he wouldn’t be in so much risk.”

Oftentimes the parents or family of those with disabilities still care for their adult children, even more so now during the pandemic. Whether it is because of the loss of a job, or other reasons, such as trying not to be exposed to the virus, many families have had to make the decision whether or not to have their adult children live at home. This can be difficult for those already living in group homes, as they may not be able to visit their family during the lockdown. However, many of these homes are doing all they can to keep their residents busy when there is nowhere else to go. Members of L’Arche, an international organization of communities for people with disabilities, have started L’Arche Cafe, a daily online gathering where members from around the world video chat with each other. The Open Mic activity in which members share poems, music, or stories has become especially popular as a way to build community, while maintaining social distancing.

Those with disabilities are more likely to be immunocompromised and therefore more susceptible to the virus, leaving them, their parents, and caregivers to weigh the risk of possible exposure and infection against the need for non-COVID medical care. Another major issue is that it has become difficult to schedule some medical appointments, due to COVID-19 patients being given priority: “From my experience and from what I’ve heard from others, it’s a mixed bag,” says Molly Pannell,

whose daughter has a rare genetic condition that causes intellectual as well as physical disabilities. “Regular doctor visits seem to be mostly fine, especially if the visit can be done via telemedicine. Being able to schedule non-emergency procedures, such as scans and minor outpatient things, is very challenging right now.” This can lead to delays in treatment for non-COVID related medical problems, which can in some cases be dangerous or even fatal. “Living with those medical conditions means that sometimes everything is really great and then all of a sudden, it’s really not, and we’re rushing to the ER late at night.” Hospitals and medical care need to remain easily accessible to those with disabilities at any time, as they often never know when they are going to need them. “I have been out of important medication for weeks, and haven’t been able to get more because of how busy my doctor is and how worried I am about being in a doctor’s office with COVID going around,” Federoff-Durbin adds. “I make do with over-the-counter remedies, but I’m impatient for this to end so that life can just get back to normal.”



Some doctors have been seeing patients using telemedicine or video visits. For some individuals with disabilities, especially those who struggle with social anxiety, this has been a welcome new change, as going to doctors’ appointments for regular checkups before the pandemic was stressful or anxiety-inducing and can now be done from the comfort of their own homes.



The closure of schools and summer programs has been especially difficult for parents and their children, as schools are often a main provider of special education therapies and resources. These typically include programs such as

speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral therapy, specialized academic support, and guidance counseling. Therapists are doing what they can to provide remote therapy over video chats; however, this is not nearly as engaging as one-on-one therapy. This can be difficult for any small child to focus on, especially when the rest of the child’s classes may also be done remotely. “You just can’t replace one-on-one interaction,” says Miriam Rudolph, mother of a deaf 4-year-old child.

Many parents are concerned that the closure of schools during the pandemic will cause their children to lose academic progress. For parents of children with disabilities, this concern is especially worrying.



Many schools have made great efforts to provide resources and curriculums for parents who are now having to educate from home. “These past few months have been intense, to say the least, but they’ve also been rewarding.” says Ann Robertson, whose daughter has autism and Down syndrome. “It [the lockdown]

“

Living with those medical conditions means that sometimes everything is really great and then all of a sudden, it’s really not, and we’re rushing to the ER late at night.

”

has given me a chance to understand her and her disability even more than before,” Robertson adds. She as well as other parents of children with disabilities have expressed a greater appreciation for therapists and special ed teachers who specialize in their children’s needs after having to attempt to provide these specialized services at home.

“

The lockdown has given me a chance to understand her and her disability even more than before.

”

The pandemic has had an effect on all of us, especially those with disabilities. Though much of it has been a struggle, not all of the changes have been negative as communities have come together to support each other and people have sought creative solutions to the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. This crisis is a reminder that we must do all we can to remain aware of those with disabilities and others in need, now more than ever. □



Meghan McGoldrick
Author

Here’s what FFL Facebook followers said:

Sara Gerardo

It’s harder to convince them to wear a mask. If it feels uncomfortable on you, those with sensory processing disorder (such as autism) are so much more uncomfortable. They are also stimulated in ways that make it easier to contract COVID-19, such as chewing on fingernails or picking their lips. This is a reason it’s so important that those who can wear a mask, should.

Crystal Kupper

Not to mention that if you have a child with special needs who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons, you now have the added fun of being chased down everywhere you go by self-righteous ‘heroes’ who believe that swearing at your 9-year-old in a wheelchair and calling her a murderer while stalking her around the store will somehow save lives. We are pretty much in hiding, in other words, because we have learned that people with disabilities are no longer welcome in this nation.

Kathleen Hall

So difficult for parents who have relied on the school system.



STRONG HEARTS DURING THE PANDEMIC

CAROLINA WASINGER

Every community in the United States faces unprecedented difficulties in combating the coronavirus pandemic. American Indian communities in particular have been some of the most adversely affected for myriad reasons; namely, population age demographics, health infrastructure issues, and the enormous risk shelter-in-place orders have posed to those women and men suffering domestic and sexual violence. Across all demographics, the United States has experienced a rise in domestic violence or “intimate terrorism” during efforts to flatten the curve of disease spread.

American Indian women encounter sexual and domestic violence at a disproportionately higher rate than any other community in the United States.

The National Congress of American Indians reports that roughly four out of every five American Indian (AI) and Alaska Native (AN) women have experienced some form of sexual violence. AI/AN women also have a greater risk of being murdered than any other group. According

to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, homicide is the third leading cause of death for AI/AN women ages 1-19 years old living in both rural and urban areas. The United States has dedicated May 5 as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. This day is commemorated each year, particularly through social media by Natives and non-Natives alike. Some people commemorate Native women who have been lost by wearing red, painting a red hand across their lips and chin, or posting a list of names of Native “sisters” lost to violence and abduction. Though some progress has been made to combat the epidemic of stolen sisters including a presidential task force established in 2019, rates of missing and murdered indigenous women continue to impact Native families and communities horrifically.

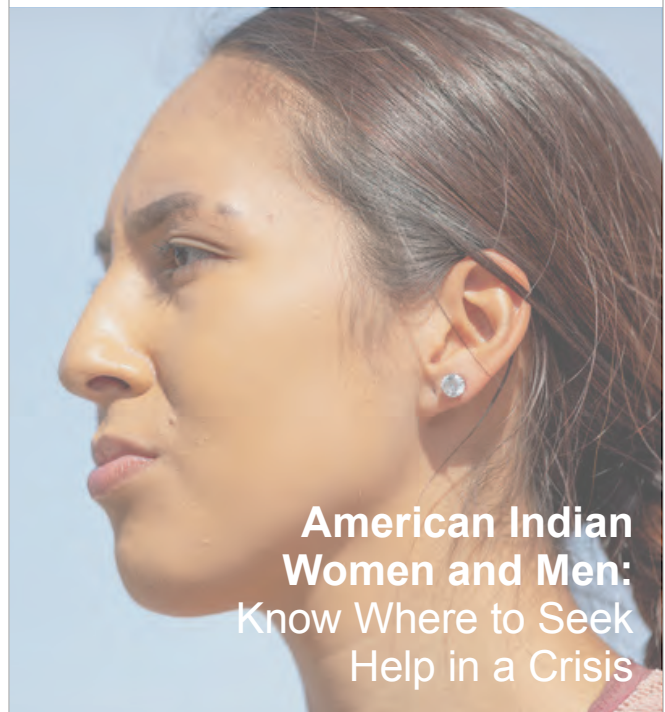
Although precautions taken to ensure greater safety for everyone during a pandemic have helped communities, they have also hindered the ability of

people suffering in poor living conditions to seek help or acquire goods and services. Approximately 71% of tribally affiliated Natives live in urban areas, and those Natives who live in rural areas face unique challenges during this crisis. Domestic abuse rates are one issue, but poor infrastructure on Native reservations is also the root of major problems. In the Navajo Nation, 30% of residents do not have access to running water in their homes, making typical hygiene measures in the time of a pandemic, such as hand washing, increasingly difficult. Additionally 30% of Navajo residents also do not have landlines or internet service, which has posed incredible problems for domestic violence cases, contact tracing, and distance learning.

Suspension of many American Indian cultural activities, such as sundance, powwows, and traditional practices/medicine, which are powerful expressions of the American Indian identity, has had far worse effects. Mental and behavioral health have been challenged for some American Indians who rely on ritual and cultural ceremonies to renew different aspects of world order, food, and health in addition to creating spaces for expression of American Indian identity.

Reports from reservations have indicated increased alcohol and drug abuse, which are closely linked to various forms of violence. These hint at the health and infrastructure disparity that exists between the United States' Native and non-Native groups. In addition to food shortages and rising unemployment rates, American Indians are experiencing a time reminiscent of when they were forced into confinement on reservations, isolated from other groups and living in deplorable conditions. □

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**American Indian
Women and Men:
Know Where to Seek
Help in a Crisis**

WomenDeserveBetter.com



Carolina Wasinger serves as an Expert on Native issues for FFL's helpsite, Women Deserve Better. She is a prospective Native law school applicant, member of the Delaware Tribe of Indians and the Cherokee Nation, and a former intern at the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. Carolina served as the President of the American Indian Student Association at the College of William & Mary, where she advocated for cultural awareness and worked to foster the school's liaisons with local Virginia tribes.



YOU ARE NOT A BURDEN

ELIZABETH TROUTMAN

You Are Not a Burden

In many different countries and cultures throughout history, the elderly have been valued as important members of society:

In Greco-Roman mythology, caring for one's parents is considered piety, as seen in the example of Aeneas carrying his aged father out of the burning city of Troy on his back in Virgil's *Aeneid*. In modern Greece, the phrase for "old man" is considered a compliment as the Greek people believe it marks wisdom and closeness to God. These ideas are affirmed by the Bible in Proverbs 16:31, which says, "Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life."

People in Asian countries believe in the key Confucian principle of respect for the elderly, also known as filial piety. Chinese families see caring for their elderly parents as the highest form of virtue. In India, the elderly are the heads of communities. In fact, not caring for one's elderly family members is illegal in India due to the Maintenance of Parents and Dependents Bill of Himachal Pradesh in 2001.

American Indian tribes also have great respect for the elderly; for example, the Delaware Nation funds daily exercise and nutrition programs for their elders.

The wisdom and seniority of the elderly are recognized and honored by many cultures. **The coronavirus has shown that now is the perfect time for Americans to re-evaluate how we can ensure the well-being of our senior family members.**

Although the coronavirus has negatively impacted every American household, nothing compares to the harms inflicted on the elderly. Due to the heartbreaking losses to the elderly population resulting from COVID-19, the virus has provided a wake-up call to the value of the elderly as members of society who do not deserve to be thrown aside, but fought for and protected. Two women who have seen firsthand how the elderly are often treated in the United States, yet have done something within their own families to make a difference, are Feminists for Life President Serrin M. Foster and FFL National Operations Coordinator Cynthia J. Wood.



Serrin has much experience with living in a multigenerational household, as her mother and father cared for her dad's foster parents when she was a child, and now Serrin cares for her elderly mother and assists her sister, who has disabilities.

When Serrin was a baby, her parents moved from Washington D.C. to Upstate New York to care for their foster parents. They built a duplex for three generations in Tonawanda. After the death of Serrin's foster grandmother, her grandfather, who suffered from dementia, reached a point when his residence in their home was neither safe for him, nor Serrin's mother, who was pregnant with Serrin's little sister at the time. "He had gotten to the point that he offered his medicines to us as little kids and almost burned the house down on several occasions," Serrin explained, prompting her father to place him where he would be safest, a military retirement hospital.

Today, Serrin loves being the full-time caretaker of her mother, as it provides opportunities for treasured time together and good memories.

Shortly after Cynthia's father started to lose his sight, he inserted a letter for long-term insurance into his reading machine, and she heard the words, "You don't want to be a burden to your children." Cynthia was shocked to hear something so demeaning being announced in the home of her beloved parents, but it provided her with an important revelation about today's culture: Though families once lived together in multigenerational households and supported each others' needs, now the elderly are misled into believing that they are too much trouble and should try to make it on their own or move to a home out of the way of their kids' fast-paced lives. Cynthia assured her parents that they were not a burden, but rather a blessing, and convinced them to move into her home.

For five years, Cynthia's parents lived with her family in Virginia, but when they all moved to South Carolina, her parents moved in with Cynthia's sister. Soon after, a third sister moved from Germany, with each family living near one another, and the three sisters formed a strong system of support for their mother and father. One of the greatest benefits of this situation was that grandchildren lived in each of the three homes, enabling their grandparents to see them grow up, and the grandchildren to see their parents overcome the difficulties of elder care. When Cynthia's dad was taken to the hospital, the family took shifts making sure he was never alone, even to the end of his life. One year later, her mother passed peacefully at home, once again surrounded by those who loved her. Cynthia described her situation: "We were our own network, formed and supported by a bond of love."

Today, Cynthia is exploring where to live when she and her husband retire. She muses about buying property with two homes, one for her and the other for one of her children. Parents and grandparents should do what they can to be a helpful part of their children's lives to form that bond of love. While the home caretaking situation described in Cynthia's story is ideal, it is not realistic for



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Thank you!

all situations, as seen in the case of Serrin's grandparents. What matters is that the elderly live where they are most safe, not where they are most out of the way.

There are many problems with the elder care system in America. Assisted living facilities are expensive and often unsafe, unclean, and understaffed. Social Security has allowed the government a large role in elder care, sometimes replacing the role of the family. There is a loss of multigenerational families as difficulties balancing jobs, children, and medical attention for the elderly has forced many Americans to find alternative living situations for their parents. Unfortunately, due to these difficulties, many of which are unavoidable, the elderly are losing the joys of grandparenting, and adult children are losing the joys of giving back to the parents who raised them.

These pre-existing problems with the elder care system have been greatly exacerbated by the coronavirus. The first major U.S. outbreak of the virus was at a Washington state nursing home. It is well known that the elderly are particularly susceptible to disease, yet most of the resources for fighting the virus were sent to critical care facilities, while all that nursing homes received were infected patients. The governors of California, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania advised or mandated that hospitals return COVID-19 patients to nursing homes, speeding the relentless spread of infection through nursing and assisted living facilities. By June 2020, an estimated

You Are Not a Burden

43% of COVID-19 deaths in the United States were nursing or residential care home residents. In Connecticut, between April 22 and April 29, **90% of coronavirus deaths were nursing home residents.**

Such neglect of the elderly during the coronavirus pandemic reveals some of the unfortunate drawbacks of the nursing home system: Staff are often underpaid, overworked, and poorly trained, and residents lack caring advocates, frequently causing them to become lonely, increasing rates of dementia. Though this is thankfully not the case for many nursing homes around the country, measures should be taken in the facilities that do bear these drawbacks to raise them to the standards our elderly deserve.

Now that a light has been shone on the elder care system's deficiencies, there is no excuse to leave these problems unresolved. The virus has been a reminder that the elderly are vulnerable and in need of protection, and measures must be taken to keep them safe. COVID-19 is not the only potentially fatal illness for the elderly; even the common cold could hospitalize the most immunocompromised. In response, friends and family can refrain from visiting the elderly when sick and can wash their hands as vigorously as during the pandemic after it ends. The safety of the elderly is one of the main reasons prompting stay-at-home orders, and Americans can honor the elderly by continuing to make sacrifices for them once the world goes back to normal.

Having seen what it is like to be unable to reach their parents or protect them from impending danger, this time offers a chance for adult children, whose situations allow it, to reconsider bringing their elderly parents into their home to care for them—including considering home renovations to make bathrooms accessible for the elderly and those with disabilities, and learning more about support services for caregivers. For those whose homes and family situations do not lend themselves to home caregiving, community support programs for the elderly such as adult day care, elder

co-housing, in-home health aides, and services offered by the local Area Agency on Aging can be explored.

Every life, from the moment of conception to the moment of death, is worthy of protection, regardless of the individual's mental or physical condition. We can learn from other cultures to revere the elderly and find real joy in caring for them in the best way possible, for both the caregiver and recipient. □

***Editor's Note:** As Feminists for Life, we have been supporting primary caregivers, who are most often women, with helpful tips and links to resources for them to make good choices for all involved. Please visit our helpsite, WomenDeserveBetter.com:*

Practical Tips When Caring for Our Elders

Extra Measures to Protect the Highly Vulnerable

8 Ways to Keep in Touch with Elderly Loved Ones When You Can't See Them in Person

What You Need to Know About Hospice



Elizabeth Troutman
Author



HE SAID/SHE DID? SEEING FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES THROUGH GENDERED EYES

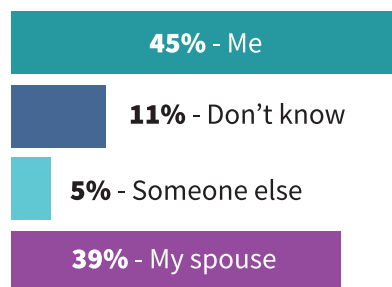
EMMA STRICK

A Morning Consult study published by *The New York Times* showed that women living with partners are taking on more than half of the childcare and household responsibilities during quarantine, though oftentimes their male partners don't realize it. When asked, "Who is spending more time home-schooling your children or helping them with distance learning?" 45% of men said that they were doing more than their female partners; women didn't agree, 80% saying that they were doing more than their male partners.

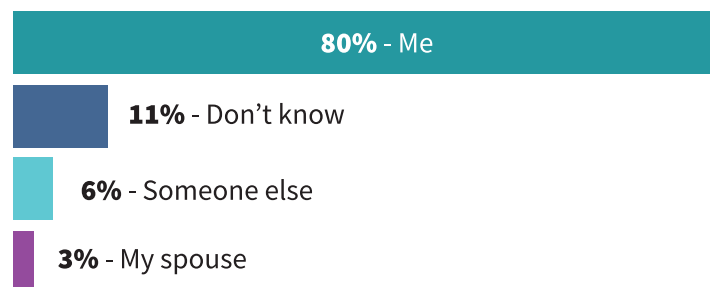
Who is spending more time home-schooling your children or helping them with distance learning?

Among parents with children under 12

Men



Women



Source: Morning Consult survey of 2,200 adults April 9-10, 2020. Margin of error ± 8 pts. for men and ± 7 pts. for women.

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding - *The New York Times*



Unfortunately, these findings don't strike most people as surprising. Women, almost by default, take on more than their fair share of work in a household. With more household responsibilities being put onto everyone during the coronavirus pandemic, women feel the strain most. This is concerning to many people, especially women in the workforce. As Professor Barbara Risman says, "What terrifies me for the future is if it will push women out of the labor force in a way that will be very hard to overcome."

Her fears aren't unfounded. In a survey of couples in which both partners are working remotely and full-time, 19% of men reported working less than usual. This number increased to 29% when answered by women.

Numerous academic journals, for example, reported fewer submissions of women-authored articles since the beginning of the pandemic. The deputy editor of the *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* said the number of such articles in recent months has been "negligible." The outbreak's effects are difficult for everyone, but with women already responsible for more domestic and emotional labor, their professional work can be forced into a delay less often experienced by men.

Social demographer Alessandra Minello's experience supports this finding, explaining that she has less time to write scientific articles, as the pressures of caring for her young son and expectations of colleagues worldwide compete for her attention. This phenomenon is widely known as the "motherhood penalty." (See article page 26.)

The gendered dynamics in academia have also caught the attention of University of Massachusetts at Amherst sociology and public policy professor Joya Misra. While her institution has assured faculty that a lower performance during this disruption won't harm their careers, some of her female parenting colleagues have doubts, "doubling down" on work in order to ensure their job security. In short, even women whose life work is documenting statistics and inequality are having to choose between their careers and their children.

Like many crises, the coronavirus pandemic highlights differences often left implicit. While these statistics are disturbing, they are not new. As the *Times* stated, **"Seventy percent of women say they're fully or mostly responsible for housework during lockdown, and 66 percent say so for child care—roughly the same shares as in typical times."** Studies like these are being published now because of the increased count of household obligations both men and women are experiencing, but similar findings have been shown in previous disaster situations.

A 1992 study, "New Realities of the American Family," by Dennis A. Ahlburg and Carol J. Devita, found that families of children and elders supported primarily by women experienced increased difficulty in accessing disaster relief resources. Furthermore, women are also the population most at risk in nearly every disaster, whether it be flood, drought, or famine. Specifically, women responsible for children have a heightened mortality rate in earthquake disasters. Lower income women are more likely to die in floods; this could be because they may live in more flood-prone areas, don't

have access to evacuation sites, fear losing custody of their children if they go to a shelter, or can't navigate themselves and their children out of the house. In extreme cases, as illustrated in *The Gendered Terrain of Disaster*, Elaine Enarson and Betty Hearn Morrow's 1998 study on Hurricane Andrew's disaster response, these women may feel a greater need to stay in their homes and protect their few, and therefore precious, belongings, rather than evacuating as others are able.

But the discrepancy between women's and men's roles is often more implicit; in famine disasters, girls have a higher mortality rate simply because boys are given a greater share of food—showing the disturbing trend, even custom, of a higher value being placed on male lives.

When we try to provide aid to disaster-struck areas, there needs to be special attention paid to women and their needs. Enarson and Morrow found that “women in traditional relationships with men often received more help preparing and recovering from disaster,” leaving the single women supporting households to struggle with inadequate resources. If disaster relief efforts had focused more squarely on women, this phenomenon may have been avoided. Additionally, some women involved in this study reported feeling “at risk of male violence” in the recovery period. When solutions adequate only for the majority are applied to a whole population and vulnerable populations are left out, many people's needs are ignored, leading to further difficulty for already vulnerable populations.

In the coronavirus pandemic crisis specifically, making sure women are involved in all planning and decision making in the workplace and supporting working parents with flexible work arrangements and childcare options can have a hugely positive impact on women. Shopping from women-owned businesses in your community is another easy way to help. To prevent domestic abuse, identifying and protecting women who are trapped at home with their abusers and simplifying the reporting of violence is imperative.

Enarson and Morrow concluded, “**Caregiving roles are intensified rather than abandoned during crisis.**” While women are the most at risk in disasters, they are also consistently heroic as “mitigators, preparers, caregivers, sustainers, and rebuilders,” in paid positions such as healthcare workers, politicians, and community organizers, and in unpaid and often undervalued positions, such as mothers, protectors, homeschoolers, and providers of emotional support. Women are vital to any recovery process, and so in difficult times, they must be supported as such. When this is all over (that hopeful refrain), women will again have stories to tell. It's up to us to make sure they have stories of support, gratitude, and empowerment, rather than the familiar story of struggle and marginalization. □

Editor's Note: To learn more about what to do in a situation of domestic violence, see the article, “When You Need to Call for Help: Domestic Violence,” on our *Women Deserve Better* helpsite.



Emma Strick
Author

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHROUDED IN COVID-19 DARKNESS

GRACE BERNING



A father holds his 11-year-old daughter's belt loops as she walks, rubbing his hand across her rear. They have come as a family, the father, mother, and two daughters, to a nonprofit social service office to apply for assistance. Walking into the small intake cubicle, the 11-year-old covers herself in material, seemingly sinking into her sweatshirt as a vulnerable creature would its shell. He tries to get her to sit in his lap, since there are only two chairs but four of them. She refuses, choosing to slide down the corner and huddle herself against the wall.

A 1992 study of post-traumatic stress disorder by Dr. Judith Lewis Herman connects the trauma experienced by prisoners of war and survivors of hostage scenarios to the domestic, often sexual, violence against women and children that occurs in homes around the world. Though the circumstances of such captivity are different, the survivors' experiences during and after prolonged victimization are nearly identical psychologically, symptomatically, and characteristically. This study's findings are particularly relevant in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Established routes of help for women and children who are being abused—such as the attention of schoolteachers, governmental agencies, and crisis centers—have been forced to close or limit their accessibility. Isolation has always been a method of control over another person, a means of inflicting psychological violence on other human beings. Now, however, governments are mandating such isolation. **Government officials did not intend for their pandemic policies to enable abusers, but certain protections for women and children have been lost, and the vulnerable have felt the consequences.**

The physical violence that has occurred in the midst of the pandemic is partially represented by reports from crisis centers and hotlines. Around the world, domestic violence hotlines received more calls in March and April than normal, especially from women requesting shelter. The risk of outbreaks in safehouses has led many organizations to turn new clientele away.

Children in need—usually aided by teachers, nonprofits, and Child Protective Services—now carry, alone, the terrible burden of getting help. According to *The New York Times*, in April 2020, “phone calls and texts to the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline increased 17 percent over the same period last year.” The heightened occurrence of abuse, however, will go unnoticed by many because not all victims will be able or willing to report.

For the women and children in isolation with abusers, it is not simple to call for help during the day. **Abusers frequently live with their victims, who are often being pulled close to those who hurt them. A call to a hotline or 911 for help might be overheard. The punishment for such betrayal, as the abuser sees it, might not be worth the chance at escape for the survivor.** Such dangerous logistical challenges for people being abused unquestionably affect how many survivors are actually able to ask for help, let alone receive it.

Unfortunately, efforts by domestic violence outreach organizations to offer virtual solutions are only useful to an extent. A profoundly physical and intimate issue cannot reasonably be stopped virtually. FFL Speaker Joyce McCauley-Benner, an expert on violence against women, explains, “Now, with stay-at-home orders in

place, schools closed, and many social service agencies only operating via phone or internet, it is even harder for victims to speak out or, most important, **to be seen and helped.**” In her article for Women Deserve Better, “When You Don’t Feel Safe at Home,” McCauley-Benner suggests reaching out to a friend for help if calling a hotline or authorities is too risky. For women and children still in danger, this might be an option.

The imminent presence of offenders over their victims’ shoulders, at all hours of the day, presents an additional problem for those needing help. Constant surveillance and fear tactics have always been used by abusers, but the pandemic provides new opportunities and circumstances to already harmful predators. As the aforementioned study of prisoners demonstrated, women and children who are victimized often form a sort of dependency on their abuser, further complicating the issue of reporting. An abuser might withhold information, food, or even convince the abused that s/he would never survive without the abuser’s help, creating an internal struggle for the survivor.

Children who are mistreated by a parent suffer a particular bond with their offenders. Victims’ brains may be changed by the violence and trauma they endure, just as prisoners’ minds are shown to be altered by their captivity. Trauma induced in victims during pandemic restrictions will prevail in their minds much longer than the stay-at-home orders will last. For survivors who escaped and received help prior to the lockdowns, therapy resources have been largely paused. Survivors are not receiving the help they need or deserve.

The CEO of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, Katie Ray-Jones, reports some of the painful instances she has heard of in the midst of coronavirus: “Another woman calling into the hotline said her partner had started slowly loading his gun as she got ready to leave for her job, telling her she couldn’t go outside at all. A third said her partner had forced her to keep scrubbing her hands until they were raw.” Constant press conferences and death reports playing on the television could make anyone anxious and fearful. Loss of jobs,

income, routine, support systems, and outlets for mental health have hurt most Americans. However, the stressful factors contributing to nationwide anxiety are amplified for women and children stuck inside with their abusers.

Following the young girl’s resistance to being held, the dad moves on to his next daughter, who is only 9. As he pulls her onto his lap, he comments how nice the school closures are because the girls are now always home with him. Their mother works full time while he is kept home on disability. The air is stiff as paperwork is filed in the nonprofit office.

Natural disasters have been shown in the past to increase rates of intimate violence, often attributed to feelings of helplessness and a loss of control, compounded with prior risk factors of abuse. **In high-stress situations, people tend to lash out at those closest to them.** Low-income households suffering momentous financial burdens have a higher risk of interpersonal violence than more advantaged people experiencing a natural disaster. Much of America falls into that first category, including the family with two young girls in the nonprofit office. They are suffering through an additional pandemic: domestic violence. The painful consequences of natural disasters and subsequent policies are felt most poignantly by innocent women and children, like those girls.

How would you feel if you couldn’t leave the looming presence of your abuser?

Editor’s Note: *If you or someone you love is experiencing intimate partner violence, please go to our helpsite, WomenDeserveBetter.com, to read “When You Don’t Feel Safe at Home,” and remember to clear your cookies so the abuser will not see where you have been.*



Grace Berning
Author



WHAT WE LEARNED WHEN SCHOOLS SHUT DOWN

ANNIE NEWSOME

During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers have been forced to do what they always do: adapt to change, be nimble and flexible, and think creatively to ignite the students' imaginations while keeping their interest—a hard job that got even harder. With new stay-at-home orders and school closings, they had to do all of those things through a computer screen. Students and parents at home searched for a new normal and a small silver lining. Parents, students, and teachers all had to navigate the best they could through uncharted territory. While everyone was in the same situation, everyone had different experiences and handled the transition differently.

Some teachers noticed that online learning allowed students to work at their own pace. It also allowed them to engage with the content in a way that worked best for them. Instead of keeping up with the pace of the teacher or comparing themselves to and competing with their classmates, learning became more independent, and the students worked and learned the material on their own time. But this adjustment was a huge challenge.

“Without direct and visible contact with students, it's much harder to tell whether they're 'getting it,' and easier for them to mask the fact when they aren't,” explained California teacher and Past FFL Board Chair Pat O’Kane. “The greatest factor in achieving a high degree of student engagement was persistent and

consistent ‘presence’ through regular online lectures, class meetings, or ‘office hours.’”

For students who were able to stay focused and move along at their own pace, the transition wasn't too difficult: just a more comfortable change of scenery and maybe some pajamas. But for others who had trouble getting into a new routine and staying motivated at home, the transition was much harder. Some students complained that it was difficult to stay organized, keep track of deadlines and meeting times, stay motivated to complete assignments, and stay focused in a setting that they would typically associate with being free from schoolwork. In an effort to keep students motivated, some teachers found that reaching out to parents to show examples of good work helped both the parents and the students.

Adapting to the new teaching/learning/assessing environment was a major challenge for teachers. New tools require familiarization training, and some teachers were able to adapt faster or otherwise better than others. Teachers had to be quick on their feet, finding creative ways to keep their students motivated, focused, and willing to push forward with learning. From creating art lessons using items students have in their kitchens, to having students introduce their pets to the class, teachers found unique opportunities that wouldn't be possible without online learning.

At San Pasqual High School in Escondido, California, English teachers featured local poets who shared their work live, online for the students. Musicians, writers, and playwrights joined Zoom calls. Although these artists may not have been able to take time out of their schedules to visit the school before the pandemic, with everyone at home, they were able to give the children that experience virtually.

At Watervliet Elementary School, located just outside of Albany, New York, Principal Kelly Webster is also engaging with students using her Facebook page, “Mrs. Webster’s Way.” On the page, she and her daughter read, share arts and crafts, and do fun educational activities. One Tuesday, she and some of the teachers did a home workout for kids over Facebook Live. “My daughter and I came up with the idea. When I do her nightly reading, we’ll go live and share it with everybody,” Webster said.

O’Kane found that establishing small working groups, which could meet separately and discuss assignments, filled the gap between lecturing to a large class and having students work individually in isolation. Some also found routines to be even more essential, finding a regular, recognizable “class rhythm” with repeatable activities, but with some variation or special activity day each week to keep them on their toes.

Many schools encouraged students to participate in virtual spirit weeks. Students had hat day, costume day, jersey day, and many other creative dress-up days, which helped kids to be excited about school and not only lift their spirits, but their school spirit as well. Students were excited to turn on their webcams and show off their attire to their classmates. This also helped kids to still experience the fun parts of school that they missed, not just sitting at home with packets away from their friends.

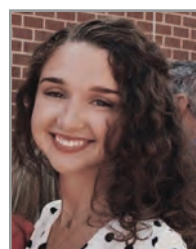
Parents also had to adapt to the transition blindly, with little notice. They were quickly teaching their children, keeping them motivated, and keeping them focused and in a routine. Many parents were doing so while also



working from home and adapting to changes themselves. Parents were working while being full time parents and, many of them, teachers.

Opportunities to have meaningful interaction with students were more challenging and less frequent with the transition to online learning. Many teachers have noted that the hardest part of distance learning was not adapting to online education but rather, not being able to physically be there for the students. **My mom was an elementary school teacher while I was growing up, and she always treated her students the same way she’d treat my brother and me, even calling them “her kids.” Her students’ problems were her problems; their victories were her victories. During COVID-19, many teachers struggled because their world revolves around “their kids,” and now, they couldn’t be there for them during such a difficult time.**

The COVID-19 pandemic is a tragedy that has negatively impacted many families, but it nonetheless brought out the best in humanity. □



Annie Newsome
Author

Women Deserve Better®

BETTER CHOICES > BETTER LIFE: DURING THE PANDEMIC

BAILEY ZIMMITTI

Women Deserve Better is not a group of first responders on the scene of medical emergencies, ER nurses giving life-saving care, or the fearless leaders providing resources to ensure financial security in the economic crisis following the COVID-19 pandemic (although some of us are!).

Instead, as Feminists for Life, we have taken a different approach that lies within our reach and in line with our unique mission. **We have focused our energy on addressing the practical and emotional needs of the primary caretakers who are carrying the brunt of the responsibilities within the family during this crisis: women.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented countless challenges to mothers across the country—women have juggled restless children at home, facilitated school work from home, worked from home, and carried the majority of what many deem the “mental load.” Moreover, young women have dealt with their high schools and colleges closing and the resulting feelings of loneliness and grief for their school years and friendships that were cut short. These particular emotions are inevitable from the social distancing and are particularly painful for our gender, as we thrive off of relationships with others. Particularly hard hit were the groups that we identified within this issue of *The American Feminist*: those at risk of being abused, those with special needs, American Indian women, and the elderly. So we worked to answer their unmet needs on our helpsite.

No matter what the circumstances, women have borne some of the greatest burdens of this global crisis. And Women Deserve Better has truly identified these struggles and attempted to respond as best we could. FFL President Serrin Foster noted,

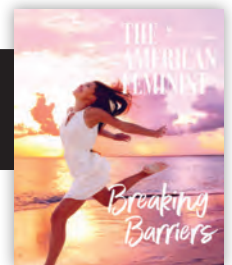
“As always, Feminists for Life is nimble and responsive to the rapidly changing needs of women. As campuses closed down during COVID-19, we quickly moved our focus from the College Outreach Program to helping all women in need through our helpsite, WomenDeserveBetter.com, while still teaching our pro-life feminist history for the 2020 Suffrage Centennial.”

Our staff has each contributed to these efforts, expanding our usual range of tasks to best give our insights, writing talents, and tech abilities to help mothers, caretakers of elderly friends and family, and those who care for siblings or children with special needs. Our interns also proved key in pushing out articles for the helpsite, publishing articles with their own interviews and experiences covering homeschooling, Native women’s needs, women trapped with abusers, and how to prepare to have a baby in the midst of a pandemic.

Our collective efforts have reaped rich rewards: **we have seen thousands of unique visitors each month to our helpsite to receive this information in their array of parenting and caretaking resources.** While we are proud of all that we have accomplished and how we are getting through this pandemic together, we will continue to grow our resources and information and invite you to support these efforts—**because women deserve better, especially now.** □

NEW

Women Deserve Better®
articles since FFL published
“Breaking Barriers” in 2019!



Bailey Zimmitti
Author



WORK

- Surprise! You're Working from Home: 7 Tips to Make the Transition
- Career Considerations for Parents
- 6 Top Tips to Nail Your Interview
- WANTED: Women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)
- 5 Tools to Find Job Training Opportunities
- What Is a Trade Certificate?
- Why Intern?
- Doing Her Part: A Seamstress Joins the COVID-19 Effort

LEARN

- 11 Tips for Homeschooling Temporarily
- What You Need to Know About Getting Your GED
- Finding the Right School for You and Your Family
- Class Selection: 5 Tips for Finding Balance
- Reimagine Your Associate Degree: A Step Toward a Bachelor's Degree
- 4 Health Insurance Options for Student-Parents
- That Textbook Costs WHAT? How to Find Textbooks for Less
- Pregnancy & COVID-19: Know Your Rights in the Workplace!
- How to Network and Build Your Personal Support System
- Self-Care When You're Away at School
- Shutdown Parenting: Protect Your Child's Education

LOVE

- 8 Ways to Keep in Touch with Elderly Loved Ones When You Can't See Them in Person
- 17 Ways to Include Your Child in Your Wedding
- Customize Your Relationships with Grandparents
- 7 Tips to Ease Painful Goodbyes
- How Can Infant Massage Help You Better Bond with Your Baby?
- 50 Cheap Date Night Ideas
- 16 Ideas for Stay-at-Home Dates
- Dealing with Dejection During COVID-19

LIVE

- Extra Measures to Protect the Highly Vulnerable
- Maternal Mortality Q&A
- A Natural Birth Story
- An Epidural Birth Story
- A Cesarean Section Birth Story
- 10 Fun Fitness Tips for Moms
- Continuing Education: What Are Your Choices?
- Getting a Head Start on Head Start
- The Do's and Don'ts of Formula Feeding
- Top Tips When Choosing an OB-GYN
- 10 Tips for Dealing with Typical Separation Anxiety
- Pros and Cons of the Gig Economy for Moms
- 6 Tips for an Efficient Laundry Routine
- Potty Training? Try Elimination Communication
- 18 Tips for Bathing Baby
- Night Owls, Unite! Tips for Moms Staying Up Late
- What You Need to Know About Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Taking Your Cardiac Health to Heart
- Q&A: Making Ends Meet with a Teenager
- 5 Birthday Bash Ideas That Won't Break the Bank
- 10 Ways to Save Money on Gifts
- 6 Ways to Save Money on Holiday Meals
- Dealing with Postpartum Depression
- 8 Ways to Get Affordable Dentistry Care
- What Do Parents Need to Know About the Coronavirus?
- Where Can You Find Emergency Babysitting?
- 7 Tips on How to Talk to Your Child About Scary News
- Are My Unborn Baby and I at Risk from COVID-19?
- 14 Tips to Take Care of Your Own Mental Health
- How to Start a Babysitting Co-Op
- What Do You Do When You Suspect Child Abuse?
- How to Fund Your Savings Plan
- What Does Baby Really Need?
- Keep Your Child Safe While Swimming
- Your Guide to Guardianship and Kinship Care
- Find the Best Health Care (When You Can't Afford It)
- What You Need to Know About Hospice
- Postpartum Options: Breastfeeding, Formula, and Weaning
- Practical Tips When Caring for Our Elders
- Teaching About Race — from the Inside Out
- Living with Anorexia
- How to Prepare for Childhood Wellness Exams
- American Indian Women and Men: Know Where to Seek Help in a Crisis



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Three years after achieving suffrage, Alice Paul, Vice President of National Woman's Party (right), and Anita Pollitzer, the national secretary, laid a tribute of flowers on the grave of Susan B. Anthony at Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, New York, in 1923. Her friend and ally, Frederick Douglass, had been laid to rest nearby.

As we commemorate the Centennial Celebration of the 19th Amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote, we recognize our foremothers and forefathers, from Anthony to Paul, who first told Feminists for Life of America co-founder Pat Goltz that we were not the first feminists for life, resulting in our research, which we subsequently shared with the world.

A century later, we thank both of you.

And we pledge to fulfill your unrealized vision:
resources and support for women and children at greatest risk
—because women deserve better.