Exciting News from KPA & KPF

We hope you enjoy this 2nd quarter edition of the KPA e-Newsletter, a regular e-newsletter aimed to enhance communication about psychology across the state. What follows is a sampling of psychology-related news and opportunities across the Commonwealth. Check out the column on the left for KPA Member Highlights, available home-studies, KPA Member COVID-19 resources, and more. For more updates, visit the KPA website and follow KPA on social media on Twitter, Facebook, & Instagram and KPF’s Twitter, Facebook, & Instagram!

Update from KPA Interim Executive Director

“It may be that when we no longer know what to do, we have come to our real work, and that when we no longer know which way to go, we have begun our real journey. The mind that is not baffled is not employed. The impeded stream is the one that sings.” ~ Wendell Berry

Hello KPA Members. We are facing an unprecedented public health crisis with particular impacts on psychological health. No matter our primary work in psychology-as clinicians, consultants, business owners, educators, team leaders, and students- we have had to adapt radically and fundamentally in an incredibly short time frame. Your training, experience, compassion, and wisdom are needed now more than ever as we face this pandemic as a community.
KPA is your professional association. Our staff and volunteer leadership have been working tirelessly these past few weeks to provide support for all of you as you incorporate rapidly shifting guidelines and newly required practices. We have harnessed our resources—including APA—for you in order to transform your work as psychologists successfully during this time.

KPA understands that the current situation for all of us is one of uncertainty—including financial uncertainty. Professional associations cannot continue without its members—KPA IS YOU - OUR MEMBERS. We want to remind you how invaluable your continued membership is to the strength and health of our psychological association. Your membership—with your annual dues along with other contributions—allow for the necessary infrastructure around all the great member benefits that KPA is able to offer.

As you are aware, KPA has had to cancel or postpone the 2020 Spring Academic Conference and live CE events for the foreseeable future. We are using the network of other state psychological associations and our own committee volunteers to inspire and inform our next best steps to provide accessible quality programming for you over the next several months. We are also, of course, coordinating closely with KBEP to ensure that our offerings meet Kentucky licensure standards for required CEs this year. Stay tuned…

During this surreal time, renewing your annual membership may feel low on the priority list. I hope you recognize how vital you are—and see that our professional association is only as strong as our members networked together. Sustaining our strong community of Kentucky psychology professionals and students strengthens our profession for our collective benefit and for the benefit of all Kentuckians.

Thanks for reading,

Katie
In a recent statewide meeting, held via a video conference platform, clinical and counseling psychology program directors from across Kentucky connected to discuss the challenges affecting graduate programs in psychology brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. I was struck by the determination, creativity, and commitment each of these leaders demonstrated. There were concerns about trainees accruing enough clinical hours towards licensure, whether practicum students could or should continue on site, shifts to telehealth, and the impact on current interns and recent graduates.

Two weeks later, in a follow-up meeting, the directors met again to share updates and program progress. The tone of this second meeting reflected the fact that each program had successfully made “pivots” in how they teach and train, in an incredibly short time. All programs were up and running with virtual classrooms, making the shift mid-semester. Practicum students and interns were moving many of their clients to telehealth on a variety of platforms. Qualifying exams were being shifted to Zoom and Go-To-Meeting. Dissertation defenses had been moved to video conferencing platforms. In essence, programs and universities had found creative ways to continue teaching and training the next generation of psychologists.

A number of challenges remain while programs shift to distance learning. Both the teaching of psychological testing/assessment skills in the classroom and the utilization of assessment skills in practicum settings are made very difficult in a time of social isolation. Test developers (i.e. Pearson, PAR) are rushing to create assessment tools and versions of existing measures that can be administered remotely via
Courtney Keim, Ph.D., wrote an article, COVID-19: From the expert -

telehealth. APA has issued a set of guidelines regarding the use of assessment tools via telehealth.

However, these guidelines clearly assume a high level of competence with these tools before adapting them to online administration. It is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic will accelerate a trend that was well underway: computerized administration of many of the tools that psychologists use for assessment.

Another area of concern for training programs is the likely reduction of clinical hours that trainees will accrue prior to applying for licensure. This issue has been clearly a part of discussions at The Association for State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) which has been compiling a list of policy changes and practice guidelines for state licensure boards. As trainees move towards independent licensure, questions remain as to whether required hours will be altered or flexed to account for the effects of social isolation requirements on direct training hours. KPA is actively involved in monitoring and working with KBEP on behalf of Kentucky’s graduate students and postdocs. On April 13, KBEP created an Ad Hoc committee to develop guidelines for possible temporary rules and standards in response to the current public emergency. KPA will keep you informed and up to date as we learn more.

It is head-spinning how rapidly changes have been occurring over the past month. It is clear that the disruptions across our commonwealth (and beyond) caused by COVID-19 are being mitigated through the creative thinking and advocacy of training programs. Psychologists are flexible thinkers, and that is evidenced in the willingness to be creative (and in some cases, tolerate ambiguity) in how psychological skills and knowledge are imparted. The effects of the virus on teaching and training will remain with our field for a while, perhaps accelerating trends like telehealth and pushing forward digital education pedagogy.

In summary, while programs and universities are showing themselves to be up for the challenge, the impact that COVID-19 has had on students’ lives, plans, and financial statuses is significant. Students are anxious and worried about their present and future career paths as well as how to meet their day-to-day challenges of paying bills and staying socially connected. Faculty and clinical supervisors are in a unique role to be
working from home with less stress. Click here to read the full article!

Vestena Robbins, Ph.D., created a video demonstrating how to talk with your child about COVID-19. Click here to watch!

Submit a Proposal for the KPA Convention in November!

The KPA Convention committee hopes you are healthy at home. While we are in uncertain times, we are doing our best to plan for a productive convention in November. We selected our convention title, “Trauma-Responsive Practices Across Settings: Integrating Information into Action,” prior to the changes COVID-19 imposed on our lives. Given current events, we feel that the convention theme will be essential to our work moving forward in November. We continue to plan for the convention in November as best we can, and hope you will consider submitting a proposal. A link to submit a convention proposal is on KPA’s main webpage. You can also follow this link. While we would like to have several workshops that align with our theme across a wide range of practices, proposals do not have to align entirely with the theme and we will be pleased to consider a wide range of topics for the convention.

Congratulations to our Office Manager, Sarah Burrell! She was awarded the Outstanding Achievement by a Psychological Association Staff Member.

able to check-in with students to find ways to support them when possible in classes, supervision, and through program communication. Advocating for trainees at the state and national level will be important tasks for the near future.
Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) Acting Secretary Eric Friedlander has announced Shambra L. Mulder, Ph.D., as the agency’s new Ombudsman. Mulder began her appointment on Feb. 13. [Click here to read the full article.]

Rachel Buehner, Ph.D., was selected to the APA Leadership Development cohort. Only 9 Early Career

OPEN CALL
We are accepting Proposals for Continuing Education Events for the 2020 Convention & 2021 Calendar

Click here to submit your proposal!

GA Session Prepares to Wrap Up and Primary Elections are Postponed

Sheila A. Schuster, Ph.D.

To put it mildly, this was a very strange legislative session!

For the first time in the history of the Commonwealth, the General Assembly chose to pass a one-year budget, rather than the required biennial budget. This was necessitated by the uncertainty of the long-range effects of the pandemic on the state’s economy. The legislature
Psychologists were selected for this prestigious position.

If you have a highlight you would like to share with the KPA office please email Marketing & Membership Coordinator, Samm Ownby at samm@kpa.org

KPA Home Studies

**Effective Advocacy - Every Voice Counts!, 1.5CE or Without CE Credits**
Presented by Sheila Schuster, Ph.D.

**Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse: Overview and Legal Updates, 3 CE**
Presented by David Hanna, Ph.D.

**Understanding and Treating Sleep Disturbance: Lessons Learned from Treating Veterans, 1CE**
Presented by Adam D. Bramoweth, Ph.D.

**Families and Couples in Transition: Lessons Learned, 1CE**
Presented by Steven Sayers, Ph.D.

will pass the budget for the second year of the biennium when they convene in January of 2021.

Also for the first time in Kentucky’s history, legislators cast their votes for the budget bill and other legislation via texts and emails from their Annex offices to their caucus leaders on the floor of the House! This accommodation was, of course, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I believe that we were the only state whose legislature continued to meet, despite the pandemic….

The budget – although very sparse – did have some good news in it! The quasi-governmental agencies – community mental health centers, local health departments, rape crisis centers, domestic violence shelters, and children’s advocacy centers – did not require additional funding in the budget because their employer contribution rate to the pension system was frozen for another year at the current 49% rate. This was particularly good news since the CMHCs have been hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of greatly reduced Medicaid billings (by as much as 30%).

Another bit of good news was the budget language and funding for the mental health piece of the school safety legislation (SB 1 last session; SB 8 this session). The allocation for the coming fiscal year was $7.4M which was about one-half of the amount originally allocated in the Governor’s budget. The funding covers all qualified mental health professionals (all levels of psychology licensing), as well as school counselors, psychologists, and social workers. Priority funding will go to schools which utilize Medicaid funding.

The Governor signed over 30 bills during the veto period, some of which were in KPA’s priority bill listing: a technical correction to Tim’s Law to allow more individuals to qualify for it; establishment of an Eating Disorders Council (for which KPA will be nominating members), rolling out Mental Health First Aid across the state, creating a single formulary for Medicaid (a huge help to the CMHCs and agencies treating Medicaid patients) and a prohibition on selling tobacco products to anyone under age 21 (part of our public health agenda). Unfortunately, we were not successful with the Psychology Compact bill nor on legislation to ban conversion therapy. We did successfully “play defense” to defeat several bad pieces of legislation during the session. Thanks to all who
Upcoming National Register Webinars

On Friday, April 24 at 2:00–3:00 p.m. ET / 1:00–2:00 p.m. CT, Dr. Steiner will present the webinar Online Group Therapy as part of the National Register's Clinical Webinar Series. 

KPA members receive $10 off registration with the code KPA10. Find out more: https://bit.ly/2VBFCZ1

On Wednesday, May 6 at 2:00–3:00 p.m. ET / 1:00–2:00 p.m. CT, Dr. Abramowitz will present the webinar Understanding and Treating OCD as part of the National Register’s Clinical Webinar Series. 

KPA members receive $10 off registration with the code KPA10. Find out more: https://bit.ly/3cq23Hi

KPA Ethics Committee: Responding to New Questions and Concerns

Most everything we know as people, as clinicians, and as neighbors, over the course of the last month, has changed. If anything, the 'social contract' we tacitly agreed to has become more stringent. The work we do has either disappeared, increased, fundamentally changed, or some combination of them all.

The Ethics Committee is composed of volunteers who respond to your requests about often complicated ethical questions. Our committee is tasked with applying general ethical principles to a myriad of situations. While ethical dilemmas, as represented in coursework, and licensing exams, are typically clear-cut, in our real-life world, they are absolutely not. Now that everyone is teaching, writing, and providing therapy called into the Message Line and communicated with your legislators during the session!

The legislators returned to Frankfort on April 14th and 15th to wind down the session. A few of our bills were still potentially in play, but none made it to final passage. At the last moment, Rep. Willner and I worked on a bill to provide community health workers to act as liaisons between schools and mental health, social services, and physical health agencies for children and families. The House passed the bill, but the Senate did not as the session ended. All of the Governor's vetoes were overridden by the legislature with votes along party lines. As required by the KY Constitution, the legislature adjourned by midnight on April 15th.

PLEASE NOTE: Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Primary Election originally scheduled in May has been postponed to June 23rd. It is not clear if write-in ballots or extended absentee voting will be allowed or not. The deadline for registering for the Primary Election has also been moved and is now May 26th. You must be registered as either a Democrat or a Republican in order to vote in the Primary Election. This election is important…remember, elections do have consequences!
remotely, the ethical concerns are viewed through an additional lens, that is, if anything, foggier than before.

To that end, we want to take this space to consider what some of the members of the Ethics Committee see as the most initially significant challenges. As always, we are not offering 'solutions'; we are highlighting challenges. We will work through those together, as a community, to provide the most caring, professional, and ethical care to those we serve.

- Privacy issues related to who is in the room with the client when online.
- Trying to do couples therapy is challenging virtually because there is often lag in the communication. When couples get heated it is difficult to intervene quickly.
- Treating children is difficult because you need an adult in the room, which again can hinder confidentiality and privacy for the child. The child may also turn upside down, put the phone/tablet down, run around the room, or leave the PC.
- Verifying the client is who he/she says he/she is.
- Having a confidential workplace at home.
- Aesthetics related to what the client sees: appropriate dress, professional appearance, professional background.
- Background noise on the client's end of the conversation.
- Laws and regulations are changing rapidly during the pandemic.
- Laws and regulations are temporarily changing during the pandemic.
- Compliant platforms are not necessarily the platforms with which clients are familiar.
As you are faced (inundated may be more apt these days...sigh) with situations in the public discourse, have you ever said to yourself or your colleagues, “Wonder what KPA is doing about that?” or think that your particular background and expertise could make a useful contribution?

Please take advantage of the interface under the ADVOCACY tab above to submit issues of interest to you to the newly formed:

Public Issue Response Committee (PIRC)

---

KPA Advocacy Benefits

- Clients that do not have a device/computer.
- Clients that do not have reliable internet access in their homes.

All of this to say: we cannot let The Perfect be the Enemy of the Good.

During this time of anger, anxiety, and apathy, we will all do the best we can, to help those in need. As we have been tasked to do. As we have been trained to do.

As your Ethics Committee, we will continue to be available to assist you to consider the new ethical concerns we are all facing during this era of change. For more information feel free to reach out at leelook@gmail.com

---

Strengthening your mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic

Brighid Kleinman, PhD & Jennifer Price, PhD - KPF President
Remember that KPA’s advocacy efforts are supported by your membership in KPA. KPA's advocacy benefits all psychology professionals, not just those who belong to KPA. We thank you for continuing to support the future of psychology and those we serve through your active membership in KPA!

As we move through another week of staying at home because of COVID-19, Kentuckians are wondering how to cope with at least several more weeks homebound. The good news is that our social distancing efforts appear to be working—Kentucky seems to be successfully “flattening the curve,” with the hopeful result that fewer of us will flood hospitals and overflow their capacities. However, our mental health is under added stress, both from the uncertainty of the virus and the substantial changes in our daily lives. We know from psychological science that specific features of stressful events increase anxiety, and unfortunately, this pandemic hits the trifecta: uncertainty and unpredictability about the future, lack of control, and high perceived risk are all factors that heighten anxiety. Most of us have some things we do to help cope in the short term, but it is very difficult not knowing how long we will have to do them. Additionally, some of our usual healthy coping strategies (like going to the gym or going out to eat) are unavailable. Combine this with increasing financial worries for many of us, and this situation is a recipe for significant anxiety and depression.

Psychological science also tells us that we can expect this increased distress to have certain characteristics - including exhaustion, lack of motivation, trouble sleeping, irritability, poor concentration, and deteriorating work performance. If you are experiencing these symptoms, you aren’t going crazy. A lot of people are feeling like this. These are natural reactions to an unusual situation, and it’s normal to have some amount of anxiety during a big stressor. It’s simply your body’s way of preparing to take action against a threat. Dr. Elizabeth Cash, Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of Research for the University of Louisville’s Department of Otolaryngology and Communicative Disorders, explains that “When we are feeling anxious or stressed, the body releases two hormones, adrenaline, and cortisol. Adrenaline activates the “fight-or-flight” response to allow our body to escape immediate threat. When cortisol is released, it signals the body to mobilize energy so it can keep moving.”

For short-term stressors, like a minor car accident or an upcoming medical procedure, there are many ways to cope with the anxious feelings since they will soon be over. In our ongoing pandemic situation, however, we don’t know how long it will last and therefore you will need to be intentional about developing longer-term coping strategies that will work with our current situation. Dr. Cash explains that our bodies have natural rhythms of alertnessness and arousal that get disrupted with long-
advocacy issues, including HIPPA, third party reimbursement, and state regulations, and can tap resources and practice information from APA to help members resolve issues.

Have a professional/practice question? KPA Members log in to the KPA website and access the consultation form under the Members Only section!

term stressors. She says “Situations that continually or repeatedly activate our stress response systems can trigger more cortisol releases, which contribute to difficulties concentrating, relaxing and sleeping.”

We can learn to re-balance our minds and bodies during a long-term stressor such as this pandemic, but we need to be intentional about it. Kentucky Psychological Association members recommend the following strategies to help you cope during the COVID-19 Emergency. We recognize that not all individuals have the resources to do all of these, so we recommend that you do what you can and help others if you are able.

- Make a daily schedule and stick to it. **Routine and structure** are helpful in maintaining good mental health. This is particularly helpful if you have a large family or lots of adults living together. Make sure you build in breaks for everyone and if you get off track, take it easy on yourself and try again the next day.

- Keep **healthy sleep habits**. Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. Don’t work in your bed—if you do activities in your bed other than sleep and sex, your body will associate your bed with wakefulness and you may have trouble sleeping.

- Get **outside** at least once a day. Sunshine and reminders of the rest of the world help us with **perspective**. Remember to stay at least 6 feet away from other people, but smile and wave to your neighbors—a little **connection** can go a long way!

- **Exercise** at least several times a week. Walking, running, or biking outside are options, as well as yoga, strength training, or dancing indoors. There are many free online exercise videos.

- Reach out for **connection** and **social support**. Set up phone calls or video calls with friends and family. Have dinner with friends over video. Take virtual walks with friends or do video book clubs and game nights. See if your church is doing a video bible study. We need communities and relationships to have **meaning** in our lives.
Free Ethics Consultations
Have an ethical concern or question? Request a consultation from the KPA Ethics Committee by completing the Ethics Consult form available under the website and make the call.

- **Limit social media and news.** It's important to be informed, but paying too much attention can have negative mental health consequences. Studies have shown that we overestimate risk when we spend too much time-consuming media.

- **Give yourself compassion and grace.** This is a very hard time, and expecting yourself to perform at your usual capacity is unreasonable. Worry and uncertainty take up space in our brains even when we don’t realize it, which might make you feel more tired or less able to focus. Don’t expect too much from yourself, and be kind to yourself and others!

- **Engage in prosocial behaviors:** research has shown that doing kind things for other people lifts our mood. This is a great time to donate money, make masks for hospital workers, or write cards for loved ones you can’t see in person.

- **Keep perspective:** what you are doing is working! You’re helping to keep your communities safe and healthy, so great job!

- **Talk to your children** in age-appropriate language. Ask them how they’re feeling and what they’re worried about. Don’t avoid the subject—unnamed anxiety is worse than named anxiety. Let them know that most people who get this illness will recover and that they are doing exactly what they need to do by staying home.

- **Signs of distress in children:** Dr. Felicia Smith, psychologist, and co-owner of Strong Minds, says that “Signs of increased stress in children may include changes in mood, behavior, sleep and eating patterns. If parents notice any of these changes, reach out to a psychologist in your area.”

Please **seek help** if you find yourself unable to cope or if you experience any of the following symptoms: urge to harm yourself or others, suicidal thoughts, inability to get out of bed or to do necessary tasks, overreliance on drugs or alcohol. Most psychologists and other mental health professionals are doing telehealth treatment so you can get help virtually. The Kentucky Psychological Association keeps a list of...
Members Only section of the website. How it works...Your request will be forwarded to the current KPA Ethics Committee Chair, Dr. Vicki Van Cleave, who will consult with the entire ethics committee and review ethical guidelines prior to issuing a response. Response time averages around 10 days depending on the depth of the consultation request.

*KPA Member Only Services*

providers on their website [www.kpa.org](http://www.kpa.org), or you can contact your insurance company to get a list of providers.

Thanks to each and every one of you who is social distancing and changing your lifestyle to keep our communities safe and healthy. You are doing a great job!

The Kentucky Psychological Foundation's mission includes educating the public on a broad range of health, mind-body, and behavioral topics in order to build a psychologically healthy Kentucky. More information can be found at [http://www.kentuckypsychologicalfoundation.org](http://www.kentuckypsychologicalfoundation.org).

The Kentucky Psychological Association (KPA) is a statewide membership organization representing psychologists, psychological practitioners, educators, researchers and students across Kentucky. KPA promotes the science and practice of psychology. To find a psychologist in your area, visit the KPA Psychological Services Locator: [https://www.kpa.org/psychological-services-locator#](https://www.kpa.org/psychological-services-locator#)

### Kentucky Gives Day 2020

On **May 12**, Kentucky's nonprofit sector will rally together to raise their voices. Kentucky Gives Day brings charities and Kentuckians—near and far—together for a powerful day of action and philanthropy. Your donations now and on the big day of May 12 can help your favorite nonprofit(s) power through this difficult time.

[Click here to make a donation to the Kentucky Psychological Foundation!](http://www.kpa.org)
Director of Professional Affairs Update

As you may know, the Director of Professional Affairs (DPA) is a paid, very part-time position for KPA, and serves as a support for practice-related issues. This liaison role includes working with:

1. DPAs from other State and Provincial Psychology Associations

2. KBEP (our state licensing board) which has been highly collaborative and responsive to recent requests for information and changes within their ability to make

3. KPA's Legislative Advisory Committee that includes our lobbyist, the tireless and resourceful Dr. Sheila Schuster

4. APA practice resources (Shout out to the wonderful legal consultants with Legal & Regulatory Affairs [LRA])
On-Demand Continuing Education Webinars

Completing one of the four Ethics and Risk Management Webinar Sequences and its exam earns you 6 CE credits and makes you eligible for a 15% savings on your Trust Sponsored Professional Liability Insurance premium for two consecutive renewals at your next policy renewal.

CLICK HERE AND ENTER TRUST-KY DURING REGISTRATION!

Department and to Dr. Jared Skillings’ team with the APA Practice Directorate for their very timely and effective outreach and advocacy efforts these past 3 intense, fast-paced weeks).

Your DPA (in good company with DPAs and Executive Directors from all across North America!) has been BUSY with coordinating, reacting, disseminating, and advocating around all things COVID-19 Quarantine! Our priorities these past few weeks have been:

> Disseminating and clarifying the latest resources and changes related to the COVID-19 Response for our members (Click to view our KPA COVID-19 Resource Page)

1. Transition to telepsychology with
   - best practices for clinicians and clients
   - the meaning of loosening of HIPAA restrictions and
   - frequently shifting coding changes and coverage for 3rd party payors

2. Interstate practice issues—soliciting clarification from our bordering states and from APA’s L & R team—these have been tricky to follow.

3. Tracking changes to education & training requirements for students, interns, and post-docs (See more from KPA President Dr. Steve Katsikas in this publication) including KBEP actions.

4. Tracking potential changes to KY CE requirements

5. Self Care for psychologists including KPA Colleague Assistance Program (CAP)

6. Responding to your questions (and frustrations!) over email and through our “Q & A Webinars with KPA Leadership”
Successfully advocating with the Governor’s Office and Kentucky Department of Insurance to expedite telepsychology be fully covered services and support continuity of care

Working with KPF to develop Public Education materials on the role psychology can play during these difficult times across our communities

We will continue to keep you informed as we go, and I appreciate your emails with your inquiries, shared information, and feedback when our work has felt supportive and beneficial to your work. I hope you will keep me informed in the upcoming weeks of the good, bad, and the ugly of how your telepsychology billing is actually being processed by insurance companies - whether you are facing denials or reductions to your fees charged…

Please keep that communication coming (dpdkatie@kpa.org) so that we can best serve your practice needs! KPA will continue to work to find ways to support you continuing successful psychological practice and be able to focus on your clients during these challenging and unsettling times.

Thanks for reading.

Katie

KPA Committees Recruiting New Members

Do you want to get more involved with KPA? Our association is YOUR professional organization. Several committees are interested in adding new members to their work. If you are interested in getting more involved please contact the KPA office kpa@kpa.org.
Check out our eNewsletter Archives for past issues

Have an idea or contribution for the KPA e-newsletter?

Contact the KPA Central Office at kpa@kpa.org or David Pascale Hague, Ph.D., KPA e-Newsletter Editor at david@claritylex.com.

The e-newsletter is scheduled for distribution in the first month of every quarter (January, April, July, October).