

## Chicago Prof. School PsyD Program at Xavier Closing

Rumors were circulating last month that the The Chicago School of Professional Psychology Xavier would be closing. *The Times* asked officials from the school about these rumors and on June 6, 2023, Vivien Hao, Public Relations Manager, provided a statement.

"The Chicago School's New Orleans clinical psychology program will not be accepting new students starting Fall of 2023. University officials said several factors went into this decision, including future enrollment projections," noted Ms. Hao.

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## Effort to Ban Medical Procedures for Trans Minors Rebounds, then Vetoed

In a clash of ideologies, and after going through several gyrations to resurrect HB 648, Rep. Gabe Firment's effort to ban surgery and hormone blockers for trans minors was vetoed by Gov. Edwards on June 30.

The measure was presumed dead after the Senate Health and Welfare Committee tabled it in a May, tie-breaker vote. The committee chair, Senator Fred Mills, who is a Republican, broke the tie and voted with the Democrat opposition to defer the bill.

But then on June 1, the Senate voted to suspend its rules and recalled the bill from committee, a rare, technical maneuver used when bills have been assigned to the wrong committee. The measure was reassigned to Senate Judiciary A, and a special review of the bill was scheduled for June 2.

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## Dr. Paula Zeanah Named 2023 Distinguished Psychologist by LPA



Dr. Paula Zeanah, who has worked as a pediatric nurse and clinical psychologist in a variety of settings, serving children and their families for more than 40 years, has been named the 2023 Distinguished Psychologist by the Louisiana Psychological Association (LPA).

Spokesperson for the LPA Awards Committee, Dr. Amanda Raines said, "Dr. Zeanah is the Lafayette

Dr. Paula Zeanah (ULL Photo)

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Dr. Joy Osofsky testifying at Congressional hearing in D.C.  
(Congressional photo)

## Dr. Joy Osofsky Testifies at Senate Congressional Committee Hearing

Dr. Joy Osofsky, Professor of Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Public Health, Head of Division of Pediatric Mental Health, and Ramsay Endowed Chair in Psychiatry at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in New Orleans, was an invited witness at the U.S. Senate hearing of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee.

The hearing was held on June 8 in Washington, and the topic was, "Why Are So Many American Youth in a Mental Health Crisis? Exploring Causes and Solutions."

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## Mental Healing for Incarcerated People Act Signed by Governor Edwards

The final version of Rep. Selders' House Bill 55, aimed to improve treatment of incarcerated individuals with mental health needs, and referred to as "The Mental Healing Justice for Incarcerated People Act," was signed by the Governor on June 8. It became Act 214 and becomes effective next month.

The new law provides that it is the intent of the legislature that the state allocate funding for the new law to ensure both the access and delivery of quality care for individuals incarcerated within the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections.

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# Editorial Page – Opinions

## Censored

by J. Nelson

At the end of April, Dr. Clifton Mixon, a young psychologist who works in Ochsner's gender care clinic, posted on the Louisiana Psychological Association listserv, encouraging people to lobby against HB 648, which would ban sex-change surgery and hormone blockers for minors.

I felt that psychologists could support LGBTQ+ children struggling with gender dysphoria without supporting medical, potentially permanent interventions. There is no research method to provide predictive validity on lifelong consequences of these procedures.

But most of all, I wanted organized psychology to stay out of medicine's fight, and mind its own business. I was afraid that Dr. Mixon, who leads the LPA Legislative Committee along with another Ochsner employee, would drag us in to a highly political, controversial issue that has nothing to do with psychology. So, I waited, hoping someone else would object, but no such luck. I finally replied with the following:

*I am concerned about the powerful forces at work in this area that can confuse and distort our scientific reasoning.*

*Supporting trans children does not necessarily mean supporting surgery or chemical interventions for minors. Some of those supporting these bills—that have been passed across several states now—believe that the medical industrial complex is exploiting these children for financial gain. That possibility cannot be dismissed.*

*Psychologists must keep strict control of ourselves when we have a conflict of interest, financial or political.*

For this, I was disciplined—losing my right to post for 30 days. A letter from the Communications Committee Chair, Dr. Parkinson, another young psychologist, said I violated the rules, because *"There is no evidence provided regarding the alleged nefarious actors involved or exploitation from reputable sources."*

I violated another rule, "being unsupportive or disrespectful" because, Dr. Parkinson wrote, *"This comment was construed by Dr. Mixon and others on the listserv as disrespectful and negative towards a member's character and motives for sharing an opportunity for advocacy. Dr. Mixon has explicitly expressed previously that he does not have a conflict of interest, but rather has asserted that he is an expert in the area about which the call for advocacy was made."*

It dawned on me that these young psychologists may not be cognizant of the medical–pharmaceutical industrial complex. They may even have been captured by it, the fate of an embedded group.

In the 70s, we were regularly warned about the problems with the medical model, treating the symptom. The concern remains: *Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health*, by Ivan Illick; *Unaccountable, What Hospitals Won't Tell You and How Transparency Can Revolutionize Healthcare*, by Dr. Marty Makary; or *Overdiagnosed, Making People Sick in the Pursuit of Health*, by Dr. H. Gilbert Welch, et al. Some attribute the atrocious ranking of health in the U.S. to the medical industrial complex.

It also dawned on me that these young psychologists don't understand what it means to have a financial conflict of interest. It has nothing to do with character, but rather with context. One either has a financial interest or doesn't. The resulting bias is often unconscious.

To assert that a person has no conflict of interest, is not the correct assertion. Dr. Mixon does not hide the fact that he is employed by Oschner's gender affirming care clinic, so he has a financial relationship. He can only assert that he does not allow it to bias his judgment. But he cannot be the judge of that, since the bias can be unconscious.

That is why rules of the Louisiana State Ethics Board, as one example, prohibit appointed officials from not only voting on the matter when they have a financial relationship, but from even participating in the discussion.

While I wish I'd have crafted it better, did I somehow harm my colleagues by expressing my opposing views? Did I somehow confuse their thought processes and lead them astray?

Or did centralized power oppress my dissenting voice?

I disagree that I broke the rules, but if I did, the rules need to change. Open debate with differing views is the correct way to move toward consensus, and help us avoid motivated reasoning.

Free speech is a core principle of psychology and an essential element of problem-solving in a healthy society.

[Julie Nelson, PhD, a licensed psychologist for over 40 years, has now turned journalist and publisher of the Times. She also holds other positions in the community. However, her opinions here are those of her own, and do not represent any group or association. She and the Times receive no compensation other than paid advertising. Email her at [drj@drjulienelson.com](mailto:drj@drjulienelson.com). —she welcomes feedback.]

## The Psychology Times

*Member, Louisiana Press Association*

Published monthly  
by Nelson News, LLC.  
[psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com](mailto:psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com)

Publisher: Julie Nelson, PhD

Journalism Consultant:  
Robert Holeman,  
*Editor (Ret.), The Coushatta Citizen,  
Winn Parish Enterprise.*

Columnists/Reporters:  
Susan Andrews, PhD, Alvin Burstein, PhD

Cartoonists: Jake Nelson-Dooley,  
Jonny Hawkins

Photography: Mike Dooley, MBA  
Tom Stigall, PhD, Adobe Stock Photos

Copy editor: Susan Brown

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## Corrections & Clarifications

No corrections were received for last month's issue. We made a few edits of our own. Please send your corrections to: [psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com](mailto:psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com)



## Governor Saves Health Care Budget from Cuts

Gov. Edwards announced last Thursday that he had vetoed Lines 6-9 on page 72, noting, "Veto No. 2 restores the \$100 million reduction in funding to Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) to protect against devastating programmatic cuts that would result from loss of the funding and the federal matching funds, totaling between \$400 million and \$700 million that were discussed in the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare on June 20 and that were outlined in the letter sent to me by the committee after the hearing asking that I restore the funds."

"The actual cut could have been seven times larger because of lost federal matching dollars, state health officials told lawmakers on the Senate Health and Welfare Committee last week. Officials said thousands of residents, including children, would likely have lost access to mental health care," reported Molly Ryan, from WWNO.

Lawmakers had allocated the more than \$100 million to pay off state retirement debt. Gov. Edwards had criticized the last-minute cut to health care, calling it "ridiculous" considering the state's \$2.2 billion surplus. "Lawmakers who helped both negotiate and pass the budget expressed regret about the reduction as they realized the profound impact it could have on health care access for Louisianans," Ryan reported.

## Gov. Comments on US Supreme Ct Decision

In a 6-3 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court, in Fair Admissions Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College, found that a strict interpretation of the 14th Amendment, prohibits favoring individuals based on race.

The case had to do with the admissions practices of Harvard University and the University of North Carolina. The court said that Harvard's selection program discriminated against students of Asian origin by giving preferential consideration to black, Hispanic, and Native American students.

Gov. John Bel Edwards provided a comment on the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to end affirmative action in college admissions:

"All colleges and universities are better and stronger because of their diversity, and having students from all backgrounds enriches the experiences of everyone. That is why increased diversity should always be our goal. While this decision by the U.S. Supreme Court may weaken that effort across the nation, the fact is that here in Louisiana all qualified students are admitted to our public universities and community and technical colleges. This is as it should be since education is the greatest pathway to improving a person's quality of life. Our state remains committed to expanding educational opportunities for everyone."

## Surgeon General Warns of Loneliness Epidemic in New Advisory Report

U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy has published "Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community," an advisory on the growing epidemic of loneliness.

A Surgeon General's Advisory is a public statement that calls the American people's attention to an urgent public health issue and provides recommendations for how it should be addressed.

Murthy, writes, "Loneliness is far more than just a bad feeling—it harms both individual and societal health. It is associated with a greater risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, stroke, depression, anxiety, and premature death. The mortality impact of being socially disconnected is similar to that caused by smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day, and even greater than that associated with obesity and physical inactivity. And the harmful consequences of a society that lacks social connection can be felt in our schools, workplaces, and civic organizations, where performance, productivity, and engagement are diminished."

The report includes key data, such as:

- Between 2003 and 2020, the time the average American spent with friends decreased by two-thirds, time spent in

social engagements dropped by one-third, and time spent in isolation rose by 17%.

- During 2020, 21% of people reported "severe loneliness" compared to just 6% prior to the pandemic.

- The rate of loneliness among young adults has increased every year between 1976 and 2019.

- Polls conducted in 1972 showed that roughly 45% of Americans felt they could reliably trust other Americans; however, that proportion shrank to roughly 30% in 2016.

- In 1960, single-person households accounted for only 13% of all U.S. households. In 2022, that number more than doubled, to 29% of all households.

- In 2018, only 16% of Americans reported that they felt very attached to their local community.

"Given the profound consequences of loneliness and isolation," Murthy says, "we have an opportunity, and an obligation, to make the same investments in addressing social connection that we have made in addressing tobacco use, obesity, and the addiction crisis. This Surgeon General's Advisory shows us how to build more connected lives and a more connected society."



# Dr. Joy Osofsky Testifies at Senate Congressional Committee Hearing, continued

Also testifying was Vice Admiral Vivek H. Murthy, the U.S. Surgeon General with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Mrs. Katherine Neas, the Deputy Assistant Secretary with the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education; Mrs. Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner with the Connecticut State Department of Education; and Dr. Joshua Garcia, Superintendent with Tacoma Public Schools, Tacoma, Washington State.

Dr. Osofsky was the expert in mental health, and, besides the Surgeon General, the other witnesses were in education.

"I was invited by Senator Cassidy from Louisiana who is the Ranking Member and Senator Sanders who is the Chair of the HELP Committee," said Dr. Osofsky. "It was quite an experience!"

In her testimony, Dr. Osofsky said:

"Since 2016, we have had the opportunity to work with Senator Cassidy to identify and support community and state agencies that can work individually and collaboratively in supporting the mental health needs of children and families including cross-state efforts. We have been pleased to support his efforts to increase mental health support in schools and communities.

"The Bipartisan Safe Communities Act and SUPPORT Act would expand community based behavioral health services and access to mental health care services in schools and communities in both rural and urban areas. This Act would also provide funding for the National Child Traumatic Stress Network to improve trauma informed training, treatment, and services for children, adolescents, and families who have experienced trauma."

Dr. Osofsky also testified about the "Effects of Trauma on Youth," saying:

"Youth are exposed to trauma in many ways, for example, experiencing abuse and neglect, exposure to domestic violence, substance use, and community violence. Youth are also exposed to natural and technological disasters and, in the past 3 years, to the COVID-19 pandemic with its many effects on children and families, including parental and caregiver loss. There is much evidence that exposure to trauma affects development in different ways. For very young children, exposure to abuse and neglect can impact on their brain development. For all children, their cognitive, social, and emotional development can be affected by abuse and neglect (Center for the Developing Child at Harvard, 2023).

"Many studies have shown that children who are exposed to adverse life experiences (ACEs) early in their lives are at significant risk for developing serious and long-term problems, both medical and psychological, later in development. Trauma-informed and trauma-responsive



U.S. Senator Bill Cassidy (L) from Louisiana is the Ranking Member and Senator Sanders (R) is the Chair of the HELP Committee. Sen. Cassidy invited Dr. Osofsky to testify.  
(Photo courtesy of Congress.)

interventions and evidence-based mental health treatments have been developed to help youth who have been exposed to trauma. It is crucial to recognize that recovery from trauma and development of resilience with meaningful, consistent relationships which means that parent and caregiver availability and support, in addition to mental health services, will help children and adolescents recovery from trauma exposure and also support resilience (Masten, 2021).

"The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to increased risk of mental health problems for several reasons. Children of all ages, including adolescents, are likely to develop well with consistency in their schedules, positive relationships with a parent or caregiver in a supportive environment,

and, as they grow older, consistent peer relationships. Few of these positive supports for youth development were in place during the COVID -19 pandemic."

Dr. Osofsky covered topics of "The Mental Health Impact of Natural and Technological Disasters on Youth Compared to the COVID-19 Pandemic," "Integrating Mental Health Support in School and Community Settings," and "Providing Mental Health Support in Collaboration with Community Groups."

Her complete verbal and written testimony, and the testimony of the other witnesses, can be found at: <https://www.help.senate.gov/hearings/why-are-so-many-american-youth-in-a-mental-health-crisis-exploring-causes-and-solutions>



Dr. Osofsky (on the right) was the expert in mental health, speaking about the effects of trauma on children. Besides the Surgeon General, the other witnesses were in education.  
(Photo courtesy of Congress.)



# Chicago Professional School PsyD Clinical Psychology Program at Xavier Closing, *continued*

"The University emphasizes all current students will continue to be supported towards completion of their programs, regardless of whether they decide to stay or transfer to another The Chicago School campus," she wrote.

"The Chicago School's leadership team is evaluating the long-term future of the New Orleans program in consultation with the American Psychological Association," Hao said.

The American Psychological Association (APA) currently lists The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, New Orleans (Clinical PsyD) as "Accredited, on contingency," with the next site visit scheduled for 2023.

The first class of doctoral students started at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology at Xavier in 2015.

The effort was innovative in a number of ways, including getting a head start on aligning with new standards for "Health Service Psychologists" to be approved by the American Psychological Association.

The Xavier based program is also innovative because it focused on applied clinical psychology specifically for the diverse and multicultural context in south Louisiana, and on "growing PsyD Psychologists here," explained Dr. Christoph Leonhard in a previous interview, the then department Chair. "We developed the program to meet the needs of local social service providers of psychological services and of the community," he said, "and frankly, to provide culturally competent services by people who understand this community, which is a very unique place in many ways."

The program organizers said, at the time, that they limited their recruitment to students inside Louisiana. The hope was to grow PsyD psychologists here, and who will remain here, in order to serve the sometimes unique needs of the Louisiana culture. "Studies indicate that newly



*The Chicago School's New Orleans clinical psychology program will not be accepting new students starting Fall of 2023, officials said. Here, from 2015, Dr. Christoph Leonhard (L) and Dr. Matt Holcomb, then faculty.*

graduated psychologists who have to leave the state to get an advanced degree do not return," said Leonhard previously. "So the emphasis of this program is to educate and train our own."

To help them reach this goal, Leonhard and his colleagues created an Advisory Committee of local professionals, including two area psychologists, the late Dr. Janet Matthews and Dr. Michele Larzelere.

Dr. Kelli Johnson took over as Department Chair in 2018 and more recently, Dr. Margaret Smith serves as Department Chair. Current faculty members include Dr. Richard Niolon, Dr. J. Michael Bradley and Dr. Adriana Pena.

The Chicago School of Professional Psychology is a private university with its main campus in Chicago, Illinois. Established in 1979, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology was primarily focused on the professional application of psychology. It currently has about 6,000 students across all campuses and online, according to its website.

Louisiana State University (LSU) hosts the only other clinical psychology doctoral program accredited by APA in Louisiana. LSU also offers an accredited school psychology doctoral program. Louisiana Tech University offers an accredited counseling doctoral program and Tulane is accredited for their school psychology program.

## Medical Psychology Advisory Committee Meets

The Medical Psychology Advisory Committee held a Business Meeting on June 23, 2023, at 1:30 p.m., via Live Streaming Video and Teleconference during the public session.

According to the public agenda the committee discussed the following topics under old business:

- Approval of Minutes
- Consultation with Nurse Practitioners
- Retaining Psychology license until granted Medical Psychology advanced license
- Laws and Rules Discrepancy

According to the agenda the committee discussed new business of the following:

- Billing Codes
- CE Broker – Ethics requirement
- Buprenorphine
- Deficiencies in Licensure Application

Topics listed under the executive session included the following:

- Licensure and Certification
- Attorney Advice – under La. R.S. 42:17(A) (10), as needed

The recording of the session is available on the medical board's website.

## Emergency Certificate By Telemedicine

HB 181 by Rep. DeVillier has been signed by the Gov. and takes effect August 1. Act 363 will allow coroners, deputy coroners, and assistant coroners to execute an emergency certificate via actual examination or telemedicine examination and establishes provisions for such persons.

The new law provides that the actual examination of the person may be conducted by any medical professional listed in proposed law, including coroners, deputy coroners, and assistant coroners, via telemedicine.



# Effort to Ban Medical Procedures for Trans Minors Rebounds, then Vetoed

## Continued

The committee for Judiciary A approved the bill and the Senate passed it with amendments by a vote of 29 to 10. It was then returned to the House and the amended version passed 75 to 25. It was sent to the Governor on June 8 for executive approval.

However, in a long and detailed critique, Gov. Edwards vetoed the measure, writing, "This bill is entitled the 'Stop Harming Our Kids Act,' which is ironic because that is precisely what it does. This bill denies healthcare to a very small, unique, and vulnerable group of children. It forces children currently stabilized on medication to treat a legitimate healthcare diagnosis to stop taking it. It threatens the professional licensure of the limited number of specialists who treat the healthcare needs of these children. It takes away parental rights to work with a physician to make important healthcare decisions for children experiencing a gender crisis that could quite literally save their lives. And, without doubt, it is part of a targeted assault on children that the bill itself deems not 'normal,' "[...]

"According to the March 2023 Louisiana Department of Health's Study on Gender Reassignment Procedures on Minors, from 2017 - 2021 there were zero gender reassignment surgical procedures performed on children in Louisiana, zero. The proponents of this bill suggest that it is necessary to stop physicians from mutilating our children by performing gruesome sex change surgeries. This is simply not happening in Louisiana," he wrote.

"The Gender Reassignment report further showed that the entire issue of gender reassignment impacts a very small subset of the population. In 2021, of 794,779 children enrolled in Medicaid only 465 were diagnosed by a healthcare provider with gender dysphoria, and of those only 57 were ultimately considered candidates for puberty blockers or hormone replacements," the Gov. wrote.

During the Senate Health and Welfare Committee hearing, Clinical psychologist, Dr. Clifton Mixon, was among those who testified in opposition to HB 648.

"I work in a gender clinic that prescribes hormone therapies to youth," he said. "At the heart of this debate is mistrust in our medical and mental health

providers to provide ethical, individualized care without prejudice and based on best practices and established research," Mixon said. "I'm here to address these concerns in opposition to a mean-spirited bill that defies science and humanity.

"The evidence is clear—gender affirming medical interventions are safe and effective treatment for gender dysphoria and resulting mental health problems for many trans youth. Unfortunately, you've been exposed to false information that misrepresents the established research and practice guidelines on gender health care medicine. I am here with actual studies that can help you understand the actual facts. I have a doctoral degree with training in how to conduct and interpret research," he said.

Psychologist, Dr. Jesse Lambert, also testified in opposition, representing the Louisiana Psychological Association.

The clashing world views of the individuals supporting and those opposing the bill included both sides claiming that they had the more valid research and that the other side's research was flawed.

Dr. Quenton Vanmeter, a pediatric endocrinologist from Atlanta, Georgia, cited evidence from European countries that suggests that there is no benefit in transgender surgery or hormonal treatment and that the suicide rate is not impacted.

Dr. Stephen Félix, a pediatrician, said, "The problem with the studies that the AEP reports and others, they do not have significant randomized control trials. They have small sample sizes, they have poor follow up, they have a lot of people lost to follow up, they have individuals who they have a very short period of time that they follow them,..." he said.

In concluding his veto letter, Gov. Edwards wrote, "I believe that this bill violates the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause because it targets and limits healthcare to transgender children that remain available to "normal" children. And finally, I believe that time will show that this veto was not just an exercise in compassion and respect for transgender children and their parents, but it was also the only legally responsible action to take because it is what is constitutionally required of me to do to uphold my oath of office as governor."



Gov. John Bel Edwards signing bills. (Gov.'s office photo.)

## Gov. Edwards Signs Bills into Law

Gov. Edwards began signing bills at the end of the session in June, and completed signing and detailing bills on June 30. The following are selected bills that have been signed into Acts.

[ACT 14-HB133](#) Provides relative to the Prescription Monitoring Program Advisory Council.

[ACT 23-HB314](#) Provides relative to trained peer support members.

[ACT 33-SB20](#) Provides relative to hospital service districts and scholarships for certain healthcare professionals.

[ACT 40-SB64](#) Creates Ezekiel's Law and provides relative to protecting children from abuse.

[ACT 53-HB72](#) Provides relative to the designation of military and veteran-friendly campuses.

[ACT 56-HB86](#) Creates the "Protect Teachers Act."

[ACT 172-HB516](#) Provides for placement of a special identification sticker or decal on a motor vehicle operated by a person with autism spectrum disorder or their guardian.

[ACT 182-HB587](#) Provides relative to the Louisiana Community Health Worker Workforce Board.

[ACT 211-SB202](#) Provides relative to campus accountability and safety.

[ACT 214-HB55](#) Provides relative to mental health treatment of incarcerated people.

[ACT 216-HB77](#) Provides for attorney general investigation for publishers and distributors of material harmful to minors.

[ACT 233-HB434](#) Provides relative to the state medical assistance program.

[ACT 237-SB34](#) Provides for "Crisis Lifeline dial 988" to be included on all state-issued driver's licenses and personal identification cards and the home page of LA Wallet.

[ACT 266-HB69](#) Provides for the screening and diagnosis of students with respect to dyslexia.

# Mental Healing for Incarcerated People Act Signed by Gov. Continued

The existing law provides that the Department may establish resources and programs for the treatment of inmates with a mental illness or an intellectual disability, either in a separate facility or as part of other institutions or facilities of the department.

Act 214 amends existing law to make the establishment of resources and programs mandatory.

According to the Legislative Fiscal Office, "There is no anticipated direct material effect on governmental expenditures as a result of this measure. DPS&C-CS states that the proposed law includes provisions already included within a list of services that it provides utilizing existing resources and would have no fiscal impact on expenditures."

The new law provides for the duties of the department as follows:

- (1) Provide screening to persons entering state prison facilities, upon intake, for mental health disorders as defined in the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, subject to appropriation by the legislature and the availability of resources.
- (2) Refer a person to a facility's mental health department if at any point during the person's incarceration, any department staff member suspects that an incarcerated person may have a mental illness.
- (3) Provide Mental Health First Aid training to employees on an annual basis, subject to appropriation by the legislature and the availability of resources.
- (4) Utilize trained peer support who have shared lived experiences to augment and enhance mental health services.
- (5) Provide an incarcerated person who has been diagnosed with a serious mental illness, prior to that person's release, with an appointment or walk-in instructions for a community mental health provider to ensure continuity of care to the extent that this is feasible and subject to the availability of department and community resources.

## Gov. Edwards Signs Bills into Law, Continued

- [ACT 268-HB242](#) Provides relative to corporal punishment in elementary and secondary schools.
- [ACT 271-HB298](#) Provides relative to parental rights in certain circumstances.
- [ACT 276-HB444](#) Provides relative to parole eligibility for certain offenders.
- [ACT 277-HB449](#) Provides relative to the rights of voters with disabilities.
- [ACT 281-HB578](#) Provides relative to a smoking cessation benefits program.
- [ACT 286-SB192](#) Provides relative to the Louisiana Gaming Control Board.
- [ACT 296-HB652](#) Authorizes certain healthcare professionals to certify the existence of an illness.
- [ACT 312-HB468](#) Provides relative to utilization review standards and approval procedures for healthcare service claims submitted by healthcare providers.
- [ACT 314-HB506](#) Creates the Louisiana Interagency Council on Homelessness within the office of the governor.
- [ACT 315-HB526](#) Establishes a chief resilience officer and provides for interagency coordination of resilience planning.
- [ACT 318-HB353](#) Provides relative to student behavior, discipline, and behavioral and mental health.
- [ACT 322-SB66](#) Provides relative to telehealth services.
- [ACT 325-SB137](#) Creates the Office of the State Child Ombudsman and the state child ombudsman.
- [ACT 333-SB188](#) Provides for utilization review and approval procedures of claims for healthcare provider services.
- [ACT 334-SB207](#) Creates the School Safety Act of 2023.
- [ACT 336-HB41](#) Provides relative to health coverage plan benefits for occupational therapy services delivered via telehealth.
- [ACT 354-HB475](#) Provides relative to admissibility of evidence of a defendant's creative or artistic expression.
- [ACT 367-HB291](#) Provides for visitation policies at certain healthcare facilities and requires that such policies allow for in-person visitation.
- [ACT 393-SB201](#) Provides for meetings of boards and commissions via electronic means.
- [ACT 394-SB205](#) Creates the Louisiana Foundational Integrated Research System for Transformation (LA FIRST).
- [ACT 416-SB 94](#) Adds certain substances to the Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substance Law.
- [ACT 422-HB12](#) Prohibits promotion to the fourth grade of certain students whose reading deficiencies have not been remedied by the end of the third grade.

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Dyslexia Screening Bill Signed by Gov.

HB 69 by Rep. Marino, which revises laws relative to screening for dyslexia, was signed by the Governor on June 9 and became Act 266. The bill passed both the Senate and then again the House after being amended in the Senate Education Committee.

The measure was voted out of the Senate Education Committee favorably after being amended by Sen. Jackson and testimony from Dr. Jesse Lambert of the Louisiana Psychological Association. The amendments changed the word "diagnosis" to "identification" and the word "psychometric" to "academic."

According to the final digest, the new law requires the state Dept. of Education to select a dyslexia screener with an area under the curve of 0.80 or above and provide the screener, at no cost, to each public school.

The new law requires the screener to be administered to each student by a classroom teacher in the second half of kindergarten or at any time it is requested by a teacher or a parent or guardian.

It prohibits the screener from being a progress monitoring tool and requires that it be developed solely for dyslexia; be evidence-based with proven, published psychometric validity; and be used for the purpose of determining whether a student is at-risk for dyslexia.

The new law requires the parent to be notified within 30 days if the results indicate that a student is at risk for dyslexia.

Implementation of proposed law is subject to the appropriation of funds by the legislature for this purpose.

According to the Legislative Fiscal Office:

"... it is estimated that proposed legislation will cost \$120,000 in FY 24 and costs will range beginning in FY 25 from \$355,360 to \$630,000. [...]

"In order to manage communications, implementation, training coordination, and the reporting requirements associated with the provisions of the proposed legislation, LDE reports that, beginning in FY 24, they will require one (1) additional Education Program Consultant 3 (\$72,000 salary, \$32,404.50 related benefits, \$15,089 operating expenses)."

Gov. Vetoes Bill That Would Have Restricted Discussion of Sexual Orientation in Schools

HB 466 by Rep. Dodie Horton, R-Haughton, would have prohibited the discussion of gender identity and sexual orientation in public schools, but was vetoed by Gov. Edwards on Jun 29.

The proposed law, passed by the house with a vote of 74 to 25, and passed by the Senate with a vote of 29 to 9, would have prohibited a public school teacher, employee, or other presenter at a school from doing any of the following in grades kindergarten through 12:

- (1) Incorporating into classroom instruction or discussion topics of sexual orientation or gender identity in a manner that deviates from state content standards or curricula developed or approved by the public school governing authority.
- (2) Covering the topics of sexual orientation or gender identity during any extracurricular activity.
- (3) Discussing his personal sexual orientation or gender identity.

Proposed law provides that no public school employee shall use a pronoun for a student that differs from the pronoun that aligns with the student's sex unless the student's parent provides written permission.

In his veto letter, Gov. Edwards said, " House Bill 466 aims to prohibit teachers, school employees, or other school presenters from engaging in discussions regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. This bill unfairly places vulnerable children at the front lines of a vicious culture war.

Further, the language would lead to absurd consequences. As passed, the mere mention of one's spouse who happens to be the same gender could cause the school employee or presenter to run afoul of the law without ill intentions and educators would be prohibited from teaching United States Supreme Court jurisprudence (see Obergefell v. Hodges) as well as from the Bible, which was just authorized as a course of instruction (see the Book of Leviticus).

"The bill is also unduly harsh as it allows students, teachers, and others serving students to totally disregard a student's autonomy by forcing the student to answer to pronouns that they do not wish to use. Every parent would have to provide written permission to the school to allow or direct the employee to use pronouns differing from pronouns used in accordance with the child's gender assigned at birth. This forced rejection of self-identity is particularly cruel to a child and this cruelty may adversely affect the child in their formative years. [...]

"It is the duty of our schools to create an environment that fosters and supports all of the children of our state, to help them succeed academically and professionally. As I stated in response to another unnecessary and harmful bill from a previous session, 'the real harm of this bill is that it would set as the policy of the State of Louisiana that there is something wrong with these children and that they should be treated differently from whom they really are. All of us are sons and daughters of this great state, and we should do and be better than that.' "

Rep. Marcelle's HB 353 "Mental Health Days" Becomes Act 318, Effective in August

HB 353 by Rep. Marcelle was signed by the governor and becomes effective in August as Act 318. It passed the Senate with a vote of 39 to zero. And it passed the House, 95 to 6. Senate Amendments were as follows:

- 1. Require rather than authorize information about suicide and substance abuse to be posted on websites.
- 2. Change purpose of pilot program from adverse childhood experiences screening to trauma-informed mental health screening.
- 3. Require excusing mental or behavioral absences upon written certification in accordance with student handbook rather than written certification from parent or doctor.

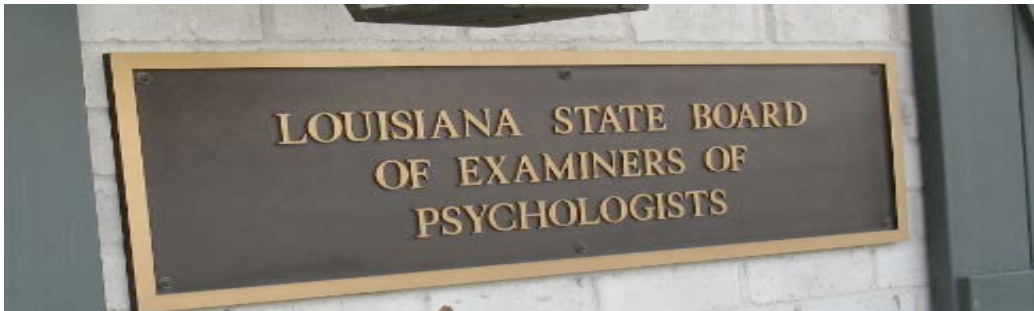
Present law provides for exemptions from compulsory school attendance, including when children are mentally, physically, or emotionally incapacitated to perform school duties as certified in writing. Act 318 adds that a student

may be absent for up to three days in any school year related to the student's mental or behavioral health, that such absences shall be excused if certified in writing in accordance with the student handbook, that the child may make up missed school work, and that the child shall be referred to school support personnel following the second day of absence.

Present law requires instruction on mental health and lists the minimum information to be included. Act 318 adds the difference between mental and physical health and the management of stress and anxiety to the list.

Present law authorizes youth suicide prevention programs to include certain components, one of which is informing students of available community youth suicide prevention services. New law includes posting information on school system website in this component.





# From the Minutes

## Selected Items from Jan '23 Minutes of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP)

Thursday, January 19, 2023 and Friday, January 20, 2023  
**FINAL APPROVED: April 21, 2023** Finally published May 8, 2023

- {CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH'S ISSUE.]
- d. Job description for Executive Counsel (In House/Prosecuting)  
[...][See June issue or Minutes for items 1 to 4.]
5. initiate or facilitate the initiation of subpoenas
6. represent the Board in proceedings before other administrative tribunals, boards, or commissions and state district and appellate courts
7. assist the Executive Director with review of and response to public records requests
8. develop and conduct educational compliance training for board members, staff and licensees related to statutory and regulatory requirements
9. conduct a continuous study of applicable law and judicial decisions that may impact the practice of psychology and/or the responsibilities and duties of the Board to regulate the practice of psychology
10. review and advise the Board on policies and procedures that may impact the practice of psychology and/or the responsibilities and duties of the Board to regulate the practice of psychology in consultation with the Executive Director
11. provide legal advice to the Board and any Board Committee pertaining to any matter that may impact the practice of psychology and/or the responsibilities and duties of the Board to regulate the practice of psychology in consultation with the Executive Director
12. draft and/or review new legislation that may impact the practice of psychology and/or the responsibilities and duties of the Board to regulate the practice of psychology in consultation with the Executive Director
13. assist the Executive Director with preparing and/or overseeing compliance with statutorily mandated reports as assigned by the Executive Director
14. perform any other related duties that may be assigned by the Executive Director or Board.

[...]

**COMMITTEES, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND LIAISON/AD HOC/OTHER REPORTS**

a. LSSP Committee Report – Dr. Hebert and Ms. Kelley Pursell appeared before the Board to provide an annual summary report to the LSBEP, advising that the Committee has met in New Orleans, LA for the past two quarterly meetings, they continue to thoroughly review application files for licensure and provide recommendations to the



Dr. Michelle Moore at a past meeting of the state board. She is next in line to serve as Chair.

Board related to licensure and issues impacting the regulation of LSSP’s such as Medicare reimbursement issues in the school system. Dr. Hebert also expressed his gratitude on behalf of himself and the LSSP Committee, for the Board approving travel reimbursement for Committee Members to attend meetings.

- d. Finance – (i) Update on Accounts Receivables including update on litigation/complaints  
accounts receivable – Drs. Gormanous, Moore & Ms. Monic - Ms. Monic discussed options previously presented to the Board regarding contracting with the Attorney General for debt collection. The Board reviewed the contract for debt collection with the Attorney General’s office. Dr. Sam moved that the Board negotiate an Interagency Agreement with Office of the Attorney General for the Collection of Outstanding Receivables, including the terms of payment to the Attorney General in the amount of 25% of the actual debt collected, and to authorize Ms. Monic to effectuate the agreement. Following opportunity for discussion, the motion was put to a vote. The motion passed by unanimous roll-call vote as follows: In favor: (6) Gormanous, Moore, McNeely, Harness, Sam and Holcomb; Against: (0); Abstained: (0); Absent: (0).
- f. Continuing Professional Development – Dr. Sam stated that she would like to be empowered to start searching for the next presenter for a Board sponsored CPD. The Board affirmed this delegation without objection. Dr. Gormanous asked Dr. Sam to also include follow up with APA’s Dr. Akbar & Dr Awad.

b. **LONG RANGE PLANNING DISCUSSION:** [...]iii. Program Competency Issues- The Board briefly discussed the changes to APA’s accrediting standards related to how programs assess competency. Dr. Moore reported that these changes were already addressed in the current proposed rules.

- iv. Examination Issues: Assessing Competence/EPPP/EPPP2 or other option vs. Oral Examination – The Board discussed this topic, and considered the information learned in the presentation today by Dr. Marianne Atwell-Burnetti, Dr. Matthew Turner and Dr. Hao Song. Dr. Holcomb stated he still had questions pertaining to implementation, test validity, Dr. Harness had questions about admission and score transfer. Dr. Harness also stated that she believed that part 2 of the EPPP would be an option for replacing the Oral Examination. Dr. Gormanous requested that outstanding or unanswered questions be sent to Ms. Monic to compile, and the Board could follow up with ASPPB representatives to get them answered. Dr. Holcomb floated the idea of a phase-out approach. Dr. Sam was concerned about a motion including a phase-out approach due to concerns about impacts on the licensure of currently licensed individuals who have not taken the EPPP Part 2 being able to become licensed in Louisiana at a later date. Following opportunity for discussion, Mr. McNeely moved that the Board adopt the EPPP (Part 2) in place of the Oral Examination by 2026; further that such steps should include but not be limited to legislative changes and appropriate engagement with persons and entities; further that staff be empowered to begin reviewing the regulations and statutes that will be impacted for proper implementation. Following opportunity for discussion, the motion was put to a vote. The motion passed by majority roll-call vote as follows: In favor: (4) Gormanous, Moore, McNeely, and Harness; Against: (2) Sam and Holcomb; Abstained: (0); Absent: (0)
- Action: Monic & Gormanous organize workgroup to begin compiling data for Board consideration.

- v. Rule Changes and the “Great Cliff” in psychology education: Continued use of Specialties vs HSP/General Applied – The Board discussed the continued use of specialties, how specialties are currently assess in an Oral Exam, and the decision today by the Board to adopt the EPPP (Pt.2) to replace the Oral Examination by 2026. Dr. Moore moved to charge the SPP committee with reviewing statutory and regulatory changes that would need to be made to drop specialty titles, including Clinical Neuropsychology, and bring recommendations back to the board. Following opportunity for discussion, the motion was put to a vote. The motion passed by unanimous roll- call vote as follows: In favor: (6) Gormanous, Moore, McNeely, Harness, Sam and Holcomb; Against: (0); Abstained: (0); Absent: (0)
- Action: SPP Committee Members (Moore and Sam) research the continued use of Specialties, models for licensure and credentialing, impacts of dropping board recognized specialties. Docket SPP Committee Meeting to discuss and finalize a recommendation to bring to the Board.



# Dr. Paula Zeanah Named 2023 Distinguished Psychologist by Louisiana Psychological Association *continued*

by James Glass

General Medical Center/Our Lady of Lourdes Eminent Scholar Endowed Chair in Nursing and Professor of Nursing at the University of Louisiana Lafayette. She has over 200 peer-reviewed publications and presentations and has served as the PI on over a dozen grant-funded projects," Raines said.

"Dr. Zeanah has a long-standing role as a teacher, trainer, and supervisor at various academic institutions and medical centers and frequently serves as an advisor and consultant on numerous state, national, and international partnerships. Further, she frequently gives back to the field by serving as a committee member of various university and department organization and, most recently, as our esteemed president of LPA," said Raines.

Dr. Zeanah serves as the Research Director at the Cecil J. Picard Center for Child Development & Lifelong Learning at The University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Her expertise includes physical and mental health; perinatal, infant, and early childhood mental health; adolescent and early adulthood sexuality; and chronic illness in children and adolescents.

She has served as Associate and Full Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Tulane University School of Medicine from 1998 to 2015. Before becoming a psychologist, Dr. Zeanah worked in a variety of primary care and tertiary health care settings as a pediatric nurse, educator, and administrator.

"I am deeply honored and proud to be identified as a distinguished psychologist, Dr. Zeanah told the *Times*. "And, given that Louisiana benefits from the contributions of many deserving psychologists, I am also quite humbled," she added.

"As a young professional, my work/career was important to me," Dr. Zeanah said. "But other than 11 years of pursuing education in nursing and psychology, I did not envision a specific endpoint. I have had opportunities that enabled me to integrate nursing and psychology in ways that have been gratifying and are still interesting to me!" she said.

"For example, my dissertation, the development of a measure of sexual self-esteem for women, evolved from my experiences working as a pediatric nurse practitioner with vulnerable teenagers for whom sexuality was insufficiently addressed. The measure has been used in studies examining various aspects of sexuality in many countries around the world—that's cool! I believe being a nurse and a clinical psychologist has given me a certain credibility when focusing on the interface of health and mental health," Dr. Zeanah said.

She has held many positions over the years, including:

Advisory Committee, New Families: Innovation and Development of the Child Health Services in Oslo, Norway; a collaborative project, City of Oslo and University of Oslo, 2021- 2022;

Consultant, Development of Culture of Wellness Framework for Nurse Family Partnership, National Service Office, Denver, CO, 2021;

Consultant, Supporting the Child to Thrive course development, Nurse Family Partnership, National Service Office, 2020-2021;

Advisory Group, Promoting Mental Health in NFP Educational Development (PI: L. Beeber, UNC). A project of the national

Cont next pg

Dr. Paula Zeanah at a past conference.

*"Dr. Zeanah is the Lafayette General Medical Center/Our Lady of Lourdes Eminent Scholar Endowed Chair in Nursing and Professor of Nursing at the University of Louisiana Lafayette. She has over 200 peer-reviewed publications and presentations and has served as the PI on over a dozen grant-funded projects," Dr. Amanda Raines said.*

*"Dr. Zeanah has a long-standing role as a teacher, trainer, and supervisor at various academic institutions and medical centers and frequently serves as an advisor and consultant on numerous state, national, and international partnerships. Further, she frequently gives back to the field by serving as a committee member of various university and department organization and, most recently, as our esteemed president of LPA," said Raines.*





# Dr. Paula Zeanah Named 2023 Distinguished Psychologist by Louisiana Psychological Association *continued*

by James Glass

NFP/University of Colorado Prevention Research Center for Family and Child Health, under the direction of D. Olds, 2012-2021; and

Innovations Advisory Committee, Mental Health Subcommittee Nurse Family Partnership, Denver, Colorado, 2017-2019.

Dr. Zeanah went on to say, “Today, that’s a huge focus of psychology, but it was not always so. I’ve been lucky to hold positions that allowed me to work 'inter-professionally' in nursing, psychology, and public health, which has been exciting, fun, and enabled the development of innovative strategies to address the mental health needs of vulnerable populations including pregnant women, infants, young children, and chronically ill children and families. Currently, I am collaborating with colleagues to increase attention to ethical dilemmas in the multidisciplinary field of infant mental health.”

Dr. Zeanah further explained, “Compelling research on the importance of early experience for brain development and later health and social functioning means the needs of infants are better recognized and prioritized-yet sometimes what is beneficial to the infant may be harmful or hurtful to the parent/caregiver, and vice-versa. Figuring out how to make appropriate clinical decisions, within the contexts of limited resources, social and cultural pressures, and personal and professional values is the challenge. Any achievements have not occurred in a vacuum—I’ve greatly benefitted from working in some of the country’s best medical centers and universities, having inspiring and encouraging colleagues, and of course, the unwavering support of my husband, family, and friends.”

Her numerous publications include:

Zeanah, P., Korfmacher, J., Lim, I. & Zeanah, C. (in press). Introduction to special section: Doing the ‘right’ thing: Ethical issues in infant and early childhood mental health. *Infant Mental Health Journal*;

Zeanah, P., Steier, A., Lim, I., Korfmacher, J., & Zeanah, C. (in press). Current approaches and future directions for addressing ethics in infant and early childhood mental health. *Infant Mental Health Journal*;

Lim, I., Korfmacher, J. Steier, A., Zeanah, C. & Zeanah, P. (2023). The ethics of infant and early childhood mental health practice. *Infant Mental Health Journal*;

Zeanah, C.H., Korfmacher, J., Lim, I., Steier, A., & Zeanah, P. (2023). Ethical dilemmas in infant mental health: Examples from child protection, home visiting, and medical contexts. *Infant Mental Health Journal*; and

Beeber, L., Gasbarro, M., Knudtson, M., Ledford, A., Sprinkle, S., Leeman, J., McMichael, G., Zeanah, P., Mosqueda, A. (under review). A mental health innovation for nurse home visiting program shows effectiveness in reducing depressive symptoms, *Prevention Science*.

The American Academy of Nursing added her to its 2021 Class of Fellows. Dr. Zeanah was the only Fellow from Louisiana selected for the 2021 class. “The Academy’s Fellows embody our values of equity, diversity and inclusivity, inquiry, integrity, and courage, which enable us to achieve new heights of impact that advance health policy across the globe,” noted Dr. Eileen Sullivan-Marx, the organization’s president. Dr. Zeanah joins an elite group that now comprises more than 2,900 experts in policy, research, administration, practice, and academia who champion health and wellness.

“Nursing is a profession that values and relies upon research to inform practice,” Dr. Zeanah explained. “There’s never been more expertise in the field, or as comprehensive a commitment to health and wellness, which makes it an exceptionally good time to be a nurse,”

Dr. Zeanah’s grants, contracts, and development activities include:

Zeanah, P. (PI; Co-PI's L. Asare, C. Suire). *Clinical Decision-Making in Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting: Does implicit Bias Play a Role?* New Horizons Grant, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation, \$18,690 February 2023-January 2024;

Zeanah, P. (PI). *The Culture of Nurse Wellness in the Nurse-Family Partnership*, Nurse-Family Partnership National Service Office, \$7840.00, March –September 2021. The purpose of this contract was to develop wellness education and resources for the national Nurse-Family Partnership program; and

Zeanah, P. (Local PI, Co-Investigator; L. Beeber, UNC, PI). *Mental Health Integration to Nurse Family Partnership*, Rita and Alex Hillman Foundation, \$74,188, January 2018-July 2021. Supports the development, implementation, and evaluation of the maternal mental health educational program for the national Nurse Family Partnership program.

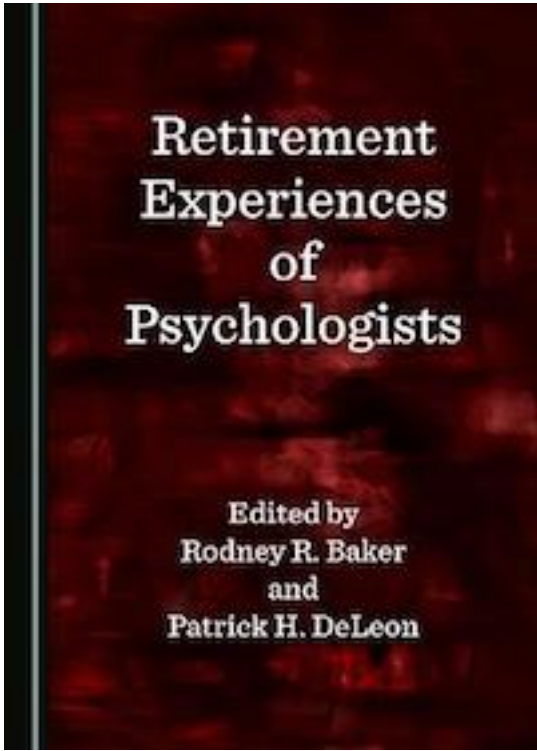
Dr. Zeanah told the *Times*, “I truly appreciate the opportunities I’ve had through the years as a member of LPA to meet and work with so many strong psychologists, and to learn and grow professionally. This past year, I had the honor to serve as LPA’s President. More than ever, I am impressed by the myriad ways Louisiana psychologists are 'advancing psychology as a science, as a profession, and as means of promoting human welfare.' ”

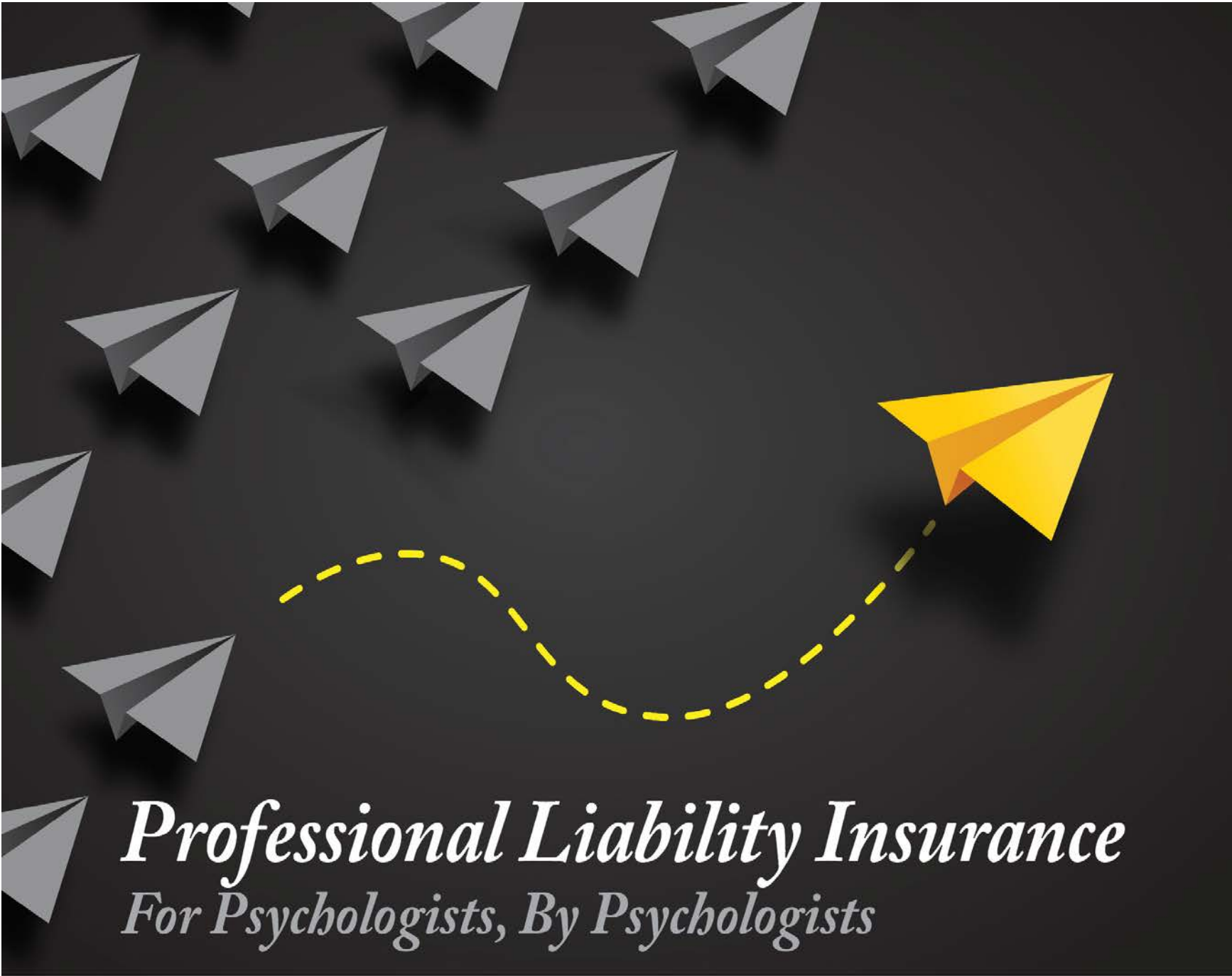
What does she hope to accomplish in the future?

“Sometimes I laugh about wanting to be a People’s Health Champion,” Dr. Zeanah said. “I’ve always been so impressed and energized by the accomplishments of those over 65! But truthfully, I do not have a list of specific things I want to accomplish. I do want to stay involved and to be useful—by that I mean I want to continue to contribute in meaningful ways to our profession through clinical service, scholarly activities, and involvement in professional activities,” she said.

"With a healthy balance of spending more time with my most important accomplishments—my children and grandchildren!"

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Test Your Stress IQ

There is a reason we talk about stress. And, we all do talk about stress. Lately, it has become a major topic. There is so much change in the world around us – everything from the weather to our daily schedules to our bodies as we get older every day. So, we should all know how stress affects us. Each of us is affected in unique combinations of ways by stress. And, each of us would define different things as being “stressful.” For example, one person might find loud noises very stressful. Another could be totally unaffected by loud sounds or noises. I imagine that many of you try to help colleagues, friends, family, or clients with their stress. So, why not test your stress IQ.

- 1. Name four symptoms that stress is affecting your brain.
- 2. Stress is the body’s reaction to harmful situation. Do the harmful situations have to be real?
- 3. Can plants reduce stress?
- 4. Can a mother’s uncontrolled stress affect her unborn child?
- 5. Can stress trigger an autoimmune disease in humans?
- 6. How does a sleep-deprived bee show stress?
- 7. It is just a fanciful belief that seeing birds can reduce your stress. True or False.
- 8. What is the first thing that is lost when your schedule gets too busy?
- 9. Growing up in poverty can have a lasting impact on a child’s brain. True or False.
- 10. Chronic stress can harm a lot of things but one thing it doesn’t do is age you prematurely. True or False.



Dr. Susan Andrews is a Clinical Neuropsychologist, an award-winning writer/author (her book Stress Solutions for Pregnant Moms, published in 2013, has been translated into Chinese,) and 2016 Distinguished Psychologist of the Louisiana Psychological Association.

Answers to Stress IQ Test – Each correct answer earns 10 points. A perfect score is 100.

- 1. If you listed 4 of the following 6 general symptoms indicating that stress is affecting your brain, give yourself 1 point. a. Constant worrying; b. Racing thoughts; c. Forgetfulness and disorganization; d. Inability to focus; e. Poor judgment; f. Being pessimistic or seeing only the negative side
- 2. No, whether the harmful situations is real or perceived or even “just” imagined, if you feel threatened, a chemical reaction occurs in the body to help you deal with the situation. That chemical reaction or the stress response is known as “fight or flight.”
- 3. Yes, some indoor plants can reduce stress. Of course, a walk in nature and the beauty of nature have long been known to make people feel better. Science backs up more benefits to keeping indoor plants around you. Indoor plants improve our mental health. A study at the University of Vermont showed that visual just seeing plants in the space around you helps reduce stress in only five minutes. Another study showed that plants in the same room while working increases a person’s ability to pay attention and stay focused (*J. Environmental Psychology*). Flowers are even more impressive. Research at Rutgers showed an immediate impact on happiness. One hundred percent of the people in the study immediately responded with a smile.
- 4. Definitely. A pregnant woman’s chronic stress during pregnancy can cause behavioral and emotional problems of childhood that last into adulthood. The fetal brain responds to maternal chronic stress by making subtle changes in the development of the brain. These subtle changes lead to behavioral issues as the baby grows, such as ADD/ADHD, high levels of anxiety, learning differences, and even autism.
- 5. Yes. Almost all research papers on the topic of autoimmune disease start by saying that there is a multifactorial group of causes, including genetic, hormonal, some environmental and immunological factors. Despite the known causes, at least 50% of autoimmune diseases can be attributed to “unknown trigger factors.” And, that is where stress as a trigger fits in. Subjects of retrospective studies on autoimmune disease have identified that they experienced an unusual amount of emotional stress prior to onset of an autoimmune disease.
- 6. Some bee species who are sleep deprived perform their waggle dances with less precision. The “waggle dance” of a bee is their equivalent of a GPS. So, a sleep deprived bee who is supposed to be communicating with the rest of the hive as to the direction of food could be off in the directions they are giving the others.
- 7. False. A study done at King’s College London examined the immediate effects on well-being when the 1,292 study subjects were in green spaces of nature and seeing/hearing birds at the same time. After statistical analysis the data showed that people rated their well-being in the moment highest when birds were present. The analysis eliminated the presence of nature (trees, plants, and water) thus isolating the positive effects of birds on human emotions. The positive effects were found regardless of whether the participant had a prior diagnosis of depression/anxiety or no mental health issues.
- 8. The first thing that drops out of your schedule when work bears down is exercise. Aerobic exercise can reduce stress but if done in sufficient amounts, aerobic exercise can increase the length of “telomeres.” An important study done at U. of California proved that exercising at least 3 times a week for about ½ hour over a 6-month period can slow down cellular aging, which is measured by telomere length.
- 9. True. In general, people know many of the negative effects of poverty. What has not been well known is how childhood poverty coupled with stress might affect brain function, particularly the brain’s function of regulating emotions. One longitudinal study found that the amount of chronic stress from childhood through adolescence, including substandard housing, crowding, noise, family violence and separation, determined the relationship between childhood poverty and prefrontal brain function when the participant was trying to suppress negative emotions.
- 10. False. Chronic stress can cause premature aging and illness because the constant overproduction of cortisol reduces the supply of telomerase and that prevents the cell from reversing the effects of stress. In other words, your telomeres get shorter because of the stress and cannot be lengthened when the stress is too great.



# A Shrink at the Flicks

## BlackBerry A Review

by Alvin G. Burstein, PhD

*BlackBerry* premiered February 2023 at the 73rd Berlin International Film Festival. Although it won no awards there, following its release to theatres and its on-line streaming, it attracted a great deal of positive comment. Directed by Matt Johnson, who also played one of the three main characters, Doug Fregin, the film is obviously a critical success. Rotten Tomatoes, the review aggregator reported an astonishing 98% positive reviews by critics and an impressive 91% positive comments by viewers, and CBS announced that it planned a mini-series using an augmented version of the film in the Fall of 2023.

Many of the reviews remarked on the film's humor, others saw it as a political critique of capitalism in the mode of *The Wolf of Wall Street*. Intrigued, I found it on Amazon Prime. I thought it, despite comedic elements, deeply tragic.

In what may be a Jungian synchronicity in 1946, *Dick Tracy*, Chet Goulds's comic strip detective, Dick Tracy, adopted a mobile two-way communication device, the wrist radio, anticipating a host of communication devices.

In 1973, Martin Cooper, the head of the communications division of Motorola made the first mobile phone call on Sixth Avenue in New York City, using Motorola's brick-sized device. In 1996, U. S. Robotics introduced Palm Pilot, a PDA (personal digital assistant). BlackBerry, combining the functions of a PDA and a cell phone emerged in 1999, and by 2011 had acquired 85 million users. This film is basically a biopic describing the BlackBerry's emergence and its 2016 death—and telling us about the people involved in its meteoric rise and fall.

Research In Motion LLC (RIM) was a Canadian firm manufacturing electronic gear, led by Mike Lazardis (played by Jay Baruchel), and Doug Fregin (played by Matt Johnson). These two entrepreneurs had assembled a madcap group of workers and had resolved to build a device that would combine the functions of a PDA (personal digital assistant) and mobile phone, encrypting the data and minimizing the electronic traffic. They cobbled together a prototype device, and, seeking funds to begin manufacture, approached the third main character, Jim Balsillie, a corporate shark, played by Glenn Howerton.

Guest Columnist,  
Dr. Alvin Burstein

Burstein, a psychologist and psychoanalyst, is a professor emeritus at the University of Tennessee and a faculty member of the New Orleans-Birmingham Psychoanalytic Center with numerous scholarly works to his credit. He is also a member of Inklings, a Mandeville critique group that meets weekly to review its members' imaginative writings. Burstein has published flash fiction and autobiographical pieces in e-zines;



courtesy photo

*The Owl*, his first novelette, is available at Amazon. He is, in addition to being a movie fan, a committed Francophile, unsurprisingly a lover of fine cheese and wine, and an unrepentant cruciverbalist.



The film opens with Lazardis and Fregin nervously awaiting an interview with Balsillie in the latter's office. Lazardis is nervous and rattled by a noise coming from an electronic device on Balsillie's desk. He opens it, notes that it was made in China, "the Mark of the Beast," and repairs it using a paper clip as tool. When Balsillie arrives he shows no interest in their device, and the partners leave, crushed. A few days later, however, Balsillie arrives at RIM and announces that he will invest in their device if he is awarded a major interest in the infant firm and co-CEO status. Overriding Fregin's concerns, Lazardis agrees.

Balsillie aggressively reshapes the organization, ultimately diverting Lazardis's attention from the quality of the product to a focus on the acquisition of customers. To meet the needs of the exploding numbers, Balsillie also recruits engineering superstars, using back-dated stock options, and office managers who convert the mad-cap but dedicated staff into frightened wage slaves. Disgusted, Fregin leaves the company.

BlackBerry becomes a major player in the PDA/cell phone field, but, increasingly plagued by mainframe overloads, service failures and increasing supply demands, Lazardis is ultimately persuaded by Balsillie to outsource manufacture of the device to China.

When Apple's iPhone, with a keyboard on its screen, hits the market, BlackBerry plummeted. The film depicts federal agents launching inquiries into illicit stock option arrangements and Balsillie's foiled attempts to acquire a hockey team to move to Ontario diverting his attention from BlackBerry. The final scenes show Lazardis throwing Balsillie to the wolves to avoid prosecution, and then, surrounded by boxes of myriad defective BlackBerries bearing the Mark of the Beast, absorbed in an impossible task of—one by one—repairing them.

Lazardis is like Icarus in Greek mythology, whose waxen wings melted when he ignored his father, Daedalus' advice, and exhilarated, flew too close to the sun, melting his wings and plunging to his death. Hubris, error rooted in pride, that Aristotle saw as the core of tragedy, had swept Lazardis to his doom.

In this biopic, the director opted to screen chyrons describing the outcome for the protagonists: Lazardis resigns from RIM; Balsillie also avoids prison; Fregin, having sold his stock at BlackBerry's peak, is a billionaire.



# 10 Years Ago ... What *The Psychology Times* was reporting on in July 2013



Industrial-organizational psychologist, Dr. Mkey Bonner, (L) and husband Sgt. Mark Johnson, Public Information Officer and Crimestoppers with the Monroe Police Department, talk with Dr. John Simoneaux (R) at the recent meeting of the Louisiana Coalition for Violence Prevention. Ms. Michelle Faust, LCSW, and regional administrator for DCFS listens to the discussion.

## Hoarders’ Dr. Chabaud Hosts Summit in N.O.

Dr. Suzanne Chabaud, Louisiana licensed clinical and developmental psychologist, hosted individuals from around the country for the second Adult Children of Hoarders Summit held June 19 to 24 in New Orleans. Chabaud is Director of the Obsessive Compulsive Disorders Institute of Greater New Orleans and expert in 33 episodes of the award-winning A&E television show, *Hoarders*.

Through her work on *Hoarders*, Dr. Chabaud became attuned to the challenges of children raised in hoarded homes.

## Governor Appoints Brown, Griffin to Psychology Board

In a press release Friday Governor Jindal announced that he was appointing Dr. Jessica Brown and Dr. Phillip Griffin to the state psychology board.

Brown will fill an unexpired term caused by Dr. John Courtney’s resignation in December 2012. The term will end in 2014. Brown’s name was submitted to the Governor along with top vote-getter, Dr. Beverly Stubblefield. In an election earlier this year, Stubblefield received 59 votes and Brown 54.

The Governor also appointed Dr. Phillip Griffin who will fill a five-year term to replace outgoing board member and chair, Dr. Lee Matthews.

## Researchers from Around La Present Their Work at SEPA

The 59<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA) was held in Atlanta, GA, this past March, with professors and students representing a number of universities from across the Louisiana.

Elizabeth Hertzler, Donice Banks, Justin Russell, Brandon Scott, and Dr. Carl Weems of the University of New Orleans (UNO) presented their work [...] Louisiana Tech’s Rebecca Cox, Devin Merritt, Stefani Paul, Cheyenne Whitehead, Dr. Walter Buboltz, and Dr. Janelle McDaniel presented [...]Loyola’s Dr. Kendall Eskine and Dr. William Locander presented their project, [...]

## Community Leaders Talk about Violence Prevention June 28

The Louisiana Coalition for Violence Prevention hosted a meeting and training session for key community members on Friday, June 28 in Baton Rouge. The event was held at the Baton Rouge Area Foundation on North 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Approximately 40 attendees from around the state represented psychology, counseling, social work, school psychology, psychiatry, law enforcement, legal, ministry, and research scientists. The participants listened to a presentation about violence, titled “Preventing Violence in Louisiana: Information, Ideas, and Inspiration,” and participated in a group discussion about the issues for the state. “Violence is a mental health problem,” said Dr. John Simoneaux, the main presenter at the meeting and Coalition steering committee member.

## Legislature Wraps Up the 2013 Session

The legislative session ended June 6 with last minute work on the state budget, HB 1. In what sources say was a compromise between House Democrats and House Fiscal Conservatives, and then between the House and Senate, the legislature passed the \$25 billion budget.

Governor Jindal then used his line-item veto stripping \$46 million from next year’s budget, mostly from higher education and health services, said a June 25 report for *Times Picayune* (NOLA.com).

## Task Force to Survey School Psychologists

The first meeting of the School Specialist Task Force was held June 28 at the state psychology board in Baton Rouge.

The group began work on a survey that will guide them in certain areas. Task force chair, Dr. Rita Culross told the *Times*, “The purpose of the survey is to seek input from school psychologists certified through the State Department of Education and psychologists licensed through LSBEP [Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists] on the possible regulation of school specialists through LSBEP.”



Dr. Carmen Broussard (L) and Dr. Conni Patterson discuss ideas at the recent meeting of the LSBEP task force to study the possible regulation of specialists in school psychology. Broussard is an associate professor at Nicholls and Patterson is a professor at Tulane.



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