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Weekly Public Affairs Program

## **QUARTERLY ISSUES REPORT, JULY-SEPTEMBER, 2021**

Show # 2021-27

**Date aired: 07/04/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Gregory Plemmons, PhD**, Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt University

Dr. Plemmons led a study that found the percentage of younger children and teens hospitalized for suicidal thoughts or actions in the United States has doubled over the past decade. He talked about the possible reasons for such a steep increase, what ages are at the greatest risk, and how parents can recognize signs of suicidal thoughts in their children.

**Issues covered:**

**Teen Suicide  
Parenting**

**Length: 7:46**

**Jeff Stalnaker**, President and Co-Founder of First Orion, a provider of data and phone call transparency solutions

Mr. Stalnaker's company commissioned a survey that found that Millennials are more likely than any other generation to give away personal information to scammers over the phone. He said nearly 40 percent of those surveyed have been contacted by someone impersonating the IRS. He talked about other current scams, and offered advice on how to avoid falling prey to scammers.

**Issues covered:**

**Consumer Matters  
Crime**

**Length: 9:17**

**Kara Lusk-Dudley**, Public Affairs Manager, Biomedical Communications, American Red Cross

Summertime is one of the most challenging times of the year for blood donations. Ms. Lusk-Dudley explained why, and outlined the process that a new blood donor can expect. She explained how to locate a donation center or blood drive nearby. She noted that the Red Cross is also in greater need of organizations to host blood drives during the summer months.

**Issues covered:**

**Blood Donation  
Personal Health**

**Length: 5:10**

Show # 2021-28

**Date aired: 7/11/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Darrin Grondel**, Vice President of Traffic Safety and Government Relations for the Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility

Although there were far fewer vehicles on the roads during the pandemic, traffic deaths rose more than 7% in 2020 to a 13-year high. Mr. Grondel discussed grants awarded by the Governors Highway Safety Association and the Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility to help states keep Americans safe from alcohol- and drug-impaired drivers.

**Issues covered:**

**Drunk/Drugged Driving  
Traffic Safety**

**Length: 8:58**

**Marshall Allen**, reporter for ProPublica, where he covers the health care industry, author of "*Never Pay the First Bill: And Other Ways to Fight the Health Care System and Win*"

Americans pay about twice as much per person for healthcare than the citizens of other developed nations, and about 1 in 6 of has medical debt in collections. Mr. Allen advised consumers to make sure each medical bill is itemized, and to check the billing codes to make sure the bill is accurate and priced fairly, before paying it. He also explained how doctors are incentivized to perform many treatments and tests whether they are needed or not.

**Issues covered:**

**Consumer Matters  
Personal Health**

**Length: 8:11**

**David Rabadi**, mental health advocate, National Speaker for the National Alliance on Mental Illness, author of "*How I Lost My Mind and Found Myself*"

41 percent of Americans reported anxiety and depression symptoms in 2020, up from 11 percent in 2019. Mr. Rabadi explained why many people struggling with mental illness try to hide it from others. He offered encouragement to seek help.

**Issues covered:**

**Mental Illness  
Suicide**

**Length: 5:07**

Show # 2021-29

**Date aired: 7/18/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Carmen Piernas, MSc, PhD**, University Research Lecturer at the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences at the University of Oxford

Dr. Piernas was part of a group of British researchers that examined the strong connection between COVID 19 and obesity. She said they found that younger people with a Body Mass Index of 30 or more, which is considered obese, are at a significantly higher risk of being hospitalized or dying of COVID-19, while those with a BMI of 23 are at the lowest risk. Interestingly, they found that obesity made no difference at all in COVID risks for the elderly.

**Issues covered:**

**COVID-19  
Obesity**

**Length: 9:17**

## **Public Health**

**Rebecca Johnson, PhD**, Co-Director of Citizen Science and Research Associate in the Department of Invertebrate Zoology and Geology at the California Academy of Sciences

In recent years, community science--also known as citizen science--has become a global phenomenon, as millions of amateurs with an interest in science contribute unparalleled amounts of data on the natural world. Ms. Johnson said community science data remains widely underutilized by the scientific community due to its perception as being less reliable than expert-collected data. She said community science may be the only practical way to answer important questions about our planet's biodiversity and how it is changing.

**Issues covered:**

**Science  
Climate Change**

**Length: 7:58**

**Shannon M. Robson, PhD, MPH, RD**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition, Principal Investigator of the Energy Balance and Nutrition Laboratory at the University of Delaware

89% of Americans believe it's important for families to have as many family meals as possible each week. Dr. Robson led a study that showed that more frequent family meals were associated with better dietary outcomes and improved family relationships. She offered suggestions for families to overcome obstacles to gathering for dinner.

**Issues covered:**

**Nutrition  
Parenting**

**Length: 4:38**

Show # 2021-30

**Date aired: 7/25/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Elizabeth Rosenthal, MD**, former reporter and senior writer at The New York Times, Editor in Chief of Kaiser Health News, former ER physician, author of "*An American Sickness: How Healthcare Became Big Business and How You Can Take It Back*"

Dr. Rosenthal discussed the rapidly rising costs of healthcare in the past few decades and the reasons behind them. She gave examples of some of the more egregious differences in healthcare costs in the US, compared to other countries. She explained how healthcare consumers can learn to negotiate with hospitals and doctors.

**Issues covered:**

**Personal Health  
Consumer Matters**

**Length: 8:39**

**Jodie Plumert, PhD**, Professor in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at the University of Iowa

For adults, crossing the street by foot seems easy. Yet it is anything but simple for a child. Dr. Plumert led a study that found that perceptual judgment and motor skills are not fully developed in most kids until age 14. She explained what parents can do to help children learn these life and death skills as early as possible.

**Issues covered:**

**Traffic Safety  
Parenting**

**Length: 8:27**

## **Children's Issues**

**Adriana Zuniga-Teran**, architect, postdoctoral research associate in the University of Arizona's Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy.

Ms. Zuniga-Teran conducted a study that examined how the design of a neighborhood can affect health and wellness. She found that those who live in traditional neighborhoods do the most walking, while those who live in suburban developments report the highest levels of mental well-being.

**Issues covered:**

**Mental Health  
Personal Health  
Community Issues**

**Length: 5:02**

Show # 2021-31

**Date aired: 8/1/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Sally Erny**, National Stakeholder Engagement Officer of the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association

Ms. Erny explained how court-appointed special advocates (CASAs) look out for the interests of abused or neglected children. She discussed how CASA volunteers work with attorneys and other court officers to ensure the youngsters are in safe and healthy foster care, and eventually, permanent homes. She also outlined the training that these volunteers receive, and how someone can volunteer.

**Issues covered:**

**Child Abuse  
Foster Care  
Volunteerism**

**Length: 8:26**

**Clint Emerson**, retired Navy Seal, author of "*100 Deadly Skills: Survival Edition: The SEAL Operative's Guide to Surviving in the Wild and Being Prepared for Any Disaster*"

Mr. Emerson offered numerous tips on how to crime-proof a house and how to avoid becoming a victim of crime in other environments, as well. He explained the importance of being aware of your environment, in order to react to dangerous situations or avoid them in the first place. He also talked about the options available to people caught in active shooter incidents or terrorist attacks.

**Issues covered:**

**Crime Prevention  
Terrorism**

**Length: 8:46**

**Tracy Mehan**, Manager of Translational Research for the Center for Injury Research and Policy at the Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio

On an average day in the US, 13 children receive emergency treatment for a lawn mower-related injury. Ms. Mehan talked about the most common injuries and how they typically vary, depending on the age of the child. She offered suggestions for parents on how to prevent lawn mower-related injuries.

**Issues covered:**

**Child Safety  
Product Safety  
Parenting**

**Length: 5:02**

Show # 2021-32

**Date aired: 8/8/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Helen Horyza**, career coach, founder of the Career Coach Entrepreneur Academy certificate programs, author of *"Elevate Your Career: Live a Life You're Truly Proud Of"*

Nearly 60% of middle-income workers are asking the question: Am I really where I want to be? Ms. Horyza explained why so many people stay in unrewarding careers and how to find a happier path. She shared real-world examples of people who found their true passion in life and created a career that perfectly suited their interests and talents.

**Issues covered:**

**Career  
Unemployment**

**Length: 7:50**

**Maria J. Prados, PhD**, Economist at the University of Southern California's Center for Economic and Social Research

Social Security benefits are a critical component in planning and saving for retirement. Prof. Prados co-authored a study that found that the average American overestimates their future monthly Social Security check by more than \$300. She explained why this is a serious problem and how consumers can find out how much their future Social Security benefit will be.

**Issues covered:**

**Retirement Planning  
Personal Finance**

**Length: 9:19**

**David Finkelhor**, Director of the University of New Hampshire's Crimes against Children Research Center

Mr. Finkelhor shared the results of a recent study from the University of New Hampshire that found that close to 1.5 million children each year visit a doctor, emergency room or medical facility as a result of an assault, abuse, crime or other form of violence. This is four times higher than previous estimates. He outlined the most common types of abuse.

**Issues covered:**

**Child Abuse  
Youth at Risk  
Government Policies**

**Length: 5:17**

Show # 2021-33

**Date aired: 8/15/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Loretta Alkalay**, former FAA eastern regional counsel, Adjunct Professor at Vaughn College of Aeronautics & Technology, a private college in East Elmhurst, New York, specializing in aviation and engineering education

Incidents of violence at airports and during flights have been on the rise in recent months. Prof. Alkalay discussed the problem and how the increasingly stressful experience of flying has fueled it. When an aircraft's doors are closed, any criminal activity falls under federal jurisdiction, but she believes changes are needed to allow local authorities to make arrests and prosecute.

**Issues covered:**  
Transportation  
Law Enforcement  
Mental Health

**Length: 8:53**

**Jenn Donahue**, leadership coach, engineer, entrepreneur

The leadership gender gap in American business is glaring; even today, women fill just 6% of CEO positions at Fortune 500 companies. Ms. Donahue explained how those women who have broken the glass ceiling can determine their leadership style, and also seek ways to bring other women up through mentoring.

**Issues covered:**  
Women's Concerns  
Career

**Length: 8:26**

**John G. Boyle**, patient and health advocate who relies on plasma-derived therapies, former CEO & President of the Immune Deficiency Foundation

The national blood shortage has been widely reported, but Mr. Boyle talked about another life-threatening donation crisis. He said the critical need for plasma donors right now in the U.S. will have lasting consequences if it isn't addressed. He explained what sorts of patients are in dire need of plasma donations, and how to make a donation.

**Issues covered:**  
Plasma & Blood Donation  
Personal Health

**Length: 5:09**

Show # 2021-34

**Date aired: 8/22/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Clifford Bassett, M.D., FAAAAI, FAAAAI**, Founder and Medical Director of Allergy and Asthma Care of New York, author of "*The New Allergy Solution: Supercharge Resistance, Slash Medication, Stop Suffering*"

Allergies are on the rise. Dr. Bassett explained why the problem and its underlying causes are quite complex. He believes in many cases, allergic reactions can be prevented, with proper medical advice that examines the interplay of diet, mindset, and environment.

**Issues covered:**  
Personal Health

**Length: 7:28**

**Cornelius N. Grove, Ed.D.**, education expert, author of "*The Drive to Learn: What the East Asian Experience Tells Us About Raising Students Who Excel*"

American students are currently ranked #25 in education globally, significantly behind countries such as Singapore, China and Japan. He believes that American children are less receptive to classroom learning, compared to East Asian children. He said a different approach to parenting is a major factor.

**Issues covered:**  
Education  
Parenting

**Length: 9:51**

**Laurence J. Kotlikoff, PhD**, William Fairfield Warren Distinguished Professor, Professor of Economics at Boston University, President of Economic Security Planning, Inc, author/co-author of 16 books on retirement planning, economics and personal finance

Dr. Kotlikoff has developed the first retirement planning software built by economists. He explained how the "Economist Approach" differs from traditional retirement advice. He said the new approach can help consumers determine the highest level of spending their household can sustain over time, in order to live within their means for the remainder of their lives.

**Issues covered:**  
**Retirement Planning**  
**Senior Citizens**

**Length: 4:56**

Show # 2021-35

**Date aired: 8/29/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Gal Wettstein, PhD**, Senior Research Economist at the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College

Dr. Wettstein co-authored a report entitled "*Are Older Workers Capable of Working Longer?*" He explained why recent worsening health trends raise the question of how long people will be able to work, and why it matters. He noted that gains in "working life expectancy" have slowed in the past 15 years. He said many black workers, as well as whites with less education, may not be capable of working to Social Security's full retirement age of 67.

**Issues covered:**  
**Retirement Planning**  
**Poverty**

**Length: 7:49**

**Glenn N Levine, MD**, Master Clinician and Professor of Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine, Chief of the cardiology section at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center, both in Houston

Dr. Levine was chair of the writing committee for a new American Heart Association Scientific Statement, entitled "*Psychological Health, Well-Being, and the Mind-Heart-Body Connection.*" He outlined the latest research that examines why and how psychological health can positively or negatively impact a person's physical health, and risk factors for heart disease and stroke.

**Issues covered:**  
**Mental Health**  
**Personal Health**

**Length: 9:22**

**Catherine Athans, PhD**, Certified Trauma Therapist, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist for more than 25 years with Doctorate Degrees in both Clinical and Health Psychology, along with a Master's Degree in Clinical Community Psychology

It's not going to be a normal fall, as both students and parents must deal with a second school year of uncertainty and concerns connected to the pandemic. Dr. Athans discussed the array of challenges faced by students and explained how parents can help. She said it is crucial for parents to recognize and deal with their own anxieties.

**Issues covered:**  
**Mental Health**  
**Parenting**

**Length: 5:06**

Show # 2021-36

**Date aired: 9/5/22 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Rachael Stickland**, Co-Founder and Co-Chair of the Parent Coalition for Student Privacy

Schools and third-party vendors collect and share an astonishing amount of personal data on nearly every student in America. Ms. Stickland explained why parents should be concerned and what they can do about it. She believes laws protecting student privacy need to be strengthened.

**Issues covered:**

**Length: 8:56**

**Parenting  
Privacy Concerns  
Education**

**Vijay R. Varma, PhD**, researcher and post-doctoral fellow at the National Institute on Aging, part of the National Institutes of Health

Dr. Varma recently co-authored a study that found an alarming decrease in physical activity in youngsters at every age. 19 year olds now get as much exercise and activity as 60 year olds. Dr. Varma explained why this is a major problem. He offered suggestions of ways to encourage both younger and older Americans to become more physically active.

**Issues covered:**

**Length: 8:02**

**Physical Fitness  
Personal Health  
Aging**

**Jim Hedlund**, consultant for the Governors Highway Safety Association, former researcher for 22 years at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Mr. Hedlund conducted a study for the Governors Highway Safety Administration that found that for the first time, more drivers who were tested after fatal crashes had drugs in their system than had alcohol. He discussed the role that the increasing legalization of marijuana may play in this trend. He also explained why laws targeting drivers under the influence of alcohol cannot easily be amended to include drug users.

**Issues covered:**

**Length: 5:09**

**Impaired Driving  
Substance Abuse  
Government Legislation**

Show # 2021-37

**Date aired: 9/12/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Susan Stark, PhD**, Associate Professor of Occupational Therapy, of Neurology and of Social Work at Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis

Falls are the leading cause of injury, accidental death and premature placement in a nursing home among older adults in the United States. Dr. Stark shared the results of her study that suggested that in-home falls can be reduced by nearly 40% with a community-based program that helps older adults make modifications to their homes such as adding grab bars, shower seating and slip-resistant surfaces in the bathroom.

**Issues covered:**

**Length: 8:23**

**Elder Care  
Aging**



**Frank Pega, PhD**, epidemiologist, health economist, Technical Officer in the Environment, Climate Change and Health Department at the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland

Long working hours are killing 745,000 people a year, according to a new report from the World Health Organization. Dr. Pega was the lead author of the study, which found that working more than 55 hours a week is a health hazard that leads to stroke and heart disease. He said the pandemic may have accelerated this trend.

**Issues covered:**

**Length: 8:55**

**Personal Health  
Workplace Matters**

**Colin Orion Chandler**, doctoral student and Presidential Fellow, at Northern Arizona University's Department of Astronomy and Planetary Science

Mr. Chandler is the project founder and principal investigator of the "Active Asteroids" project, which seeks to recruit citizen scientists to assist in an effort to quadruple the number of known active asteroids. He explained how people can volunteer and why the search for these rare space objects is important.

**Issues covered:**

**Length: 5:03**

**Science  
Volunteerism**

Show # 2021-38

**Date aired: 9/19/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**Benjamin H. Barton**, Helen and Charles Lockett Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of Tennessee, author of "*Rebooting Justice: More Technology, Fewer Lawyers, and the Future of Law*"

Professor Barton discussed what he sees are longstanding problems in our judicial system. He said that laws are too complex and legal advice is far more expensive than necessary. He outlined a series of reforms which he believes would make the courts much fairer and more accessible for poor and middle-class Americans.

**Issues covered:**

**Length: 8:31**

**Legal Reform  
Poverty**

**Steve Casner, PhD**, research psychologist, NASA scientist, author of "*Careful: A User's Guide to Our Injury-Prone Minds*"

Dr. Casner has devoted his career to studying the psychology of safety. He said after a hundred years of steady decline, the rate at which people are being injured or killed in everyday accidents, such as car crashes, pedestrian fatalities, home-improvement projects gone wrong, medical mistakes and home fires, is increasing. He explained why few of us are as careful as we think we are, and what we can do about it.

**Issues covered:**

**Length: 8:36**

**Accident Prevention  
Personal Health**

**Robin Behrstock**, entrepreneur, author of *“Adventures Of Women Entrepreneurs: Stories That Inspire”*

Dr. Behrstock shared some inspiring examples of women who overcame both personal and professional setbacks to turn their dreams of starting their own business into reality. She offered advice for aspiring entrepreneurs who are reluctant to take that first step.

**Issues covered:**  
**Women’s Issues**  
**Career**

**Length: 4:50**

Show # 2021-39

**Date aired: 9/26/21 Time Aired: 6:00AM**

**William Lastrapes, PhD**, Professor of Economics, Bernard B. and Eugenia A. Ramsey Chair of Private Enterprise in the Terry College of Business at the University of Georgia

Professor Lastrapes led a study that suggests that eliminating \$20, \$50 and \$100 denominations of physical currency might benefit average US families. He explained that although cash is popular, transactions are largely untraceable by the government and are sometimes used to pay for under the table or illegal goods or services. He believes that less cash means less tax evasion and that the government could theoretically reduce other taxes.

**Issues covered:**  
**Government Policies**  
**Economy**

**Length: 8:17**

**Nora Volkow, MD**, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, part of the National Institutes of Health

Marijuana use continued to rise among college students over the past five years, and remained at historically high levels even among same-aged peers who were not in college, according to survey results from the 2020 Monitoring the Future panel study. Dr. Volkow, who has led the National Institute on Drug Abuse since 2003, discussed the potential reasons for the trend. She added that the survey found that there was also a significant increase in the annual use of hallucinogens such as LSD, and a significant drop in current alcohol use among college students.

**Issues covered:**  
**Substance Abuse**  
**Government Policies**

**Length: 9:01**

**Sangeetha Abdu Jyothi, PhD**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Computer Science at the University of California, Irvine

Prof. Jyothi said a severe solar storm could plunge the world into an "internet apocalypse" that keeps large swaths of society offline for weeks or months at a time, by damaging long undersea internet cables that connect continents. She said that although coronal mass ejections are relatively rare, the global internet infrastructure is relatively new, and its vulnerabilities remain largely unstudied.

**Issues covered:**  
**Internet Infrastructure**  
**Technology**  
**Business**

**Length: 4:54**