



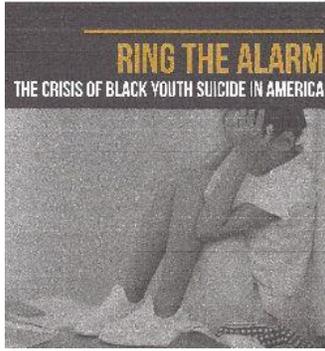
The March NAMI GDM newsletter can be found [here](#).

Also posted:

- A multi-page document of additional **mental health related articles** from around the nation - [here](#)
- Interested in **Mental Health classes for the Workplace** (14 available)? Click [here](#).
- Interested in a **Community Education class** (27 available)? Click [here](#).
- Interested in purchasing **crisis cards**? Do's and Don'ts, Suicide Prevention, Compassionate Communication - [here](#)
- **Prohibition 2020**: The Ban on the Production, Importation, Transportation and Sale of Stigma -**Thursday, April 23** at NOCE, 1326 Walnut, Des Moines – 5 to 8 PM – click [here](#) for more detail. Sponsorships available. \$50/person tickets.

March is a pivotal month. The State Legislature is moving fast and plans to be done early in April. The Governor's bill on funding mental health is leaving many people with pangs of panic. We still do not know what the final solution will be. Keep watching the [InfonetIowa](#) newsletters and bill tracker to stay on top of legislation that is still alive.

Below are some reports which indicate our work is not yet done.



Black Youth Suicide Attempt Rate Rose 73% Between 1991 & 2017

[“Ring the Alarm: the Crisis of Black Youth Suicide in America,”](#) the report includes a research section summarizing the current state of studies about Black youth, suicide and suicidal behaviors. It provides details about risk factors, protective factors, mental health service usage, stigma and other factors that may influence the trends that researchers are seeing. A number of trends of increasing suicide rates among Black youth are noted in the report. In youth ages 10-19, suicide was the second leading cause of death and in 2017 – over 3,000 youth died by suicide in this age group.

Self-reported suicide attempts rose by 73% between 1991 and 2017 for black high school students who took the National Youth Risk Behavior Survey. The rate



The State Ombudsman Report

[A Tragedy of Errors – an Investigation of the Death of Natalie Finn](#)

Natalie Finn was just 16 when she died of cardiac arrest on October 25, 2016. After I read an article in The Des Moines Register alleging that DHS had failed to act on a report that Natalie was being starved, I self-initiated an investigation into her death.

At that time, it had been 16 years since the Ombudsman’s office had issued a public report critiquing DHS’s actions involving the death of a child. Unfortunately, some of the problems we identified in our 2000 report on the death of 2-year-old Shelby Duis were repeated by DHS in Natalie’s case: intake reports did not contain some allegations made by reporters, or inadequately described those allegations; child-abuse reports that should have been accepted were rejected;



The ALICE report (spring 2018)

ALICE, Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed, places a spotlight on a large population of hardworking residents who work at low-paying jobs, have little or no savings, and are one emergency away from falling into poverty.

The United Way ALICE Report is the most comprehensive depiction of financial needs in the state to date, using data from a variety of sources, including the US Census. Data is available on the state, county and municipal level. The report unveils new measures, based on present-day income levels and expenses that show how many Iowa workers are struggling financially, and why.

ALICE represents a growing number of individuals and families who are working but are unable to afford the basic necessities of housing, food, childcare, health care and transportation. Although ALICE is

of injuries due to suicide attempts rose by 122% for black adolescent boys.

The suicide death rate among black youth has been found to be increasing faster than any other racial/ethnic group. Additional findings for black youth include: The suicide rate for black children ages 5 to 12 was roughly twice that of white children of the same age group during this time period.

Alongside the report, Congresswoman Watson Coleman announced the pending introduction of a comprehensive legislative package aimed at addressing youth mental health — in communities of color and well beyond — titled [The Pursuing Equity in Mental Health Act of 2019](#). It will include new and existing legislative proposals to increase the amount of research relating to Black youth mental health and suicide through the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Mental Health, particularly research undertaken by minority researchers—as well as increase funding for and direct the National Institute on Minority Health and Health

and important collateral witnesses were not identified or contacted.

We also discovered new areas of concern. DHS's record-retention policies have been hindering its workers' ability to identify patterns of abuse. The intake unit has been suffering from insufficient staffing, supervision, and oversight. We found that reports of abuse from experienced mandatory reporters were not given proper weight, and two of their written follow-up reports were not reviewed.

This report details the problems we identified with DHS's child abuse intake and assessment processes in connection with the Finn case and offers 14 recommendations to address these issues.

In addition, this report asks the Iowa Legislature to re-evaluate its expectations of the Child Fatality Review Committee and other existing oversight bodies responsible for reviewing child deaths.

[earning income, pays taxes and contributes to Iowa's economy](#), the household income is not enough to meet a **basic survival budget** in these categories.

United Way ALICE Report for Iowa- [here](#)

- Over 450,000 Iowa households - **37%** - struggle to afford basic household expenses
- Federal Poverty Level indicates only 12% of Iowa households faced financial hardship - an **ADDITIONAL 25%** of households fall below the ALICE Threshold (meeting a **household survival budget**)
- ALICE households comprise between 26% (Plymouth Co.) and 52% (Decatur Co.) of the population in every Iowa county.
- More than 40% of senior households fall below the ALICE Threshold
- Over 100,000 households with children fall below the ALICE Threshold - nearly one-third are in two-parent homes
- The average annual household Survival Budget for a four-person family in Iowa is \$56,772, more than double the Federal Poverty Level for

Disparities (NIMHD) to study mental health disparities in racial and ethnic minority groups.

Read the [full report](#), the [executive summary](#) and the [resources](#) section.

<https://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2019/december/BlackYouthSuicideRatesRising.html>

the same family
-- Childcare represents a family's greatest expense - \$1,031/month for one infant and one preschooler in licensed and accredited childcare•
-- 66% of Iowa jobs pay less than \$20/hour; more than half of those pay less than \$15 per hour - (\$15/hour full-time is \$30,000 annually)
-- Present minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour.



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