

# Council on Women and Girls, Health and Safety Subcommittee, May 2021

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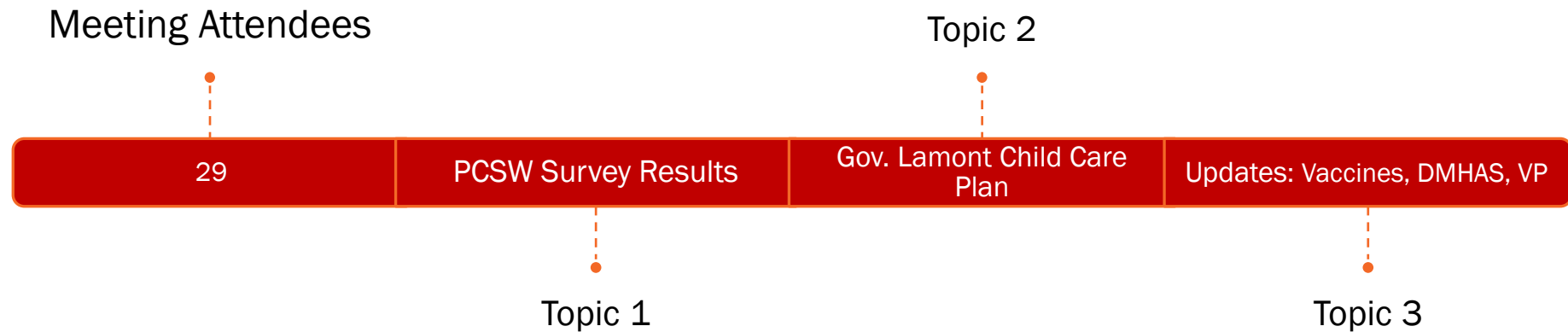
TRI-CHAIRS:

COMMISSIONERS: DELPHIN-RITTMON, DORANTES, BYE



# April 19, 2021 Meeting, Update

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# Permanent Commission on the Status of Women Survey

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**PCSW**  
Permanent Commission  
on the Status of Women

*"COVID has shone a spotlight on the fact that women are the shock absorbers for society's crises."*

Fairfield County Forum Participant



## METHODOLOGY

<b>1,020</b>	Survey Respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Survey Respondent Pool closely mirrors Connecticut's diversity by:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Race/Ethnicity</li><li>◦ Age</li><li>◦ Household Income</li><li>◦ Geography</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>100+</b>	Forum Participants	
<b>OCT 5, 2020- FEB 5, 2021</b>	Data Collection Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data Collection Period captured the "winter surge" and represents the most current and only data of its kind statewide</li></ul>

## COVID IMPACT: CONNECTICUT'S WOMEN REPORTED

# Permanent Commission on the Status of Women Survey

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## COVID IMPACT: CONNECTICUT'S WOMEN REPORTED

### WORK AND PAY

**26.5%** were either **furloughed or lost their jobs** due to COVID-19

**33.0%** experienced a **decrease in Total Monthly Income** due to COVID-19

**66.1%** of **women with dependent children** indicated that the **increased demands of work in the home** (homeschool, children home) **impeded their ability to work**

**68.2%** indicated that their **ability to work/return to work** was **impaired** by COVID-19

**16.1%** reported that their **career advancement** had been **impaired** by COVID-19

- **Latinx** (36.9%), **women of Two or More Races** (47.4%), and **women of lower household income levels** (54.7%) were **more likely to be furloughed or lose their jobs**

- **Latinx** (47.4%), **women of Two or More Races** (42.0%), and **women of lower household income levels** (48.5%) were **more likely to report a decrease in Total Monthly Income**

- **Monthly income decline equated to approximately a 10% median decrease in total annual income**

- **Women aged 25-45 with dependent children** in the home were **more likely to have their work impeded due to demands including home schooling/lack of childcare/work in the home**

- **Women at higher income levels** (27.4%) and **women aged 36-45** (42.0%) reported the **greatest impairment to their career advancement** due to COVID-19

# Permanent Commission on the Status of Women Survey

## HOUSING AND FOOD SECURITY

**21.3%** reported that their **housing security was impaired**

**11.5%** reported **decreased ability to buy food**

- **Housing and food security impairment were inversely correlated with household income level**, with 40.0% and 24.9% of women in the lowest income categories reporting housing and food security impairment compared to the average

## HEALTHCARE AND HEALTH

**35.4%** reported their **healthcare (affordability and accessibility) had been negatively impacted** by COVID

**49.8%** reported an **impairment to their mental health** due to COVID-19

- **Negative impact on mental health was the single biggest factor showing uniformity** across race, ethnic group, age, household income level and geography

## PERSONAL SAFETY

**14.1%** reported that they or someone they know was **experiencing a domestic violence situation**

**49.8%** reported that the situation **developed or got worse** since the COVID-19 pandemic began

**29.3%** indicated that their **workplace safety had been affected** by COVID-19

- The **impact of domestic violence spanned all** races and household income levels
- The most pronounced reason for the lack of workplace safety was **inadequate workplace regulations** concerning social distancing, mask-wearing, etc. (59.3%)

# Permanent Commission on the Status of Women Survey

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Encourage **training and on ramping for women** to recover lost jobs
- **Eliminate the gender wage gap** – provide equal pay for equal work
- Support **early childcare** – subsidize women/families who cannot afford current options, while retaining family choice
- **Expand quality childcare options** – through more licensing and training
- Financial **relief to renters and homeowners**
- Expand **access to affordable, accessible healthcare**
- Elevate **awareness of mental health issues**
- Elevate **domestic violence in all forms as a significant factor** in Court proceedings
- Provide statewide guidelines to **safely open schools** for the remainder of 2020-21 school year
- Support **college tuition relief and college loan forgiveness**
- **Expand role of non-profits and private sector** to derive creative solutions to lessen fiscal burden on state government

# Solutions: Free and Affordable Child Care

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## Affordable child care for families in workforce development

**Currently** - A young Mom or Dad who has lost their job, and needs training or education to make a job change or move up gets no help with child care.

CT needs skilled workers

**With ARPA** - Families will have affordable child care for workforce training and higher education activities. CT can add skilled workers in areas of need.

Cost: \$50 million

Impact: Families of 6,000 children

2

## Affordable child care for middle class families

- **Currently** - A single mom with two young children making \$55,000/year spends up to 40% of her income (\$24,000/year) on child care & is not eligible for assistance.
- **With ARPA** - Mom would pay \$5,500 per year, **cutting her child care bill by \$19,500 a year.**

Cost: \$26M

Impact: families of 4500 children, Expand access to 60% SMI

# Solution: Free and Affordable Preschool, Child Care, Summer Fun

## 3 Pay Parent Fees for Families in Care 4 Kids

- Cost: \$14M
- **Impact:** Provides 17,000 families free child care
- Those hardest hit by the pandemic get this relief
- 8 months
- Needs legislative approval for \$5.3 M

## 4 Smart Start Expansion

- Cost: \$7-\$10 million.
- **Impact:** Adds 800 public preschool spaces for families providing free or very low cost education and care
- Helps parents re-enter workforce
- 2 years

## 5 Free Summer Preschool for Families in State Funded School Readiness & CDC

- Cost: \$7 million
- **Impact:** 10,000 preschool families receive free summer programming, and enrichment.
- Pay Family Fees for SR &, CDC (Leg approval needed)
- FRC Ready for Kindergarten



## CT Highest in Nation Child Care Quality & Supporting Supply:

- \$120 million in Grants to 4,000 child care providers.
- CT will lead the nation in high quality child care by 2023.
  - Supports Accreditation for programs and supports educator credentials at a time of critical brain development
  - CT will pay providers significantly more for higher quality care.
    - Incentivises programs to seek Accreditation
    - Give parents more buying power in higher quality settings
    - Supports School Readiness
- **Expand shared services for child care businesses**

# Updates:

- Vaccine availability discussed by Comm. Dorantes with access to links with information
- Comm. Dorantes shared about visit with VP Harris and discussion around child welfare.
- Comm. Delphin-Rittmon discussed DMHAS enhanced resources materials now available working with 211 United Way.

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