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## “COVID-19 and the Increase in Domestic Violence”

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***Journal of Family Strengths***

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**“COVID-19 and the Increase in Domestic Violence”**

**Fall 2021**

**Guest Editor’s Introduction**

By Sharlette A. Kellum, Ph.D., Department of Administration of Justice, Texas Southern University

“The Rule of Thumb” is one of the oldest laws enacted to guide society in the way of domestic violence. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, President Joe Biden has been working to end gender-based violence. On International Women’s Day in 2021, President Joe Biden signed an Executive Order creating the White House Gender Policy Council, calling for the development of the first-ever government-wide National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence.

During the third week of March 2022, President Joe Biden signed into law the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022. The bipartisan legislation passed by Congress increases services and support for survivors from underserved and marginalized communities including LGBTQ+ and services in rural communities. The 2022 reauthorization of VAWA also provides special criminal jurisdiction of Tribal courts to cover non-Native perpetrators; establishes federal civil cause of action for individuals whose intimate visual images are disclosed without their consent; and enacts the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) Denial Notification Act.

Grateful and joyful are just two of the words that express how I feel as the Guest Editor for this Special Issue of *Journal of Family Strengths*. *JFS* is a highly sought after, respected journal that is published by CHILDREN AT RISK, Prairie View A&M University, and the Texas Medical Center Library. Edited by the CHILDREN AT RISK Institute, *JFS* serves to inform policy and practice affecting children and families by providing practical case studies and research on the transformative potential of program and policy change.

*JFS* brings together researchers, practitioners, child advocates, policymakers, and the public with the common goal of advancing all elements of children and family issues with a strengths perspective centered on improving services that promote and sustain family systems.

This issue delivers with academics from all over the world that contribute to the exponential growth in collaborative and collegial relationships with informed scholarship that underpins the work to create a society where survivors are supported, and all people can live free from abuse.

*JFS* Volume 21, Issue 1 manuscripts focus on men, women, and children in isolation with abusers. Some say if COVID-19 had never appeared, many would have lived long, fruitful lives. Would some of the people that are now labeled as abusers or killers have ever held that title if it were not for the conditions and outliers of COVID-19?

This issue provides a space for both scholars and practitioners/professionals to discuss the reaction to the pandemic in the United States and the rest of the world and their reaction to domestic violence and domestic homicide within the pandemic.

Additionally, this issue contributes to the limited but emerging literature in the area of self-control and coping mechanisms in a pandemic.

**Keywords:** domestic; violence; homicide; COVID 19; pandemic; marginalized; Houston; police; stress; family; vulnerable; populations; African American; racism; discrimination; Black; women; LGBTQ+; communities; refugees; Native Americans; intimate; partner; home; lockdown; criminal; justice; safety; county; Texas

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