



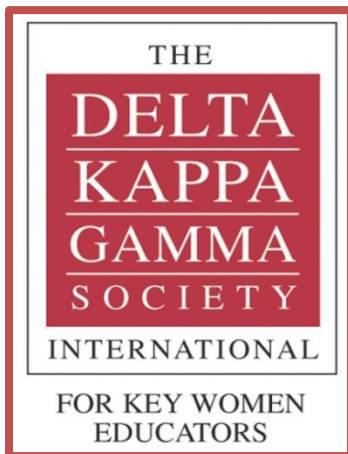
MA STATE ORGANIZATION of
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Baystater

Leading Women Educators Impacting Education Worldwide

VOLUME 66 ISSUE 1

Fall 2023



PROVOCATIVE
POINTS

SAVE THE DATE:
FALL
CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 21:
9:00-3:00
MSAA OFFICE,
FRANKLIN
PROGRAM AND
REGISTRATION
FORM ON P. 13-14

"Happy New Year!"

Educators understand this greeting when it is offered in August, and usually respond with a slow nod, a slight smile, and a longing for just a few more beach days. I can share that even after 8 years of retirement, there comes that one August morning when you sense the new year is right around the corner...the air smells like school.

And then, in a flash, it's October!

Each new year brings us the opportunity for a re-set, trying new strategies, making new connections, and to reach out to new members. DKG has a variety of ways to offer support to key women educators, and our primary goal for this biennium is to provide that support wherever and whenever we can.

This does not mean things will be the same!

We have streamlined our message, and we will reach out wherever we can. In the next few weeks I have the opportunity to speak at conferences for early childhood teachers, caregivers, directors, and elementary principals. With our impressive new MASO brochures in hand, I will be expounding on the benefits of membership in DKG, and welcoming educators where they are.

I am opening up an invitation to prospective members to our Fall Conference as it is providing a wonderful opportunity to explain and review what DKG can be for new and veteran members together.

Just look at our 4 presentations:

- Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Self Care with Drumming
- The Arts

Combined with fellowship, networking, and plenty of good food at an incredibly reasonable cost, why wouldn't you attend?

So, spread our message far and wide: **DKG is here for you!**

Your DKG Sister,

Jill Flanders (jillayneflanders@gmail.com)

ALPHA UPSILON STATE 2023-2025

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Alpha Theta	Kaaren Harrington

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Alpha Gamma	Tammy Edmonds and Beth Clark
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AREA III

Eta	Jo-Anne Butler and Tove Bendiksen
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Alpha	Elaine Karalekas
Alpha Epsilon	Lindsay Skelton

AREA V

Alpha Iota	Nanci Flaherty
Alpha Zeta	Gail Saccone

AREA VI

Epsilon	Irene Frangos Falite
Alpha Eta	Diane Swistak (Contact)

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I'd like to thank the following contributors to this issue: Jennifer Hoffer (Alpha Theta), Dianne Swistak (Alpha Eta), Irene Frangos Falite (Epsilon), Carol LaPolice (Alpha), Nanci Flaherty (Alpha Iota), Lynn Howard (Alpha Iota), and Diana Grady (Alpha Theta)

THANK YOU! Gail Saccone

Alpha Upsilon Organizational Health Survey

Submitted by Carol LaPolice, 2nd VP

The survey committee met at the home of Carol LaPolice in August to review and revise the survey. Then survey measures our chapter health and functioning among 8 measures: Purpose, Management, Ethics, Accountability, Relationships, Publicity, Communications, and Financials. We had a good response with 120 returns, thank you for your participation.

Results will be shared in a workshop for all attending the October 21 State Fall Conference in Franklin. Chapter Presidents bring your team to use the results to plan next steps. State trends will be shared and strategic planning will begin. Focus will make it happen!

U.S. FORUM NEWS

**DKG US FORUM INVITES YOU TO THE
NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SEMINAR**

**MARCH 10-13, 2024
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**LEARN TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
SPEAK UP, STAND UP, SOAR!**

Submitted by Carol LaPolice, MA State Organization, DKG Representative

Looking to become more involved or learn more about education advocacy? The US Forum is hosting their seminar March 11-13, 2024! Registration opens Oct 31, 2023. The steering committee organizes this event to include educational issues and Congressional speakers, advocacy training, hotel accommodations and organized trips to DC offices and tours. You can plan to meet with your Congressional leaders and staff- going en masse makes an impact! The congressmen always wonder what is happening when they see us coming into the Congressional offices, especially if we have our red jackets on!! If you've never been to D.C. you can add some time to visit the Smithsonian among other great museums, government buildings and parks. A couple of new museums have opened, too! To keep updated on educational issues in a timely fashion I send information periodically to chapter presidents to email to their members. You can register for the seminar and also access information from US Forum website <https://www.dkgusforum.org> (note new website ending).

NEWS FROM THE US FORUM

NORTHEAST REGION

Beverley Johns- NE Regional Representative

HR 4259

A recent bill, H.R. 4259, introduced by Rep. Marcus Molinaro from New York was approved 39-0 by the House Committee on Education and Workforce mark-up and now goes to the floor of the US House for consideration. Schools would be required to notify parents of students with disabilities that they can invite people with additional knowledge or expertise to participate in individualized education program meetings under the proposed Think Differently about Education Act. IEP members invited by parents can include people who know the child or who have special expertise about that child's special education services.

CHRONIC ABSENCES A MAJOR CONCERN

The percentage of chronically absent public-school students nearly doubled from 15% in the 2018-19 school year to around 30% in 2021-22, following the pandemic, according to a recent study that collected administrative data from 40 states and the District of Columbia. The data accounts for over 92% of K-12 public school students in the United States. This data is worrisome in light of declining test scores.

The report came on the same day as an Education Department announcement including initiatives to bolster state and district efforts to tackle absenteeism. The department cited evidence-based practices to drive attendance increases, like home-visiting and texting parents.

Although the US Forum does not advocate nor endorse specific candidates, in light of the Mental Health resolution, passed at the 7/10/2022 US Forum meeting in New Orleans, we want to update you on current legislation that addresses our goals and encourage you to take action if you so choose.

HR 744 Supporting the Mental Health of Educators and Staff Act of 2023 was referred to the House Subcommittee on Health (from the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, Education and the Workforce) in February 2023. See the attached summary of the bill. Between February and June 2023, the bill has acquired 10 co-sponsors. But it has not moved out of committee to the larger Committee nor on to the House floor for a vote.

In further good news, the Senate has also just introduced a companion bill S. 2530 on 7-26-23 by Senator Robert P. Casey (PA) that is the parallel bill to HR 744. *Similar encouragement needs to go to your senators.*

We need a Call to Action asking DKG members to review the bills and, if they are so inclined, to write their Congressional representatives asking them to:

- (1) co-sponsor the bill
- (2) urge its swift passage into law.

If your representative is already a co-sponsor, you might write a thank you and urge them to push to have it sent out of committee for a vote.

Now is the time for Congress members to hear about the needs of educators for mental health support. Educators and other school staff need to know that Congress is aware of their needs, and recognizes that stress and other mental health concerns are contributing to staffing shortages, and that Congress supports those educators. Congress took bi-partisan action in 2022 to pass the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act (HR 1667) recognized the need to support the mental health of first responders. *It is time to do the same for educators.*

Feel free to use this fact box to communicate with your Representative and Senators.

Fact Box: Mental Health in the Schools

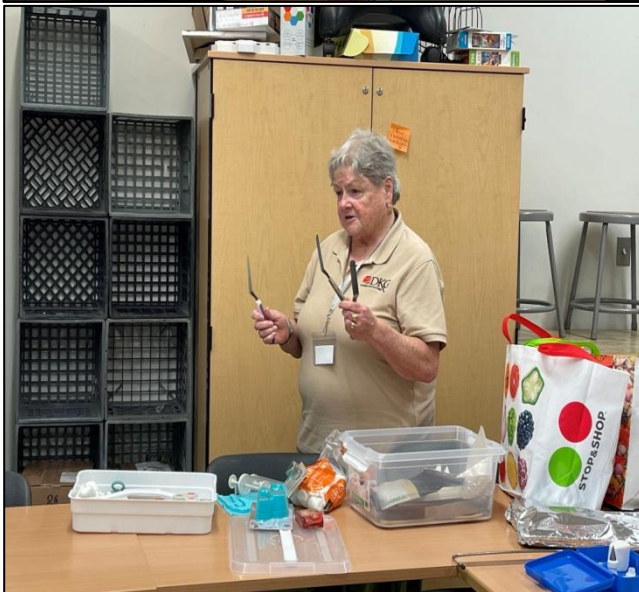
- Educators are 3 times more likely to report symptoms of depression than other working adults (RAND)
Nearly ¾ of teachers and 85% of principals report frequent stress compared to 1/3 of other adults.
- K-12 educators are ranked as having the highest burnout levels of ANY profession - 44% compared to 30% (Gallop Workforce Survey)
- Only 2% of teachers report their districts as offering extensive mental health supports (Merrimack)

An UPDATED ARTICLE, SEPTEMBER 24TH, from BEV JOHNSON has been added on p. 15

The Multi-State DKG Arts Retreat

Submitted by Lynn Howard, Alpha Iota

The first Multi-state DKG Arts Retreat with Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island held on August 9th in Hartford, Connecticut was a success! There were nine workshops, a Book Swap, and a Make and Take Creation Station. Thank you to the following DKG-MA members who hosted a workshop: Donna Brown (Take the Cake-Cake Decorating), Kit Dunlap and Diana Grady (Remnants and Echoes-Writing), Jennifer Hoffer (Chalk Away the Stress), Jessica Lupien (Dancing Through Time), and Julie Nussbaum (Artista Tiles of Seville). In addition to our workshop presenters, several other members from Massachusetts participated in the event. After the Retreat, Linda Paslov, the chair of the committee said “I simply cannot stop smiling! I had a wonderful time watching all of you create, collaborate, and converse during our Multi-State Creative Arts Retreat this past Wednesday. I also enjoyed learning about some creative arts that I have never tried before. (I truly wanted to attend ALL of the workshops.) Afterwards, I enjoyed reading some congratulatory emails that came my way. Thank you so much for your participation, as well as your positive feedback.” We’re hoping to do it again next summer, so put on your thinking caps and think about a workshop you can host.



~~BAYSTATEMENTS~~

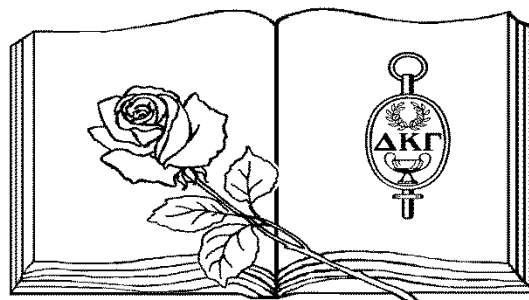
ALPHA Submitted by Carol LaPolice and Claire LaBonte



Alpha Chapter is very proud of their sister Kathy Balakier (far right) as she opened a Little Library in front of her home in Springfield. Kathy is retired from a long career teaching in elementary schools and had always wanted a Little Library. A friend gave her a premade box as a gift and her husband George helped by painting the box red, yellow, and blue. Neighbor and friends have gotten involved by giving Kathy books for the library. Kathy tries to have a little bit of everything in her library. As people “take a book and leave a book”, Kathy also tries to add in new books often so there’s always something new. Kathy is so excited to see her Little Library be so well received by children and adults alike. Congratulations Kathy for promoting reading and giving back to your community!



Alpha Member, Eleanor Parke, past Alpha Chapter President, receiving her 60th membership pin with Claire LaBonte, Past State President, and Alpha Chapter Presidents MaryJane Kostek and Dr. Ann Barone.



Alpha Article and Pictures continued on next page



CLAIRE: Alpha sisters are back in action for the next season. The Lunch Bunch met recently to enjoy each other's company at the local Pizzeria Uno. At our first business meeting we collected homework supplies for Homework Helpers (afterschool students) at the local Boys & Girls Club Family Center of Springfield. This is our traditional fall service project. They were all smiles when the supplies, along with a check, were delivered the next day. They are looking forward to our Mary McGrath's A Child's Wish Campaign.

CAROL: Alpha Chapter had their fall meeting at the Agawam Senior Center. Beginning with some Fellowship Fun with Dr Ann Barone. The icebreaker, Paper Bag Dramatics, brought us back together to use some creative thinking and laughter ensued! It was followed by a buffet hosted by the retirees and luscious desserts brought by our working members.

Following the business meeting presided by Chapter President Elaine Karalekas, we had a wonderful interactive presentation by Melissa Zeitz, you may remember Melissa from our MA ST State Convention celebrating our 75th Anniversary. Melissa's topic was *Demystifying Artificial Intelligence*, a hot topic for educators and the general public alike. Melissa is an Alpha Chapter member and currently teaches at the Alfred G. Zanetti Montessori School. A teacher of digital literacy and computer science teacher preK-8, she also coordinates CS (Computer Science) for All in the Springfield Public Schools. She is the President of CSTA Western Mass. Recognized as a Code.org Fundamental Facilitator, Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert, and HP Teaching Fellow, Melissa is highly regarded for her expertise across the DLCS field.



ALPHA ETA *Submitted by Dianne Swistak*

Alpha Eta members met to celebrate Cinco de Mayo eve at the home of Diane Green. We took care of chapter business, enjoyed Mexican themed snacks, and had fun during the auction of unique items, which raised money to support chapter projects for the coming year.

The year ended in June with our planning meeting. Interested members joined the executive board to discuss the many ideas for activities and meetings. We were able to draw up a schedule of meetings which we hope will appeal to our members.

Our first meeting for 2023-24 was a visit to the Hammond Castle in Gloucester in mid-August. Members learned about Mr. Hammond's life and work and had a guided tour of the castle, which was built to represent a medieval castle on one end, had a great hall in the middle in the Gothic cathedral style, and followed the design of a French chateau on the other end, which was the residence. After touring the grounds and taking pictures, members headed to the Causeway Restaurant (small, crowded and noisy) for a wonderful lunch.

The next meeting of Alpha Eta Chapter is scheduled for October.



ALPHA THETA *submitted by Jennifer Hoffer*

Alpha Theta kicks off the new year with a bang! Alpha Theta members gathered together Monday, September 18th, 2023 during a downpour. It was gratifying to see so many members brave the driving rains to come out to Home Plate Bay Street Grill! Attendees enjoyed some fellowship before getting down to business, starting off the evening with agreeing on a proposed budget. There was an intermission for a delicious dinner, before business picked back up - with the promise of dessert after the business portion of the meeting concluded. Upcoming events, such as the MASO Fall Workshop and Alpha Theta's Shakespeare and Tea in November were discussed, as well as glowing recommendations for the State's online book club. Annette Shaw thanked members for the donations of underwear and socks for the Mansfield Task Force assigned to help incoming immigrants, and she let members know that she would be in touch when the Task Force is ready to accept more clothing donations. The business concluded with the introduction of three new member candidates, two of whom were present. All three are slated to be inducted during the November meeting! The evening ended on a high note with ice cream and more fellowship.

Alpha Theta pictures on next page



EPSILON *Submitted by Irene Frangos Falite*

Wow! Autumn is here again. Enjoy the beauty of this colorful season!

Epsilon Chapter met on Tuesday, August 1st at the Wardhurst Restaurant in Peabody, MA for some friendship, good food and planning for the upcoming year. Brainstorming ideas and places for our meetings and events with laughter and good conversation made for a great afternoon. We will continue to discuss new ideas which include our fundraising projects too.

On Sunday, September 10th we had a lovely luncheon at the home of our sister Marie Cassidy. We thank her for hosting us in her elegant home in Salem, MA. After that we went to tour the Stephen Phillips House. This is a historic house and museum located in the McIntire District in Salem, MA.

The focus of our private tour was on the women's role in the home. A beautiful home with rich history told by a wonderful archivist named Abby made for a very complete afternoon. So many questions about the family and their lives were shared. It was amazing to see the artifacts, paintings, etc. in each room and certainly is a tour not to be missed! The Phillips House is now owned by Historic New England and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. If you are going to Salem, be sure to visit this historic home.

In December, our festive Holiday Celebration will take place in a venue soon to be announced.

We wish everyone a blessed holiday season....coming too soon every year!

Epsilon pictures on next page



ALPHA IOTA *Submitted by Nanci Flaherty*

On June 24, 2023, Alpha Iota had the pleasure of celebrating our 50th Anniversary. Alpha Iota was chartered on June 16, 1973. Margaret Jackson was the founder and mentor in the early years along with Mary Connolly and Dr. Catherine Maney. Alpha Iota charter members in attendance included: Ann Blair, Frances Doherty, Eleanor Farinato, and Maureen Walsh. Charter members that were unable to attend included: Elizabeth (Betty) King and Margaret Blake. Charter members who were given a moment of silence included: Patricia Armstrong, Sandra Carle, and Yvonne Husbands. Incoming State President Jillayne Flanders was our guest of honor. A Celebration of Life ceremony was held to celebrate the lives of Mary Gaughan and Sandy Carle. The Margaret M. Jackson award was presented to Joan Rego, who received a well-deserved round of applause. Following a delicious lunch, the gathering concluded with a Recommitment Ceremony led by Past State President and Past Chapter President, Joyce Gleason.

In the spirit of keeping the membership of Alpha Iota engaged in activities, our annual Holiday Boutique is scheduled for Saturday November 18, 2023, 12 noon at Mia Regazza in Marshfield where we'll hold our silent auctions and raffle for the Amelia Armstrong Grant in Aid. Note it on your calendar!! We hope to see you there. Alpha Iota has recently learned of the passing of Margaret Blake, one of our founding members. Margaret passed away at the age of 97 in July 2023 surrounded by loving family and friends. We offer our condolences to her loved ones.

On a personal note, I thank you all for your patience as we navigate our membership drive this year. We were in the very capable and dedicated hands of our beloved Sandy Carle for so long that we found ourselves a bit lost without her. All will work itself out but thank you for your understanding - it is greatly appreciated!

Yours in Sisterhood, Nanci Flaherty

Alpha Iota pictures of 50th Anniversary on next page

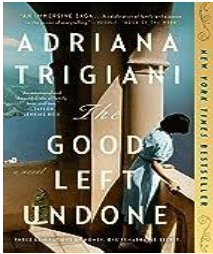


THE DKG-MA VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB

~Upcoming Books~

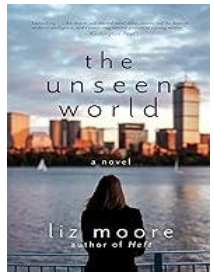
Submitted by Lynn Howard and Diana Grady

The DKG-MA Virtual Book Group has continued to meet each month having lively discussions about the books they've read. The group is open to all members. We don't take attendance or kick people out so don't worry if you can't join us every month. If you see a book that interests you feel free to join the discussion! We usually meet on the second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. However, in October due to the holiday on October 9th, we won't be meeting until October 16th. If you want to join us send me an email at lynnphoward4@gmail.com if you aren't already on the mailing list for the Book Group. I'll send you the Zoom link. Here are the books and dates for the upcoming meetings:



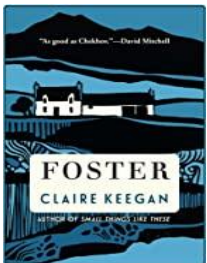
OCTOBER 16th: THE GOOD LEFT UNDONE by Adriana Trigiani

Matelda, the Cabrelli family's matriarch, has always been brusque and opinionated. Now, as she faces the end of her life, she is determined to share a long-held secret with her family about her own mother's great love story: with her childhood friend, Silvio, and with dashing Scottish sea captain John Lawrie McVicar. **Adriana Trigiani will speak at UMass Dartmouth on October 15.**



NOVEMBER 13th: THE UNSEEN WORLD by Liz Moore

Ada Sibelius embarks on a mission to uncover her father's secrets: a process that carries her from childhood to adulthood. What Ada discovers on her journey into a virtual universe will keep the reader riveted until *The Unseen World's* heart-stopping, fascinating conclusion.



DECEMBER 11th: FOSTER by Claire Keegan

Claire Keegan's piercing contemporary classic *Foster* is a heartbreaking story of childhood, loss, and love; a story of astonishing emotional depth, *Foster* showcases Keegan's great talent.

Upcoming Events:

October 21, 2023 Saturday: Fall Conference

9:00-3:00 MSAA Offices, Franklin MA

October 17, 2023 Tuesday: Executive Board Meeting

7:00-8:30 This will be a remote meeting

February 3, 2024 Saturday: Winter Board Meeting

9:00-10:30 This will be a remote meeting.

May 11, 2024 Saturday: Spring Conference

9:00-3:30 MSAA Offices, Franklin MA

FALL CONFERENCE PROGRAM



DKG Fall Conference October 21, 2023

8:15 - 8:55 Set up and Breakfast items available

9:00 Welcome
Diana and Jill

9:05 - 10:15 Leadership Presentation from our Texas Team: "What we learned and practiced"
Diana, Linda, Martha

10:15 - 10:25 Break

10:25 - 11:35 Chapter Strengthening: "What's data got to do with it?"
Carol LaPolice

What we learned from our MA survey this summer. We will look at trends regarding our organizational health. Bring members of your Chapter along to take a deeper dive into your own results, and together we will begin strategic planning that can be implemented right away. We are in this work together!

11:35 - 12:00 Board Update and Votes: Jill

12:00 - 12:45 Lunch

12:45 - 1:45 Drums Alive - Kelly Sipe

Cardio drumming for all ages and abilities. It is a mind-body exercise that uses music and patterns to improve overall health. "You will be having so much fun that you won't realize you are exercising." Beyond Your Limits Inclusive Fitness and Recreation (BYL Fit and Rec)

1:45 - 1:55 Break

1:55 - 2:55 DKG Multi-State Creative Arts Festival: Lynn Howard, Diana
Our state sisters will report on the activities they offered and participated in at the Festival held August 9 in Hartford CT.

2:55-3:00 Closing, DKG Song
Jill

FALL WORKSHOP ♦ MA STATE ORGANIZATION, DKG ♦ 2023

Saturday, October 21, 2023

Member & Guest Registration Form

Massachusetts School Administrators' Association Headquarters

33 Forge Parkway, Franklin, MA 02038 Phone: 508-541-7997

[CLICK HERE](#) for directions.

Registration Deadline Date: October 14, 2023

*To minimize confusion and errors, **one person per registration form**, please. Non-member guests are welcome.*

Please complete a separate registration form for your guest and indicate your name as their host.

Name: _____ Address: _____

Your Chapter _____ or ☐ I am a Guest.

State Office/Committee (if applicable) _____ Chapter Office (if applicable) _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Registration, Food & Workshop Program

\$25.00

Please check all boxes that apply to you. One price includes all offerings. We do need a count.

☐ **Breakfast:** Selection of fruit, yogurt, small Danish and pastries. Coffee, tea, and juice.

☐ **Lunch:** Sandwiches: Chicken salad, tuna salad, and egg salad on finger rolls; roast beef on focaccia bread & ham & cheese on focaccia bread. Tossed salad, potato and pasta salads. mini cannoli and pastries. Coffee, tea, soda, and juice.

☐ **Afternoon Snack:** Cookies

Check if applicable: _____ I require gluten-free food. _____ I require vegetarian food.

Send registration & your check in the amount of \$25.00 payable to: MA State Organization, DKG Int'l

Mail to: Linda Stewart, PO Box 564, Hyannis Port, MA 02647

Please call 508-725-5442 if mailing your registration after 10/9/2023

While we do not have a block of rooms, for nearby overnight accommodations you may contact:

The Residence Inn by Marriott 4 Forge Parkway, Franklin MA 02038 508-541-8188

NEWS FROM THE US FORUM
NORTHEAST REGION
Beverley Johns- NE Regional Representative
September 24, 2023

FACTS ACT:

The FACTS Act was introduced this week with bi-partisan support by U.S. Representative Susan Bonamici from Oregon and U.S. Representative Kevin Kiley from California. FACTS is the Fentanyl Awareness for Children and Teens in Schools. It would create a federal task force to improve federal responses to youth misuse of synthetic opioids, and overdoses. It also calls for federal data collection about the prevalence in secondary schools and provides additional resources to schools. Both U.S. Representatives are looking for additional co-sponsors.

The FACTS Act is endorsed by: Song for Charlie; American Federation of Teachers (AFT); National Education Association (NEA); National PTA; National Association of School Psychologists (NASP); AASA, The School Superintendents Association; National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP); National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP); National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI); American Psychological Association (APA); National Association of Counties (NACo); and US Conference of Mayors.

UPCOMING ZOOM:

The Mental Health Subcommittee of the US Forum is pleased to announce its latest Wellness opportunity. Have you ever heard of “Forest Bathing?” What is it? What does it have to do with wellness? Be sure to attend on Zoom on October 4, 2023, at 8 p.m. Eastern. Linda McLean is a member of Beta Chi Chapter in Michigan and has studied the practice for about three years now and has become a Certified Guide through the Forest Therapy Hub group based in Spain (<https://foresttherapyhub.com/>).

The title of her presentation is: "Forest Bathing - For the Health of It."

A short description - Forest Bathing comes from the practice of Shinrin Yoku which began in Japan in the 1980s. It is a well-researched and proven health-based program that uses a slow and mindful walk in a forest or other nature area with specific activities to open one's senses and connect with nature. A Forest Bathing Guide provides the specific sequential steps to lead the group through these activities. The practice of Forest Bathing can be the catalyst for a new sense of well-being that will last a lifetime.

You can either pre-register at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdjSILzI3nf9TT4WfmSD-0LUH_QI2leKz2XEqWuqZOxR9NbVA/viewform
or just click the link below.

Topic: Bev Johns' Zoom Meeting for Forest Bathing

Time: Oct 4, 2023 08:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83217769298?pwd=OG9HM3VyOENkVGxRZnNmYzYwVWZQU09>

Meeting ID: 832 1776 9298

Passcode: 435883

One tap mobile

+13052241968,,83217769298#,,,,*435883# US

+13126266799,,83217769298#,,,,*435883# US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 832 1776 9298

Passcode: 435883