

INSIDE

What's the Best Response
to Mental Health Crises? 18

America's Religious
Future 28

The Pew Charitable Trusts

Trust

An aerial photograph of a fishing fleet in turquoise water. The boats are small, blue and yellow, and are arranged in a loose pattern across the water. The water is a vibrant greenish-blue, and the boats are scattered throughout the frame, some closer to the foreground and others further away. The overall scene is a wide expanse of water with many small boats.

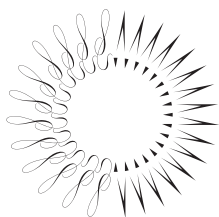
Fewer Boats, More Fish

Pew helped reduce harmful fleet subsidies that drive overfishing, expand broadband to more Americans, and save consumers billions in 2022.



David Jennings/Digital First Media/Boulder Daily Camera via Getty Images

TIME CAPSULE



In 2008, The Pew Charitable Trusts determined there was no standardized, reliable nationwide source for basic information about where and when to vote and what was on the ballot. That was the beginning of the voting information project—a partnership with state election officials and leading technology companies, including Google, Facebook, AT&T, and Microsoft. During the 2010 election, the project offered polling place information to 10 million U.S. voters. Two years later, during the 2012 presidential election, polling place locations and candidate information were accessed by more than 25 million people around the nation using the voting information project. Pew turned the project over to Democracy Works, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that continues to ensure that important information remains an essential part of the Election Day experience for American voters.

CONTENTS

-
- 2 **Notes From the President:** Service to Democracy for 75 Years—and Counting
 - 4 **The Big Picture:** Center City Philadelphia, where The Pew Charitable Trusts was founded 75 years ago.
 - 6 **Noteworthy:** Pew Scholar Wins Nobel Prize; More Americans Support Than Oppose the #MeToo Movement; Philadelphia Ponders Property Taxes
-

8 **Reaching New Horizons**
As the world evolved—offering new problems and opportunities—Pew rose to the challenge, finding ways forward in 2022 to help communities and people thrive.

18 **When People Face a Mental Health Crisis, What's the Best Response?**
New efforts in Texas diffuse potentially volatile situations and provide care to those in need.
By Carol Kaufmann

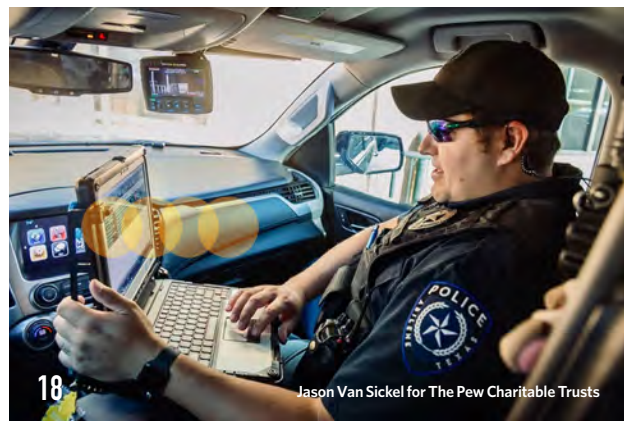
24 **A Global Deal for a Healthier Ocean**
Billions of dollars in harmful government subsidies to commercial fleets drive overfishing around the world, but that could be ending soon.
By John Briley

28 **News:** What Is the Future of Religion in America?

30 **Stateline:** Black Families Fall Further Behind on Homeownership

32 **On The Record:** The Dreadful Toll of Wildlife-Vehicle Collisions—and What We Can Do About It

33 **Talking Point:** To Tackle Plastic Pollution, Partnership Helps Companies See Their Role in the Problem



34 **Return on Investment:** Pew improves policy, informs the public, and invigorates civic life

38 **End Note:** Women Now Outnumber Men in the U.S. College-Educated Labor Force

Cover: Oleh Slobodeniuk/Getty Images

Service to Democracy for 75 Years— and Counting



In this issue of *Trust*, we reflect on a challenging year and look forward to our 75th anniversary in 2023. Although the world has changed dramatically since 1948, our efforts to use data to make a difference continue to create both common ground and tangible progress.

One touchstone for us is encouraging an effective and responsive U.S. democracy. In the aftermath of World War II, our founders only had to look to a scarred and rebuilding Europe for a sign of how fragile democracy can be. And while America was then entering an era of postwar optimism that inspired their early investments, they knew that maintaining a strong democracy requires vigilance and constant effort.

In a healthy republic, government exists to serve the people. Their voices are heard, their votes counted, and their desires honored. As you'll see in the following pages, the Pew Research Center continues to give voice to the public, illuminating issues, identifying trends, and helping policymakers understand the needs and opinions of an increasingly diverse citizenry.

"I am optimistic that diverse perspectives, civil public debate, respectful dialogue, and thoughtful compromise can lead to positive change."

Although national leaders can set the agenda by providing resources and forging consensus, the states are often the most effective laboratories of democracy, places for new ideas to meet newly developing—as well as the most stubborn—societal problems. Our efforts to help individuals and communities thrive include a range of partnerships at the state level that build new strategies to broaden access to credit, savings, and health services. Built on evidence, facts, and a lot of listening, new approaches are making government more responsive and effective.

As I look back on Pew's activities last year, I'm struck by the fact that many of the challenges we're addressing didn't exist 75 years ago. As we grew from a local to an international organization, the health of the environment emerged as a critical concern.

The overfishing of our ocean, for example, was underway by the middle of the past century, but science didn't recognize it—or the role of government subsidies that incentivized more aggressive fishing methods. But with Pew's research helping lead the way, the World Trade Organization last year voted to end those subsidies—a win for local fishers around the globe.

With progress like this, I am optimistic that diverse perspectives, civil public debate, respectful dialogue, and thoughtful compromise can lead to positive change. I am grateful for your partnership as we celebrate the past, meet today's challenges, and work toward a brighter future.



Susan K. Urahn, *President and CEO*

Trust

Winter 2023 | Vol. 25, No. 1

Board of Directors

Christopher Jones, Chair
Henry P. Becton Jr.
Robert H. Campbell
Susan W. Catherwood
Raynard Kington, M.D., Ph.D.
J. Howard Pew II
Joseph N. Pew V
Mary Catharine Pew, M.D.
Sandy Ford Pew
Willa Seldon
Susan K. Urahn

President and CEO

Susan K. Urahn

Executive Vice President, External Affairs

Melissa Skolfield

Senior Vice President, Chief Communications Officer

Nasserie Carew

Senior Director, Editorial

Bernard Ohanian

Editor

Daniel LeDuc

Senior Editor

Demetra Aposporos

Creative Director

Dan Benderly

Art Director

Richard Friend

Lead Designer

Cara Bahniuk

Photo Editor

Louisa Barnes

Staff Writers

John Briley
Carol Kaufmann
Howard Lavine
Keith Lindblom

One Commerce Square
2005 Market Street, Suite 2800
Philadelphia, PA 19103-7077

901 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20004-2037

pewtrusts.org

THE BIG PICTURE

The Benjamin Franklin Parkway runs through the heart of Center City in Philadelphia, where The Pew Charitable Trusts was founded by two sons and two daughters of Sun Oil Co. founder Joseph N. Pew and his wife, Mary Anderson Pew. This year marks Pew's 75th anniversary and over those years the organization has worked in its hometown to support social service and civic organizations and the arts even as its other projects have expanded throughout the nation and around the globe.





Elevated Angles for VISIT PHILADELPHIA®



Carolyn R. Bertozzi stands in front of the Sapp Center for Science Teaching and Learning at Stanford University on Oct. 5, 2022, shortly after Nobel Prize winners were announced. *Justin Sullivan/Getty Images*

Pew Scholar Wins Nobel Prize

BY KEITH LINDBLOM

On Oct. 4, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced that Carolyn R. Bertozzi, Morten Meldal, and K. Barry Sharpless were awarded the 2022 Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

The academy cited the scientists' "development of click chemistry and bioorthogonal chemistry" as their standout contributions to the chemical sciences, and a great benefit to humankind. Their developments are "about making difficult processes easier," the academy said.

Sharpless and Meldal discovered a method that makes it possible for scientists to build complex molecules using simple, dependable reactions. It has been likened to the design of Lego pieces, which snap together in predictable ways, simplifying the process for building complicated chemical compounds. Bertozzi provided new functionality to click chemistry by pioneering a development known as bioorthogonal chemistry.

Bertozzi was named a Pew scholar in the biomedical sciences in 1996, a time when she was researching glycans—complex sugar molecules that play a central role in allowing cells to "talk" to one another and in regulating the immune system. The molecules are difficult to track inside living organisms, so Bertozzi set out to visualize them. Her work led to a new technique to attach glycans to imaging molecules using chemical reactions that can be done within living systems without disrupting normal processes. The method takes its name from its success in avoiding interference with normal cell behavior—bio-orthogonal, as she described it. The knowledge derived

from her research is helping investigators explore how cancers and other illnesses develop, and is providing novel approaches for creating therapeutics.

"Like all of us, I've had family members and close friends who suffered from ailments that were so untreatable," Bertozzi said in an interview following the announcement. "It was always my hope that, as a scientist, I could make some contributions that might benefit human health, either in the near term or the long term, or not even necessarily in my lifetime. That was always my goal."

Today, Bertozzi is at Stanford University, where she is director of the school's Sarafan ChEM-H (Chemistry, Engineering and Medicine for Human Health) institute, the Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Professor in the School of Humanities and Sciences, and professor of chemical and systems biology and of radiology.

The Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences was created in 1985. Each year, the program—the first to carry the Pew name—recognizes promising young researchers and provides them with grants, creating a community of more than 1,000 scientists. Bertozzi is the third Pew scholar to be awarded a Nobel prize in as many years, and the sixth in the program's history. Previous Nobel winners are David J. Julius in 2021 and Charles M. Rice in 2020, both for physiology or medicine; Carol Greider for physiology or medicine in 2009; Craig Mello for physiology or medicine in 2006; and Roderick MacKinnon for chemistry in 2003.

More Americans Support Than Oppose the #MeToo Movement

About half of Americans who have heard of the “MeToo” movement express support for it, while 21% say they oppose it, according to a Pew Research Center survey conducted last summer. There are wide partisan gaps in these views, with Democrats roughly three times as likely as Republicans to support the #MeToo movement.

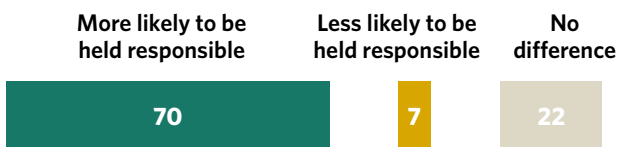
The movement was founded by activist Tarana Burke, who coined the term “MeToo” in 2006, but it gained widespread attention in 2017 when actress Alyssa Milano urged victims of sexual harassment and assault to share their stories on social media and the “MeToo” hashtag went viral as millions did so. In the years that followed, hundreds of powerful men lost their jobs or roles after accusers alleged that they had been victims of harassment or assault by these men in the workplace.

The survey found that Americans see some changes in how sexual harassment and assault are handled in the workplace. Seven in 10 U.S. adults—including majorities across demographic groups and partisan lines—say that, compared with five years ago, people who commit sexual harassment or assault in the workplace are now more likely to be held responsible for their actions. And about 6 in 10 say that those who report harassment or assault at work are now *more likely* to be believed. These views are echoed even by a majority of those who oppose the #MeToo movement overall.

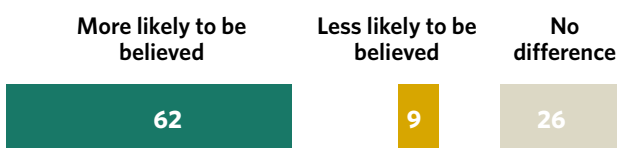
—Demetra Aposporos

Most say those who commit sexual harassment or assault at work are now more likely to be held responsible

*% saying that, compared with five years ago, people who **commit** sexual harassment or assault in the workplace are now ...*



*% saying that, compared with five years ago, people who **report** experiencing sexual harassment or assault in the workplace are now ...*



Source: Pew Research Center

Philadelphia Ponders Property Taxes

Many Philadelphians rank the city’s property tax—which helps fund both city government and the school district—as being less fair than its wage and sales taxes, according to a poll undertaken last year by Pew’s Philadelphia policy and research initiative. Questions of fairness aside, the city’s property taxes are lower than those in nine out of 10 other large cities—Atlanta; Baltimore; Boston; Chicago; Columbus, Ohio; Houston; New York; Pittsburgh; and Washington. Only Detroit came in lower than Philadelphia.

And less of Philadelphia’s general fund revenue comes from property taxes than in many other big cities—14.5% in the 2020 fiscal year, when the median for these 10 peer cities was 31.5%. Many elected officials have been opposed to increasing reliance on the tax, citing a widespread lack of confidence in it fueled by a long history of inconsistent and seemingly unfair assessments.

Philadelphia, which has one of the highest homeownership rates among lower-income households of any major city in the country, has put programs in place that reduce property taxes to assist those households.

Questions about the city’s tax mix have drawn renewed attention as officials ponder how to promote economic growth and equity in the wake of the pandemic. Some business leaders and economists have urged raising property taxes and reducing the city’s heavy reliance on wage and business taxes, which is relatively uncommon among major cities. Such a change, they say, might spur economic development. And property taxes, which are relatively stable from year to year, fare better during economic downturns.

“This is a key moment for Philadelphia’s property tax system,” said Elinor Haider, senior director of Pew’s Philadelphia program. “Over the past decade, city officials have taken steps to make the tax fairer, by bolstering tax relief programs for homeowners, improving assessments’ accuracy, and making the relationship between assessments and tax bills easier to understand.” How well those adjustments are received, along with the new assessments, will go a long way toward determining whether Philadelphians become more accepting of the property tax.

—Demetra Aposporos





REACHING NEW HORIZONS

As the world evolved—offering new problems and opportunities—Pew rose to the challenge in 2022, finding ways to help communities and people thrive.

The Buccaneer Archipelago is off the coast of Western Australia in the Kimberley region. Last year, the Kimberley saw the creation of three new marine parks jointly owned with Traditional Owners as well as a new national park that will be managed by the government and Traditional Owners. *Philip Schubert*

Driven by the economic upheaval of the digital age, the rise of political polarization, and the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, American journalism is in turmoil. The Pew Research Center in June published a survey of nearly 12,000 U.S.-based journalists to examine their views on the industry. Overall, journalists recognize many challenges facing their business, but largely feel satisfaction and fulfillment in their jobs.

Journalists are passionate about what they do but have deep concerns about the news industry

% of U.S. journalists who ...

77%

Would pursue a career in journalism again



75%

Are extremely or very proud of their work



70%

Are very or somewhat satisfied with their job



72%

Use a negative word to describe the news industry—words like **STRUGGLING** and **CHAOS** are most common



57%

Are extremely or very concerned about future restrictions on press freedoms



71%

Say made-up news and information is a very big problem for the country



Source: Pew Research Center

JOURNALISM



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Michael Fousert/Unsplash

OCEAN

With a Pew study showing that governments pay \$22 billion a year in harmful subsidies to fishers, the 164 members of the World Trade Organization agreed in June to curb that spending—a driving force behind overfishing around the globe. (Read more on Page 24.)

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

**David and Lucile Packard Foundation,
Adessium Foundation**



Cara Bahniuk/The Pew Charitable Trusts

RETIREMENT SAVINGS

When people with an employer-sponsored retirement plan such as a 401(k) retire or change jobs, they often roll their savings into an individual retirement account, or IRA. A June report from Pew's retirement savings project showed the risk in those moves. Mutual funds often charge large employer plans lower fees than they do individual investors, and an increase as small as 0.19 percentage points can cost a person tens of thousands of dollars over time. The report called for clearer explanations about fees for consumers—and concluded that if investors are happy with an employer's plan, they may want to stick with it even after leaving their jobs or be sure to find IRA funds with equivalent or lower expenses than in their 401(k).

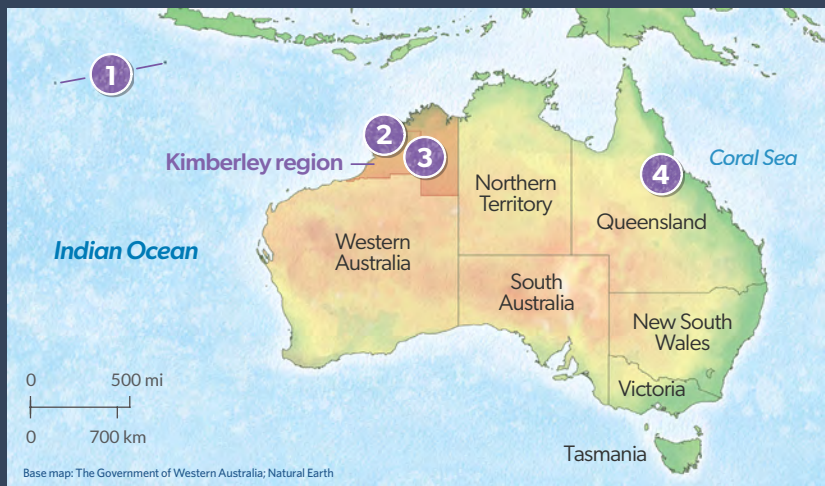
AUSTRALIA

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

**Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy,
Wyss Foundation**

WaterFrame/Alamy

Australia remains one of the wildest and most intact places on Earth. And last year the government sought to continue that distinction with several new protections on lands and waters. Surrounding the Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands, two marine parks announced in March safeguard an area of 287,000 square miles that houses unique underwater reefs and rare aquatic species. In the Kimberley region, three new marine parks—the Bardi Jawi Gaarra, Mayala, and Maiyalam, which are jointly owned with Traditional Owners Bardi Jawi, Mayala, and Dambeemangarddee—together cover more than 2,300 square miles. Also in the Kimberley, Gooniyandi Traditional Owners together with the government announced the jointly managed Warlibirri National Park along the Martuwarra Fitzroy River, which protects nearly 40,000 acres. And the Queensland Government acquired a new 88,000-acre property for a future national park on the Gudjala First Nations people’s traditional country. Pew has been working with Indigenous leaders throughout Australia to assist their efforts in establishing new conservation areas on the island continent.



- ① Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- ② Bardi Jawi Gaarra, Mayala, Maiyalam marine parks; Buccaneer Archipelago
- ③ Warlibirri National Park, Fitzroy Crossing
- ④ The Lakes future national park, Porcupine

WILDLIFE MIGRATION



Each year in the U.S., approximately 200 people die and 26,000 are injured in collisions with wildlife. In 2022, the federal government and eight states—California, Colorado, New Mexico, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming—adopted more than a dozen laws or policies to protect wildlife habitat and fund wildlife bridges, tunnels, culverts, and fencing that conserve well-traveled animal corridors and guide migratory herds away from traffic. Pew’s U.S. public lands and rivers conservation project provided significant technical assistance for these measures, which will safeguard animals, ecosystems, and people.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

**William and Flora
Hewlett Foundation**

Björn Aliche / 500px via Getty Images

SEABED MINING

In September, California banned the seabed mining of hard minerals within 3 miles of shore, building on previous prohibitions by Washington and Oregon to create a protected area along the entire West Coast. The action establishes one of the largest marine areas in the world—more than 7,700 square miles—where seabed mining is explicitly and proactively banned by statute. Pew provided technical assistance to the Legislature. Seabed mining can harm sensitive habitats, for example, from dredges destroying corals and sponges, which could in turn hurt communities that depend on fishing, tourism, and cultural resources.



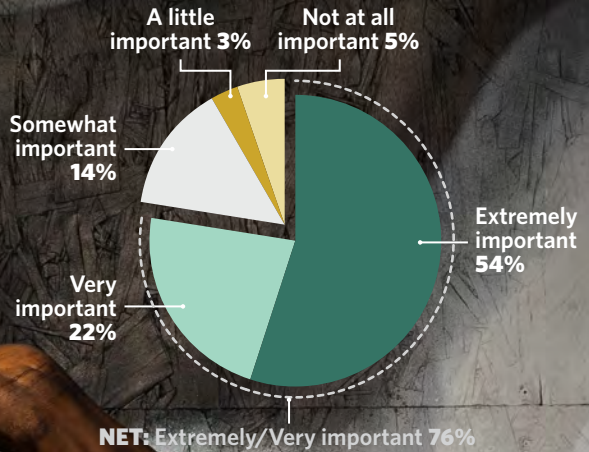
Ned Drummond, The Pew Charitable Trusts

BLACK AMERICANS

An April report from the Pew Research Center found that 76% of Black Americans say that being Black is extremely or very important to how they think about themselves. The survey, coming at a time of growing racial consciousness in the U.S., was one of a series of projects exploring the diversity of views and experiences among Black Americans on religion, identity, racial inequality, institutional and social change, household finances, history, science, and politics.

Most Black adults say being Black is very important to how they see themselves

% of Black adults who say being Black is ___ to how they think about themselves



Source: Pew Research Center



Kerem Yucel/AFP via Getty Images

CHILE

In July, the Chilean government designated the Tictoc Golfo de Corcovado Marine Park to protect species such as blue, humpback, and pilot whales and Chilean dolphins, among others, across 393.5 square miles of richly biodiverse waters. Development of the park's management plan will involve Indigenous and local communities, who were instrumental in creating this area, and be supported by Pew's Chilean Patagonia project and the Melimoyu Foundation. Last year, the government also announced the new 286-square-mile Parque Nacional Los Glaciares in the Andean metropolitan region.



Wirestock/Getty Images

PUBLIC PENSIONS

When Pew began researching public employee pension plans in 2007, only about a third of the states were making the necessary investments to meet future obligations to their retirees. Since then, Pew's public sector retirement project has provided technical assistance to more than 20 state and local governments to help them reform and strengthen their pension systems. Last October, the project released a report showing that states collectively had met a crucial benchmark for minimum funding in 2020—it was a first in two decades, showing many states are on the cusp of long-term solvency and sustainability.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

**Laura and John
Arnold Foundation**


CONSUMER FINANCE

Most of the nation's 25 largest banks over the past year reduced or eliminated overdraft fees and nonsufficient fund fees—a move poised to save consumers more than \$4 billion annually. The federal government reported that consumers paid \$15.5 billion in these fees in 2019. Pew's research has highlighted the need for these changes and found they should have outsize benefits for Black and Hispanic customers who pay a disproportionate share of these fees. Also last year, three large banks launched affordable small-dollar loans that meet Pew's standards, so six of the top eight banks now offer a near-instant small loan accessible to many of their customers who have used payday and similar lenders. Borrowing \$500 for three months from a payday lender costs \$450 on average; the banks are charging no more than \$30.

PHILADELPHIA

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

William Penn Foundation



Like many U.S. cities, Philadelphia's economy was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the city's recovery has lagged the nation's. To help city leaders navigate the future, Pew's Philadelphia research and policy initiative in February released a series of reports on the city's fiscal future, including "Four Possible Scenarios for Philadelphia's Economy." Based on projections for post-COVID economic growth and key factors such as the return of in-person activity, the analysis created scenarios for job growth or contraction across sectors and populations. The pandemic has created significant changes in employment and economic behavior that have the potential to shift businesses' and households' decision-making into the future.

Chris Henry/Unsplash

BROADBAND

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

ConnectED New York, a sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, supported by the Ford Foundation and Schmidt Futures

With an unprecedented \$65 billion federal investment in high-speed broadband available to the states, Pew formed the Broadband Education and Training Initiative, which last year worked with 30 states and territories. The no-cost support helps local officials make the most of the new revenue and highlights Pew's research into effective strategies and other technical assistance available to expand broadband. A Pew-sponsored forum in June brought together hundreds of state and federal officials, digital equity advocates, industry experts, and academic researchers to share ideas and best practices. And to keep momentum on expanding accessibility to this essential technology, Pew and its partners took on leadership of the National Broadband Resource Hub. The hub will empower government and community leaders to build better broadband by providing educational resources and connecting broadband practitioners.

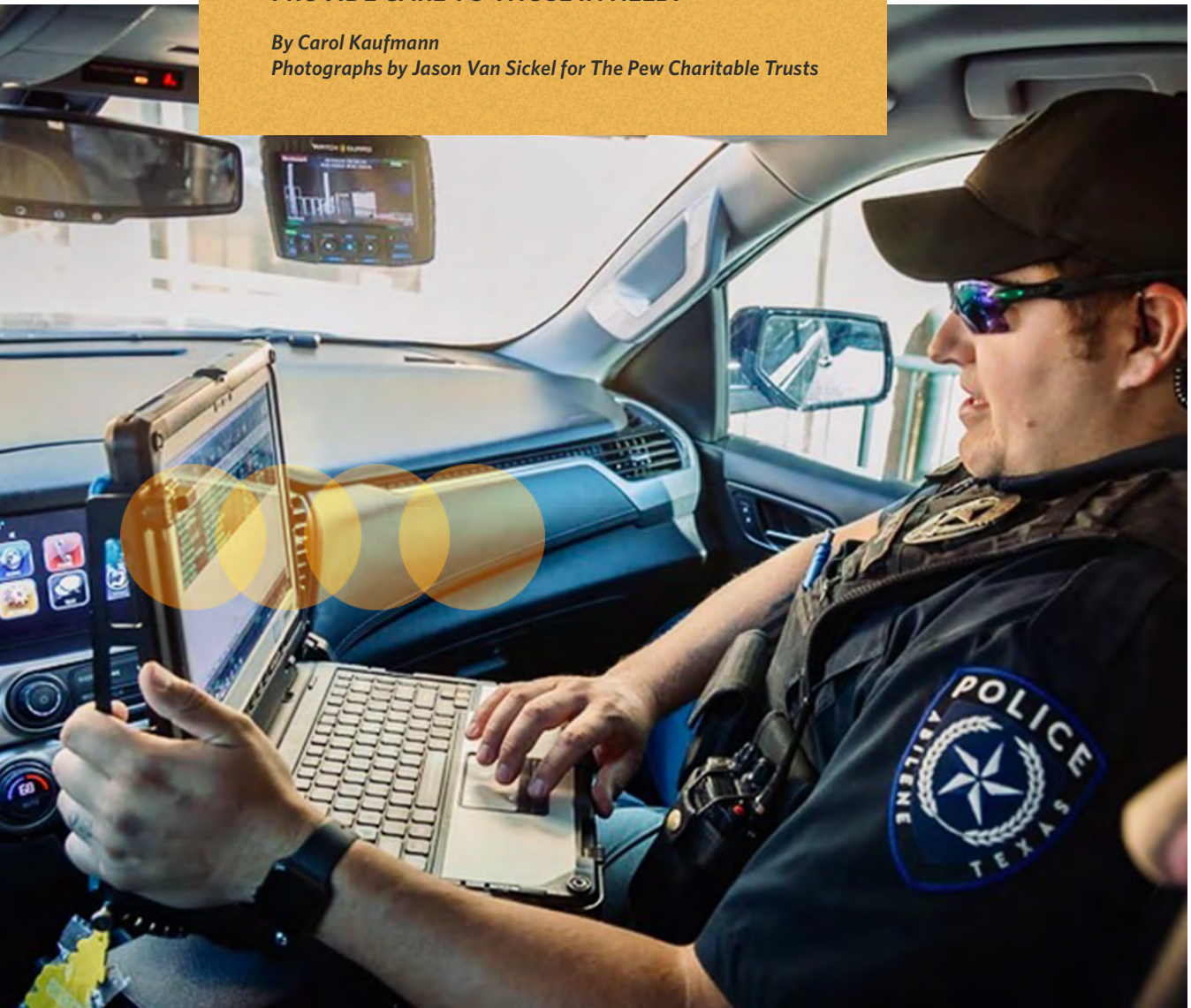
Derek Davis/Portland Press Herald via Getty Images

When People Face a Mental Health Crisis, What's the Best Response?

NEW EFFORTS IN TEXAS DIFFUSE POTENTIALLY VOLATILE SITUATIONS AND PROVIDE CARE TO THOSE IN NEED.

By Carol Kaufmann

Photographs by Jason Van Sickel for The Pew Charitable Trusts





Officer Will Claxton (left) surveys incoming police calls as part of his job on a three-person Community Response Team (CRT), a new solution to responding to mental health needs in Abilene, Texas. A police officer, fire department paramedic, and a mental health worker travel together to emergency calls that may involve a mental health issue. They also follow up with people who have ongoing challenges. “I struggle in the living department, which is what they come and help me with,” says Grant (above, in red), who meets the team in his driveway. “If I’m in an emergency, I know I can call the CRT.”

A black SUV pulls up to an empty storefront in Abilene, Texas, where a man is sleeping on the sidewalk. He looks to be 30-something, though it’s difficult to tell. Although his blondish red hair and long beard are matted and his arms and dark clothing are caked with dirt, incongruously his hands and nails are immaculately clean. Three people—a police officer, a paramedic, and a mental health counselor—get out of the vehicle and calmly approach him.

“Does Rolando need anything?” asks Will Claxton, an officer with the Abilene Police Department, offering the man a bottle of water. Claxton has enough experience with Rolando to know to address him in the third person, because he won’t respond otherwise. Claxton also knows that Rolando has schizophrenia and hears voices, some of which threaten to kill him; when addressed, Rolando often talks back in a loud voice, flails his hands, and prepares to defend himself. “Strangers don’t know he’s fighting these voices,” Claxton explains. “They get scared and call the police.”

A grocery store recently barred Rolando because he frightened people there, but Claxton and his team know that Rolando doesn’t beg, steal, or hurt people, and he has money through Social Security Insurance. They don’t know his history or how he ended up on the street,

but they know the general area he wanders so they can find him and help him stay on the medications that calm his brain and quiet the voices.

“We meet people where they are,” says mental health clinician Andrea Reyes. Reyes, Claxton, and paramedic Josh Horelica, from Abilene Fire and Rescue, make up one of the city’s two Community Response Teams charged with helping people experiencing a mental health crisis or ongoing mental health challenges.

In the past, people like Rolando would often end up in jail or a hospital emergency room. But both places are ill-equipped to treat people in a mental health crisis. Research shows that people with ongoing mental health conditions are jailed more than 2 million times each year, often for misdemeanor crimes. Three-quarters of these individuals have co-occurring substance use disorders as well. And people of color make up a disproportionate percentage of those in the criminal justice system but are less likely than White people to be identified for signs of potential mental illness and to receive treatment once incarcerated. Meanwhile, if they go to emergency departments while in a mental health crisis, patients can end up waiting for days, weeks, and even months for treatment.

The Abilene teams have no shortage of work in their corner of a nation that is experiencing and recognizing

mental health problems more than ever before. Nearly a third of U.S. adults (32.8%) experienced symptoms of depression in the spring of 2021, one year after the COVID-19 outbreak—a threefold increase from pre-pandemic levels. A larger share (37%) of high school students reported that their mental health was not good most or all of the time during the pandemic, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey, which was conducted from January to June 2021. People with serious mental illness—such as schizophrenia, bipolar or schizoaffective disorder, and major depression—can struggle more when people around them die, health care is marginalized or has vanished, and sources of socialization and support have come undone—all situations that happened during the pandemic. Even before the pandemic, national survey data in 2019 showed that 57% of people with a mental illness and 80% of those with a substance use disorder did not get needed care.

Failure to recognize mental illness can take fatal turns. In 2017, 1 in 4 people shot by police suffered from mental distress at the time of their encounter with law enforcement. Similarly, a 2015 study also found that at least 25%—and as many as half—of all fatal shootings by police involved people with untreated severe mental illness.

“Rolando is one who could very well be shot, just from noncompliance,” says Horelica, “or if officers are new and don’t know they have to talk to Rolando in the third person.”

In 2019, The Pew Charitable Trusts, in partnership with philanthropic and nonprofit organizations, launched a national effort to encourage communities to create teams such as those in Abilene. Now, Pew is working in Texas to research state policies and develop recommendations for other communities seeking to change their response to mental health crises.


“We want to ensure that police, jails, and emergency rooms are not the default response to people with mental health needs,” says Julie Wertheimer, who leads Pew’s mental health and justice partnerships project. “It’s not an effective intervention to further crowd jails and ERs with people who need help with mental health. These settings often can’t handle the complex needs of people in crisis. And it’s not a cost-effective solution. New approaches, like the one Abilene is taking, are working.”

A typical day for an Abilene response team begins with a review of the overnight 911 calls to see if any involve a mental health issue—such as a suicide threat

or public disturbance—and to check if team members recognize any names from past calls. They spend about 40% of their 40-hour workweek responding to crises and devote the rest of their time to following up with people they’ve previously seen or calling on people they may not have interacted with but who are known to the community. They help connect individuals with housing or food services, or with a social caseworker. Horelica will do a medical evaluation, perhaps taking someone’s blood pressure or temperature. Sometimes, the team may spend a half hour just talking to a person—and showing concern—to help diffuse an impending crisis.

“These are people who aren’t often treated well in the general public,” says Jenny Goode, CEO of the Betty Hardwick Center, the local mental health authority that—along with the police department and fire and rescue unit—created, funds, and oversees Abilene’s response teams. “Many of them often lost their family, or burned bridges with family, or treatment centers have told them they can’t come anymore. But when our teams go back, and back, and back to check on them—and are kind—these people eventually do realize they need help.”

She says that most team calls result in people being stabilized and connected to social services. “Transfers



**1 in 4 people
shot by police
suffered from
mental distress
at the time of
their encounter
with law
enforcement.**

9 8 8

to ER, jail, or inpatient psychiatric care are all relatively low,” Goode says. “Instead, these teams make human connections, and the people they visit love these guys.”

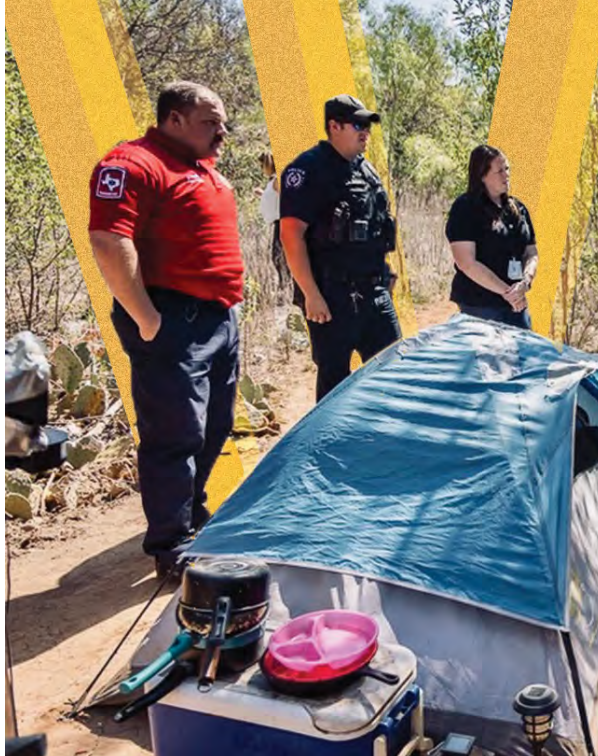
On a recent Thursday morning, the team stops to see Cynthia, who is 66 and has schizophrenia and ongoing fixed delusions. She hears voices, speaks in tongues, and tries to give away money to passersby. She’s been in and out of the state psychiatric hospital numerous times, and for a long time, refused to seek help at the Hardwick Center.

Cynthia smiles when the three get out of their SUV, and she offers them each a chair and a drink. It wasn’t always so easy when the team first started to visit, Cynthia’s husband tried to run them over in his truck and flung his oxygen tank at Reyes. But the team kept coming back every week, offering help, sometimes water and snacks, and now her husband welcomes them with a friendly wave as he leaves with his dog and the team chats with Cynthia.

She needs a monthly dose of medication to help stabilize her condition—it comes in a shot she doesn’t like to take. But the team’s regular visits and coaxing have persuaded her to go to the Hardwick Center to get it. Since she’s been taking the injection, she hasn’t been back to the psychiatric hospital and hasn’t had any disturbing incidents. But her agreement to continue with the monthly shot is tenuous. Cynthia is especially attached to Reyes; she was so distraught when Reyes was on maternity leave that Reyes called her to assure her she hadn’t quit and was still alive. And Cynthia says that if Reyes ever does leave the team, she won’t take the shot.



The local mental health authority, the Betty Hardwick Center, serves as headquarters for the community’s two CRTs and works in partnership with the Abilene Police Department and Abilene Fire and Rescue to manage and fund the program.



The team—from left, paramedic Josh Horelica, Officer Will Claxton, and mental health worker Andrea Reyes— visit an outdoor encampment, where they usually find some of their homeless clients.

From Cynthia’s house, the team drives to another home. The man they’re going to see, Grant, has seen them coming and opens his garage door. Out walks a bespectacled man with a red T-shirt, a full head of dark hair, and a cell phone pressed to his ear. “These people came to make sure I’m not dead,” he says into the phone, then sets it down on a car. “Here are my hands,” he says, putting them on top of the car. “No weapons!” He grins.

“You’re good, Grant,” says Claxton. The team chuckles and Grant is visibly relaxed by their smiles.

He’s a high-functioning 35-year-old math whiz who creates award-winning word puzzles. And he has autism and a difficult time processing his emotions. Once, Grant got agitated by a social media post, spiraled into a crisis, and ran into the street threatening suicide.

“You know the patterns of people you visit,” says Claxton. “You build a rapport with them and can talk them down. But most police wouldn’t know to look for signs of autism. They would just see someone ranting, possibly threatening other people, and threatening to kill himself.”

If that happened, police would handcuff Grant and take him to an ER or jail for endangering the public and himself—the previous protocol for the situation. But that approach would tie up patrol units and cost far more than a visit from the response team does. It also wouldn’t help Grant. Says Horelica, “Ninety-nine percent of the time, we can de-escalate the situation just by sitting down and talking.”



Though the team responds to crises, about 60% of its work is following up with people it's previously seen. "I get to help people, see the impact I've had, and the change you can make in someone," says Officer Will Claxton. "Being on a firetruck is awesome," says paramedic Josh Horelica, "but helping someone on the worst day of their life? You can't replace that."

**From 2017-19,
RIGHT Care saw
a 20% decrease
in mental health-
related admissions
to the ER at
Dallas' Parkland
Memorial Hospital.**

Abilene modeled its program after one that began in Dallas in 2018, which brings together licensed mental health professionals, paramedics, and specialized law enforcement officers. Dallas' first Rapid Integrated Group Healthcare Team, called RIGHT Care, was assigned to the city police district that had the most 911 mental health calls.

A report from the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, developed with Pew, looked at a 2½-year period from Jan. 29, 2018, to June 2, 2020, when the Dallas team responded to 6,679 calls. The report found that RIGHT Care minimized the number of arrests and transports to jails or ERs, noting that only 2% of the team's responses resulted in arrests for new offenses. And though all mental health visits to the ER at Dallas' Parkland Memorial Hospital increased by 30% from 2017-19, areas that had RIGHT Care saw a 20% decrease in mental health-related admissions. Now, the city has 15 such teams operating around the clock.

Dallas police Sgt. Gerald Parker, a 25-year veteran of law enforcement, has witnessed a remarkable change in how police now approach mental health crises. Before RIGHT Care, "our hands were tied," he says. "We knew that, often, people needed services, but our choices were to go our separate ways or handcuff and bring them to Parkland and let someone else deal with it."

Earlier this year, police responded to a call about a man in his late 20s who was acting oddly in a Dallas



Officer Clarissa Williams, who serves on one of Abilene’s CRTs, answers a 911 call from a woman in distress. Team members will follow up with her in a week to make sure she is safe. Says mental health worker Andrea Reyes, “We can engage with people in the community and do a lot of proactive work—and not just respond when they’re in a crisis.”

health clinic, not talking or engaging with anyone. The clinic employees wanted the man arrested for trespassing. The police on the scene suspected a mental health issue and called in RIGHT Care.

Immediately, the team recognized that the man displayed signs of autism. They watched the clinic’s surveillance video, found the Uber that dropped him off by zooming in on the vehicle’s license plate, learned the man’s home address, canvassed the street to find someone who knew him, and got enough information to contact the man’s mother. She confirmed that her son has autism and should have been at the day center for people with intellectual disabilities—located across the street from the health clinic.

“It could have been a bad situation,” says Kristin Peterson, a social worker who helped locate the man’s mother. “He could have become confused and scared. Officers could have handcuffed him if he appeared to be resisting and taken him to the ER—where he’s not able to communicate his needs and would end up sitting there for hours. That would have been totally inappropriate for the situation.”

Instead, the team simply took him across the street to the day center where he belonged.

Police can divert incoming calls to RIGHT Care, and people experiencing a mental health crisis can reach Dallas’ call center by dialing 911 or 988—a new number that replaces the national suicide hotline and is intended

to help people with any behavioral health crisis 24/7.

Either way, trained mental health experts answer the line, find out what the caller needs, and arranges responses that range from house calls to telehealth to dispatching a RIGHT Care team.

Residents of Dallas are becoming more aware of the new approach. Todd Pillsbury, an investigator and analyst in the city’s central police division, has a lot of experience responding to calls with people in mental health crises and says there’s been a surge in calls for RIGHT Care. “About a year ago, maybe 2% to 3% of the calls were for RIGHT Care,” he says. “Now I hear it on a daily basis, multiple times.”

In Abilene, the response team members see the effectiveness of this approach to mental health with their own eyes. “If you’re a counselor in a crisis situation, it’s one and done,” says Andrea Reyes. “But with this job, we talk to the person on the worst day of their lives. Then we follow up, see people in the hospital, and see them getting on medication or getting a job. Kids who wanted to die end up sending us an invitation to their graduation.”

9 8 8
=

Carol Kaufmann is a staff writer for Trust.



Fishing boats pass under the Xiangshan Port Cross-Sea Bridge in Ningbo, China, in September on their way to the East China Sea. China, the European Union, the United States, South Korea, and Japan account for more than half of all the fishing subsidies in the world. CFOTO/Future Publishing via Getty Images

A Global Deal for a Healthier Ocean

Billions of dollars in harmful government subsidies to commercial fleets drive overfishing around the world, but that could be ending soon.

By John Briley

In the high seas of the South Atlantic Ocean, more than 200 miles off the coast of Argentina, lies one of the world's largest fisheries. Hundreds of vessels from around the globe amass there to fish for Argentine shortfin squid, which feed along the edge of the Continental Shelf; the catch is sold worldwide, including in many U.S. restaurants as calamari. The vessels use powerful lights to lure squid toward the surface before snagging them with jigging lines—lights so bright and plentiful that they appear clearly on satellite photographs of the Earth at night.

One might assume that the revenue from fishing would cover these vessels' costs, with some left over for profit, and that everything is working as it should from a fisheries management perspective. But that's not the whole story. The four fleets catching most of that squid—from China, South Korea, Spain, and Taiwan—

receive hundreds of millions of dollars in annual subsidies from their governments, an infusion that funds extremely heavy fishing of shortfin squid.

The payments are part of the \$35.4 billion that governments around the world dole out yearly to their fishing industries—money used for vessel construction and repair, fuel, and other expenses. And although some subsidies are necessary to help keep smaller-scale fishers in business during lean times, a 2019 Pew-commissioned study found that an estimated \$22 billion of the \$35.4 billion in payments qualify as harmful subsidies—that is, funding for industrial fleets that don't need the money and are using it to accelerate overfishing.

Finally, though, that stream of harmful fishing subsidies may soon be cut off. Last June, the 164 member countries of the World Trade Organization

(WTO) agreed to end many of the payments. The agreement specifically prohibits three broad categories of subsidies: those known to aid fishing on overfished stocks; those that support illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing; and those that abet fishing in areas of the high seas that are outside the purview of regional fishery management organizations.

“This is a big deal,” says Ernesto Fernandez Monge, who leads Pew’s work to end harmful fishing subsidies. “The agreement covers a lot and, once it’s in force, it could give a lot of fish populations that have been under growing pressure a chance to recover.”

o **A Pew-commissioned study found that \$22 billion of the \$35.4 billion in payments qualify as harmful subsidies—funding for industrial fleets that don’t need the money and are using it to accelerate overfishing.**

Pew put significant resources into advocating for the WTO agreement, including facilitating a groundbreaking global estimate of what governments spend on harmful fisheries subsidies each year. That study, published in the journal *Marine Policy*, found that the top five subsidizing political entities—China, the European Union, the U.S., South Korea, and Japan—account for 58% (\$20.5 billion) of the \$35.4 billion spent worldwide. Pew also funded two lines of research at the University of California, Santa Barbara: One, published in 2021, found that ending all harmful fisheries subsidies would yield a 12.5% increase in fish biomass worldwide by 2050—nearly 35 million metric tons of fish. The other produced an interactive tool that visualizes the magnitude—and distribution—of subsidies that prop up fishing in other countries’ waters, also known as distant-water fishing. The five entities providing the most harmful subsidies for such fishing are China, the E.U., Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.

More than one-third of fish stocks worldwide are exploited beyond sustainable levels, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. That’s up from 10% in 1974 and about 25% in 1990. The government subsidies that help drive this overfishing go primarily to industrial fishing fleets, and they artificially lower fuel and vessel construction costs—allowing large vessels to catch more fish than is sustainable by fishing farther out to sea and for longer periods, essentially increasing each vessel’s capacity.

And many industrial fleets wouldn’t be profitable without government assistance. These include a large European electric trawl fleet that targets plaice and other bottom-feeding flatfish; industrial tuna fishing boats in the western and central Pacific; and even some vessels known by authorities to routinely engage in illegal fishing.

Greatly reducing overfishing is important not only to sustain populations of the targeted species but to protect the balance of the entire ocean ecosystem. Depletion of one species—say, tuna—will have ripple effects on that animal’s predators and prey, and, in some cases, on entire ecosystems. Harmful subsidies to large commercial fleets also hurt small, local fishers worldwide, many of whom must travel farther from shore and stay at sea longer to catch enough fish to feed their communities.

Under the new WTO agreement, countries will also need to consider the current state of fish populations when granting subsidies—a provision that should help prevent future overfishing, improve ocean health, and protect livelihoods in coastal communities. Of course, as with most multilateral treaties, agreeing to adopt a deal is only the first step toward implementation. In the case of the fisheries subsidies deal, two-thirds of the WTO—that is, 109 members—must ratify the agreement for it to take effect, and getting to that number could take some work, says Rashid Sumaila, professor of interdisciplinary ocean and fisheries economics at the University of British Columbia’s Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries.

“It’s going to be a big effort to get countries to sign on. Even in developed countries, like here in Canada, we don’t know the status of every fish stock because every stock isn’t assessed,” Sumaila says. “Every country needs to have their assessments and have an idea of how much illegal fishing there is.”

If the deal isn’t finalized by 2028, it would lapse, although Pew’s Fernandez Monge says he expects finalization of the agreement. And, he adds, the deal will improve transparency and accountability related to how governments support their fishing sector.

The deal requires WTO members to report whether the fish populations for which they’re providing subsidies are overfished, maximally sustainably fished, or underfished; they’ll also need to supply the scientific reference points used to make those judgments. Members will also have to state if conservation and management measures are in place for the relevant fish stock, as well as listing the fleet capacity in the fishery; catch data by species or group of species; the names and identification numbers of vessels benefiting from subsidies; and any boats known to have engaged in IUU fishing.

As part of the agreement, trade ministers also committed to continue negotiations on some outstanding issues related to overfishing and overcapacity—which is a fleet’s ability to harvest more fish than is sustainable. The agreement also sets up a mechanism for wealthier WTO members to voluntarily contribute funding to help developing countries implement the deal, with negotiations ongoing on how best to help developing countries meet the requirements of the agreement.

“Having everyone following the same rules around the world will go a long way toward reducing overfishing,” Fernandez Monge says.

To understand how momentous this deal could be, it’s helpful to look at some past successes and failures in the fight against overfishing.

Government subsidies to industrial fishing fleets began in earnest in the years following World War II. And until the 1980s, almost none of the major fishing nations around the world even acknowledged the threat of overfishing. The prevailing opinion seemed to be that the ocean was a bottomless source of fish, one that could give humanity all that we wanted to take.

One notable exception to this attitude were the Indigenous communities of the South Pacific, many of which had practiced sustainable fishing for centuries—mostly by imposing moratoriums on fishing whenever they noticed stocks might be under too much pressure.

Some cultures would pause fishing proactively to allow stocks to recover in advance of a celebration or other event that necessitated catching a lot of fish.

Unfortunately, larger, more industrialized nations took no such precautions. The U.S., Spain, Japan, China, and many others not only worked to optimize their efficiency for fishing in their own waters, but they also began to build distant-water fleets that could roam both the high seas and other countries’ territorial waters in the quest to fill their nets.

By the late 1980s, catch data revealed a predictable outcome: Populations of the fish that people most loved to eat—cod, tuna, salmon, herring, and more—were plummeting in many places.

And as scientific knowledge about the ocean grew, the focus on subsidies increased. In 2001, the U.N. started discussions on the payments.

The prevailing opinion seemed to be that the ocean was a bottomless source of fish, one that could give humanity all that we wanted to take.



Harmful subsidies to large commercial fleets hurt small, local fishers such as these in India, who often must travel farther from shore and stay at sea longer to catch enough fish to feed their communities. Mainak Bagchi/AFP via Getty Images



A fishing boat pursues cod in the Arctic Ocean. Increased attention to government subsidies began two decades ago as catch data showed that the populations of fish that people most love to eat—cod, tuna, salmon, herring, and more—were plummeting in many places. *piola666/Getty Images*

And in 2003, researchers at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, began looking beyond studies of individual fish stocks to take a broader view of the ocean, plotting the harvest throughout the world from the 1950s as subsidies began to transform industrial fishing. Their study concluded that the development of industrial fishing after the war was responsible for removing up to 90% of the cod, halibut, tuna, swordfish, marlin, and other large fish in the ocean.

In 2015, the U.N., in its sustainable development goals, tasked the WTO with reaching an agreement to prohibit certain forms of harmful fisheries subsidies by 2020. Although the COVID-19 pandemic and other global crises caused WTO members to miss that deadline, they persisted and ultimately struck the deal adopted in June.

For some observers, the action was decades in the making. The United States was among the first governments to meet the overfishing challenge head on, and it did so by strengthening its primary federal fishing law, the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Although the U.S. has not yet totally solved the issue of domestic overfishing, it has made significant progress, mainly by setting and enforcing science-based catch limits and other fisheries

policies, to the point where scientists consider more than 90% of commercial stocks in U.S. waters to be at sustainable levels.

Other countries, including Iceland, Norway, the Philippines, and South Korea, also manage their fisheries well.

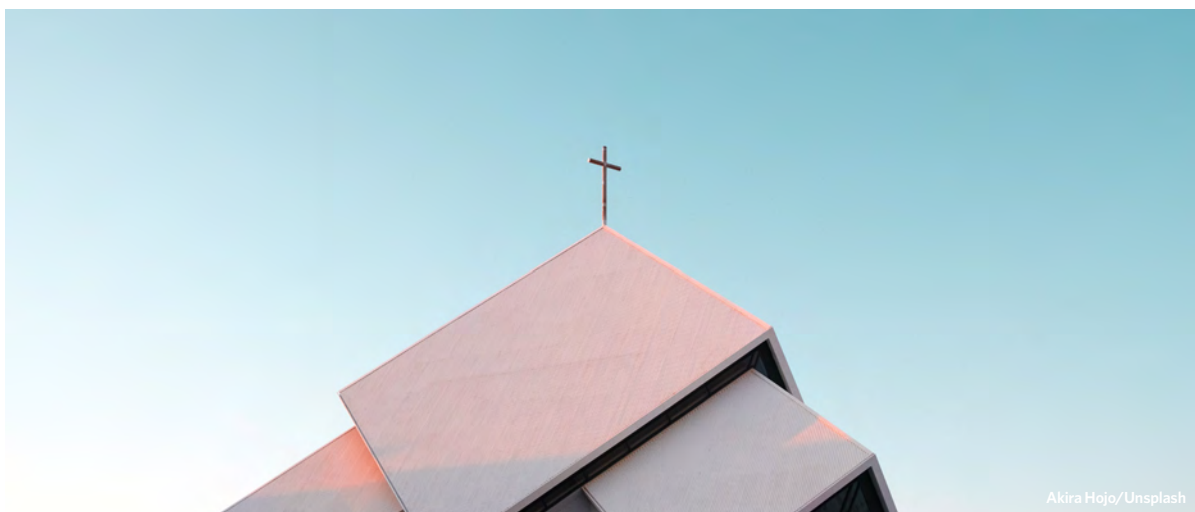
But the broader trend is worrisome for the ocean—and for all who depend on it for food and livelihoods.

That's what makes the WTO agreement so significant. Although the deal by itself won't mean the end of overfishing, it could go a long way toward helping reverse decades of damage and allowing the ocean to provide for humanity far into the future.

"This agreement could mark the turning point when humanity corrected course on overfishing of our ocean," Fernandez Monge says. "We have more work to do, but by ending this volume of harmful subsidies, the WTO brought us decades forward in our goal of achieving fisheries sustainability around the world."

==

John Briley is a staff writer for Trust.



Akira Hojo/Unsplash

What Is the Future of Religion in America?

If trends in religious switching continue, Christians could make up less than half of the U.S. population in just a few decades.

BY DAVID O'REILLY

Throughout the 13 Colonies in 1741, the young preacher Jonathan Edwards saw Americans standing on “slippery, declining ground, on the edge of a pit” as Christians pursued wealth, frolicked on the Sabbath, questioned predestination—and even thought good works might lead a soul to heaven.

Edwards famously warned that only God’s mercy prevented sinners from sizzling in hellfire like spiders over a candle flame. The terrifying imagery of his iconic sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” helped launch the Great Awakening, a revival of Christian faith and practice that lasted much of the 18th century.

What would Edwards think now, if he were here to read the latest analysis of U.S. religious trends by the Pew Research Center? American Christians “keep leaving religion,” it notes matter-of-factly, adding that if recent patterns continue, “Christians could make up less than half of the U.S. population within a few decades.”

Nine out of 10 American adults identified as Christian as recently as the early 1990s, according to the Center’s September 2022 report, “Modeling the Future of Religion in America,” produced as part of

the Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures Project, a partnership with the John Templeton Foundation. Over the past three decades, however, “large numbers of Americans have left Christianity to join the growing ranks of U.S. adults who describe their religious identity as atheist, agnostic, or nothing in particular.”

Although polls have chronicled America’s declining religiosity for years, the Center’s future-oriented analysis hit home for many. “If you’re trying to predict the future religious landscape in America, according to Pew, the question is not whether Christianity will decline,” *Christianity Today* magazine commented, “it’s how fast and how far.”

To see what the future may look like, the Center’s researchers mined a deep trove of data to develop eight versions of how religion in America may evolve. The eight alternatives “are not meant as predictions of what *will* happen,” the report cautions, but rather as “formal demographic projections of what *could* happen under a few illustrative scenarios.”

In all the scenarios, Christianity’s share of the U.S. population declines. “Depending on whether religious switching continues at recent rates, speeds up, or

stops entirely,” the report says, the Center’s projections show Christians shrinking from 64% of Americans of all ages in 2020 to between 54% and 35% by 2070.

Although the Center has made previous projections of religious growth and decline, they were always from a global perspective, illuminating the trajectories of world religions in settings ranging from Eastern Europe to sub-Saharan Africa.

“What we’ve done this time,” explains Alan Cooperman, who directs religion research at the Center, “is draw on the enormous amount of fine-grained data we have” on the dynamics of religious change in the U.S., which the Center has studied in ever-increasing detail.

For the first time, Cooperman says, the new projections take into account the percentage of U.S. parents who pass on their religious identity to their children by age 13, as well as the rates at which Americans give up or switch religions—especially between ages 15 and 29, when disaffiliation typically occurs. The research team produced multiple scenarios by modeling what would happen if those rates remained stable, accelerated, or reached certain limits.

Some of the scenarios are deliberately implausible yet still instructive. For example, what if *no* more Americans switched religious identities after 2020? In that case, a slight majority of the population (54%) would be Christian in 2070. That outcome provides context for three likelier scenarios:

- If movement into and out of Christianity continues at current rates—that is, in each new generation, 31% of young adult Christians become religiously disaffiliated while 21% of religiously unaffiliated people (“nones”) become Christian—then in 50 years, less than half of Americans (46%) would be Christian.
- If growing numbers of Christians switch out before age 30, while a shrinking share of “nones” switch in—but the switching rate is capped to keep the share of Christians who leave from rising above 50%, the limit found even in highly secular European nations—then 39% of Americans would be Christian in 2070. “This pattern seems to most closely fit the patterns observed in recent years,” according to the report.
- And if the share of Christians who switch out continues to rise—as it has in recent decades—without any limit, then Christians could represent just 35% of Americans in 2070.

Pew researchers went on to envision four more scenarios, calculating what would happen if every mother transmitted her religion (or absence of it) to her children; if all religious groups in the U.S. had children at identical rates; if all immigration and emigration ceased; and if there were no switching, in any direction, after age 30.

Think of these latter projections “as an experiment in which some key drivers of religious composition change are turned on or off, sped up or slowed down,” says the report, “to see how much difference they make.” All four additional scenarios produce only minimal differences in the broad pattern of Christianity’s declining share.

David Voas, a demographer and sociologist of religion and professor of social science at University College London, calls the Center’s report “an enormously persuasive picture of what’s likely to happen.”

“The first thing you note is the thoroughness of the analysis,” says Voas. “There’s the underlying data quality, but on top of that they’ve used the most complete scenario-building you can imagine, trying out all the main variations we find remotely plausible about these things, from differential fertility to religious switching to migration.”

“The end product is so compelling precisely because you see all the main possibilities we could imagine for the near future,” says Voas, “and that allows us to point to ones we think most likely.”

Conrad Hackett, the Center’s associate director of research and senior demographer, had long suspected that the Center’s previous projections for the growth of the “nones” in the U.S. were conservative, because they were made for a 2015 global report on “The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050” that could not dig deeply into the unique traits of each country.

“It’s not feasible to do eight scenarios for every country when you’re studying nearly two hundred countries,” says Hackett. “But for the U.S., we had the data, and we knew it would be interesting.”

As Hackett anticipated, the new analyses yielded markedly different trajectories. Whereas the 2015 report had projected that two-thirds of Americans would be Christian in 2050, the 2022 analysis projected that just 47% of the population would be Christian at midcentury under the likeliest scenario, and 39% by 2070.

Nearly three centuries after Edwards’ fiery sermon, Christianity’s tumbling numbers might have him rolling in his Princeton, New Jersey, grave. Still, the report’s authors caution that even the most scrupulous data analysis is not a crystal ball.

Although no Great Awakening seems imminent, “new patterns of religious change could emerge at any time,” the researchers write. “Armed conflicts, social movements, rising authoritarianism, natural disasters, or worsening economic conditions are just a few of the circumstances that sometimes trigger sudden social—and religious—upheavals.”

==

David O’Reilly spent more than two decades covering religion for The Philadelphia Inquirer.

Stateline, an initiative of The Pew Charitable Trusts, is a team of veteran journalists who report and analyze trends in state policy with a focus on fiscal and economic issues, health care, demographics, and the business of government. More stories are available at pewtrusts.org/stateline.

Black Families Fall Further Behind on Homeownership

BY TIM HENDERSON



A family sits on their front porch in Meridian, Mississippi. That state, along with Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, and the District of Columbia, saw Black homeownership drop by 3 points between 2010 and 2021. *Wong Maye-E/AP Images*

Some cities and states are trying to boost Black homeownership, which dropped to a 60-year low even before the economic turmoil wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Black homeownership fell in 2019 to 40.6%, down from the 2004 peak of 49.7%. The rate has rebounded somewhat since then, but advocates remain dismayed at how, decades after the 1968 Fair Housing Act, Black families still struggle to become homeowners at the same rate as White peers.

“To see the Black homeownership rate lower than the generation before is shocking, considering what

earlier generations faced,” said Janneke Ratcliffe, vice president of the Housing Finance Policy Center at the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C.

The persistence of redlining, the Great Recession, gentrification, and the increasing number of homes being scooped up by investors all have contributed to a growing Black-White disparity in homeownership, which is larger now than it was in the early 1960s, before the 1968 Fair Housing Act and other civil rights legislation.

The Urban Institute is working with cities in a dozen states and the District of Columbia on strategies to

bring Black homeownership back up. Among them are financial assistance to Black homebuyers to help them cover down payments and closing costs, and support for current homeowners facing foreclosure.

The gap between White and Black homeownership rates is wider now than it was in 1960, when housing discrimination was rampant and legal, U.S. Census Bureau data shows. In 2022, 74.6% of White households owned their homes, compared with 45.3% of Black households—a gap of more than 29 points. In 1960, the White homeownership rate was 65%, and the Black rate was 38%, a 27-point gap.

Recent redlining complaints against banks accused of denying loans to buyers in predominantly Black and Hispanic neighborhoods illustrate the existing barriers.

Last October, for example, New Jersey-based Lakeland Bank created a \$12 million homeownership fund as part of a settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice, which had accused it of redlining. The bank did not admit to wrongdoing, but it agreed to increase mortgage lending in communities of color in the wake of a seven-year federal investigation of its lending practices.

In the past year, the Justice Department has negotiated similar settlements with lenders in Houston, Memphis, and Philadelphia.

Also in October, Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser, a Democrat, unveiled a plan that aims to add 20,000 Black households to the ranks of the city's homeowners by 2030. Among other strategies, the city will use \$10 million to create a public-private fund that would make homes more affordable to Black families; help residents transfer homes to their children and heirs; and accelerate zoning and permitting for affordable units.

"We know if we can close that gap we can increase Black wealth in our city," Bowser said during an Oct. 3 press conference. "We know that that is the way to pass down generational wealth."

Brittany Freeman of Washington, D.C., speaking at Bowser's press conference, said she grew up in transitional housing for people experiencing homelessness in D.C. and had been on government assistance before getting a college degree and using a city-sponsored down payment and closing-cost assistance to buy a home.

"Homeownership is possible, and I am definitely my ancestors' wildest dream," Freeman said.

Down-payment assistance is the most important help Black homebuyers need, Ratcliffe said. With longer histories of homeownership, White families are more likely to give their children financial help to buy homes, she said.

Some of the Washington, D.C., strategies are targeted at all families, regardless of race. Others, such as bridge loans to prevent foreclosure and money for renovation, are specifically targeted at Black homeowners. The task

force that made the recommendations asked for legal review to ensure such preferences are legal. The mayor's office did not respond to Stateline inquiries on the status of that review.

Republican U.S. senators objected to similar national policies, announced in June by the Federal Housing Finance Agency, to aid Black and Latino homebuyers.

"Discrimination on the basis of skin color is simply wrong. That remains true even when intended to benefit minorities," a dozen GOP senators wrote in a July letter.

The District of Columbia's Black homeownership rate improved by 1 point to 35% last year, which is 3 points below what it was in 2010.

Black homeownership has not declined in every state in the past decade, and it has declined faster in some states than in others. Between 2010 and 2021, the percentage of Black residents who owned their homes rose by 3 points in New York and Delaware and 2 points in South Carolina and Illinois, according to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

During the same period, Black homeownership dropped by 3 points in Mississippi, Ohio, Tennessee, and Texas, as well as in the District of Columbia.

In 2021, the city with the lowest Black-White homeownership gap was Jersey City, New Jersey, a rental-heavy city where the White homeownership rate was 32%, compared with 25% for Black households. Detroit (59% to 50%) and Philadelphia (58% to 48%) also had relatively small gaps.

Recent price increases have made housing more unaffordable for Black buyers, compared with their income, in California, Oregon, and Utah, said Nadia Evangelou, senior economist at the National Association of Realtors, a trade group that studied race and home affordability in a report this year.

The most affordable states for Black families were Kansas, Maryland, and West Virginia.

In Tennessee, the Housing Development Agency is collaborating with mortgage bankers on the Convergence Memphis program, which aims to increase Black homeownership in the Memphis area with more affordable housing and financial education. Organizers worked with the Urban Institute on the plan, according to Katie Fallon, a senior policy manager at the institute. The group also contributed to Bowser's plan.

Convergence Columbus in Ohio, which also has worked with Urban, has similar goals and includes the Ohio Housing Finance Agency. An expansion to Philadelphia is planned for this year.

==

Tim Henderson is a staff writer for Stateline.

The Dreadful Toll of Wildlife-Vehicle Collisions—and What We Can Do About It

BY MATT SKROCH

Most people might be surprised to learn that the combined distance of paved roads in the United States could encircle the Earth more than 160 times. While these roads and highways make up critical infrastructure, there are significant downsides to all that asphalt and concrete, including wildlife-vehicle collisions. These accidents lead to some 200 human deaths and 26,000 injuries each year, resulting in more than \$8 billion in property damage, health care costs, and lost workdays, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Collisions are, of course, a losing scenario for wildlife as well, and not just because of the immediate toll they take on animals' lives. In Wyoming, for example, the mule deer population, which supports more than \$300 million in annual hunting-related spending in the state, has decreased by 40% since 2000, due in large part to habitat fragmentation caused by roads and development. But there is good news: Recent advances in science and policy have given us the tools to help solve this problem, starting with an understanding of how and where wildlife move.

The phenomenon of terrestrial wildlife migration—between higher, cooler summer habitats and lower elevations with more accessible food in winter—is widespread among many species, particularly big game such as elk, pronghorn, and deer. Many of these seasonal routes are thousands of years old and in some cases are taught by one generation to the next. Migration, which may cover hundreds or even thousands of miles, is vital to these animals' survival; it also benefits not only communities that depend on revenue from hunters and wildlife-viewing tourists but also families that rely on big game for food.

Advances in research technology over the past decade have revolutionized experts' understanding of how wildlife move across landscapes and are now helping to resolve wildlife-vehicle conflicts that are rising due to increased development. One example is GPS collars that are affixed to big game,

as well as other mammals and birds, and transmit electronic signals via satellite from some of the most remote regions in the U.S. to researchers throughout the country. This data captures exactly where and when animals move within large landscapes, enabling scientists and engineers to pinpoint where the construction of wildlife crossings—mostly overpasses and underpasses that help animals traverse highways—can most effectively improve motorist safety and facilitate animal migrations. Studies show that a well-placed underpass or overpass can reduce wildlife-vehicle accidents by over 90%, providing a high rate of return on federal and state investments in such structures.

Further, by eliminating much of the guesswork on annual movements of species, advancements in migration science enable elected officials, land managers, and transportation and wildlife agencies to shape policy. In fact, numerous states have taken bipartisan action pertaining to wildlife habitat this year, with California, Colorado, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming enacting laws designed to reduce animal-vehicle collisions by investing in transportation infrastructure such as overpasses and underpasses and other measures to improve habitat connectivity.

On the federal level, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 includes billions of dollars over five years for wildlife and aquatic connectivity programs, along with \$350 million for a new wildlife-crossing construction program. Now it's up to agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration to efficiently implement these programs so that tribes, states, and other stakeholders can apply for these critical grants.

These wins should mark just the start of durable solutions to conserve U.S. migration corridors. Federal agencies, including the departments of Agriculture and the Interior, are considering new ways to manage lands that maintain critical ecological linkages. In the face of climate change,

sustaining these landscape connections is more important than ever, as it helps provide greater ecosystem resilience for species that migrate between habitats.

Opportunities are growing to integrate science and effective policy to better conserve migration corridors. It's important that leaders continue working together to craft more innovative technologies, bipartisan policies,

and funding mechanisms that reconnect wildlife habitats and, in the process, benefit communities, local economies, and wildlife health.



Matt Skroch oversees The Pew Charitable Trusts' work on wildlife migration corridors and crossings. A version of this article originally appeared in Governing on Oct. 4, 2022.

TALKING POINT

To Tackle Plastic Pollution, Partnership Helps Companies See Their Role in the Problem

Better awareness of plastic use and output should empower businesses to reduce both

BY WINNIE LAU

Plastic pollution is one of the great environmental challenges of our time. It harms our natural world, our economies, and our communities, threatening terrestrial, freshwater, and ocean ecosystems, and possibly human health. Plastic is nearly ubiquitous on Earth: It has been found in the deepest parts of the ocean, on the highest mountain peaks, and even in human bloodstreams.

Still, the problem is surmountable. The Pew Charitable Trusts' 2020 report "Breaking the Plastic Wave," as well as a paper in *Science*, identified a path forward to solving this problem. It showed that with existing solutions, and with everyone from governments and industry to advocacy groups and consumers playing a role, the amount of plastic going into the environment could be reduced by 80% from 2020 levels by 2040, creating new jobs, saving governments billions of dollars, and reducing plastics-related greenhouse gas emissions.

One of the most significant obstacles to addressing the problem effectively is a lack of data. That is, despite the scale of the problem and the extent of its impacts, many companies still have a limited understanding of their own plastic footprint. Without knowing their plastic production, usage, and consumption, companies have a hard time knowing whether their commitments and actions are helping to meaningfully reduce plastic pollution.

But this data gap can also be closed. The not-for-profit charity CDP is a leader in its space, having pioneered a global disclosure system for carbon,

water, and causes of forest degradation that investors, companies, and city, state, and regional governments can use to manage their environmental impacts. CDP is now turning to plastics to develop a similar system as part of a partnership with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation—which worked with the United Nations Environment Programme on the groundbreaking New Plastics Economy Global Commitment—and experts from Pew and the Minderoo Foundation.

Our ambition is to collectively build a plastics disclosure system that is on a par with those in existence for carbon, helping companies understand and tackle their plastic footprints and, in turn, guide governments and investors on their policy measures and sustainable investments. Through CDP, more than 680 financial institutions with more than \$130 trillion in assets already call on nearly 10,400 companies to disclose environmental data.

Global plastic pollution is at staggering levels and is forecast to increase dramatically without fast, ambitious actions. Partnerships are key to tackling the plastic pollution problem. Pew thanks CDP, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, and the Minderoo Foundation for joining us in this initiative.



Winnie Lau leads The Pew Charitable Trusts' preventing ocean plastics project.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

*The Pew Charitable Trusts applies a rigorous, analytical approach to **improve public policy**, **inform the public**, and **invigorate civic life**, as these recent accomplishments illustrate.*

IMPROVING PUBLIC POLICY



A driver charges his electric vehicle at a California charging station in August 2022. *Frederic J. Brown/AFP via Getty Images*

Project studies how electric vehicles may affect gas tax revenue

In October, Pew's state fiscal health project published an analysis that examined how the increased adoption of electric vehicles may affect state gas tax revenue—and, as a result, state transportation budgets. Fuel taxes provide nearly 40% of the revenue that the states in aggregate direct to their transportation funds—special accounts for transportation spending. The analysis highlighted the importance of states conducting long-range projections on gas tax revenue and of using these forecasts in the context of broader revenue and spending projections.

New critical international fishing guidance

In September, the United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization Committee on Fisheries adopted new global voluntary guidelines to regulate transshipment. Transshipment—the transfer of fish or other marine wildlife between a fishing vessel and carrier vessel at sea or port—allows vessels to keep fishing as their catch makes it back to port. But this activity often takes place on the high seas and outside the reach of authorities, creating a loophole for illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. Endorsement of the new guidelines—plus strengthened transshipment measures that are now in place for international fisheries in the Atlantic, eastern Pacific, and Indian oceans—is a culmination of a multiyear effort by Pew's international fisheries project.

Pew readies states for rollout of 988 behavioral health crisis line

The 988 phone number, developed to help people at risk of suicide or grappling with other mental health and substance use emergencies to access care safely and quickly, went live over the summer. To help inform the public about the new number, Pew's mental health and justice partnerships project created fact sheets that focus on improving call centers' ability to identify and navigate behavioral health crises; modifying responses to those calls in a way that prioritizes the health and safety of people in crisis, as well as the first responders, bystanders, and others involved in the emergency; and connecting people in distress to mental health and substance use treatment and related services when needed. The project also published an analysis that details key considerations for state and local leaders as they plan for and implement 988.

Study quantifies risks and costs of inappropriate antibiotic prescribing to children

In May, Pew's antibiotic resistance project, together with the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, published new research, "Association of Inappropriate Outpatient Pediatric Antibiotic Prescriptions With Adverse Drug Events and Health Care Expenditures," in *JAMA Network Open*, a monthly open access medical journal by the American Medical Association. Based on 2.8 million privately insured children treated for severe infections in outpatient facilities, the study revealed that inappropriate antibiotic prescribing increased the risk of life-threatening infections as much as eightfold and generated at least \$74 million in excess national health care costs. This work supports the project's goal of increasing antibiotic stewardship efforts in outpatient health care settings and reducing inappropriate prescribing for acute respiratory conditions in the United States by 40%.



Colombia announces project finance for permanence conservation initiative

In June, the government of Colombia signed a joint declaration with WWF and a broader coalition of partners, including Pew, to launch Heritage Colombia (Herencia Colombia), a new project finance for permanence (PFP) initiative. The project is supported by Enduring Earth, a collaboration of The Nature Conservancy, Pew, WWF, and ZOMALAB to accelerate conservation worldwide to help address the climate and biodiversity crises and support community economic development. The agreement secures US\$245 million of public and private financing to permanently protect and manage more than 79 million acres of the country's iconic landscapes, including the Amazon and Central Andes, and opens the door to new and expanded marine protected areas in the Caribbean and Pacific. The initiative will enable Colombia to achieve its goal to protect 30% of its oceans by 2030.

Queensland government announces historic investment in park expansion

In June, the Queensland, Australia, state government announced an AU\$262.5 million (US\$176.8 million) investment toward expanding its national park network. This funding—the single-largest conservation investment in the state’s history—has the potential to add 2.4 million acres of protected areas in Queensland, Australia’s most biodiverse state and home to more than 1,000 threatened species, including the iconic koala. Since 2018, Pew has worked with local partners in Queensland through the Our Living Outback alliance to increase funding for land acquisition and other conservation measures to protect the state’s most ecologically rich habitat and the species that rely on it.



A mother kangaroo stands beside her joey in a clearing. *Guahim/Getty Images*

INVIGORATING CIVIC LIFE

Pew Fund awards \$4.25 million to four local nonprofits

In July, the Pew Fund for Health and Human Services in Philadelphia awarded \$4.25 million to four nonprofit organizations working to close opportunity gaps and address the growing impact of violence on local residents. The awards include a grant to University City District’s West Philadelphia Skills Initiative to help create paths to economic mobility for nearly 2,500 residents throughout the city. Three additional grants will aid Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Drexel University, and Temple University Hospital in coordinating and expanding their hospital-based support programs for the growing number of adults and children who have experienced community violence.

Pew Center for Arts & Heritage announces 2022 grantees

In September, The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage announced its 2022 grants and fellowships in support of cultural events and artistic work that will enliven and enrich the Philadelphia region and represent diverse identities, personal experiences, and historical narratives. The 42 awards total \$9.5 million: \$7.2 million in project funding, \$1.4 million provided as unrestricted general operating support for the 30 local organizations receiving project grants, and \$900,000 going to 12 Philadelphia-area artists as Pew fellowships. Many of the newly funded projects spotlight artists and communities of color, engaging with topics such as the rich history of social dance within Philadelphia's Black communities, the contributions of Japanese artists working in the U.S. in the mid-20th century, and the cultural traditions and contemporary practices of Mexican artists and migrants. Several projects will bring creative work to public spaces and nontraditional venues such as a public park, a community recreation center, and a botanical garden, while others will investigate historical archives to illuminate lesser-known stories.



Pew fellow Roberto Lugo's mural "The Talented Mr. Trotter: You Can Be Anything," installed on The Clay Studio's building in Philadelphia. *Steve Weinik, © City of Philadelphia*

INFORMING THE PUBLIC

U.S. teens spend considerable time on social media, study shows

Amid ongoing societal discussion about the effects of social media and technology on teenagers, the Pew Research Center published a report examining which social media platforms American teens use most and how much time they spend on social media. It found that nearly half of teens say they are online almost constantly (46%)—roughly double the share saying that in 2014-15 (24%). TikTok has established itself as one of the top online platforms for U.S. teens, with 67% of teens saying they have ever used the platform, including 16% who say they use the platform almost constantly. Meanwhile, the share of teens who say they use Facebook has declined significantly.

What it means to be Asian in America

The Pew Research Center released a signature qualitative research package in August about the experiences and perspectives of Asian Americans. The centerpiece was a data essay, "What It Means to Be Asian in America," presenting the Center's largest qualitative focus group analysis to date, based on 66 focus groups organized into 18 distinct Asian ethnic origin groups and held in 18 languages. Despite diverse experiences, backgrounds, and origins, some common themes emerged: Participants highlighted how the pan-ethnic "Asian" label represented only one part of how they think of themselves, noted the disconnect between how they see themselves and how others view them, and discussed the multiple ways in which they express pride in their cultural and ethnic backgrounds while also feeling at home in America, celebrating and blending their unique cultural traditions and practices with those of other Americans. The research package also included a documentary, extended video clips, and an interactive quote sorter.

Gaby Bonilla/The Pew Charitable Trusts

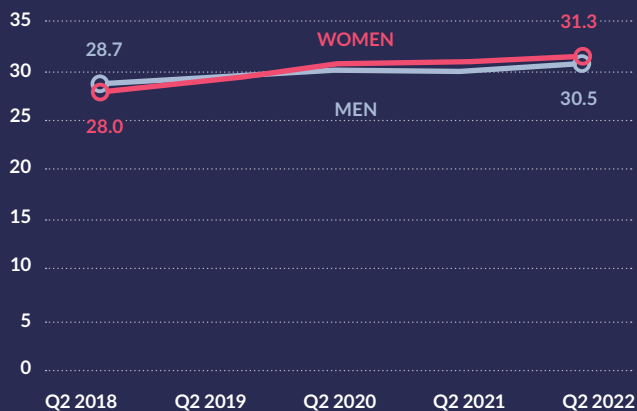


Women Now Outnumber Men In The U.S. College-Educated Labor Force

Women have overtaken men and now account for more than half (50.7%) of the college-educated labor force in the United States, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of government data. The change occurred in the fourth quarter of 2019 and remains the case today, even though the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a sharp recession and an overall decline in the size of the nation's labor force.

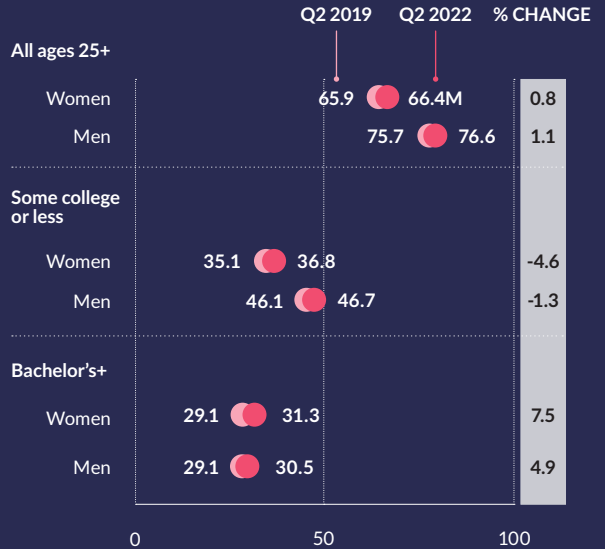
Women now represent a majority of the college-educated labor force in the U.S.

Number of people ages 25 and older in the U.S. labor force with at least a bachelor's degree, in millions



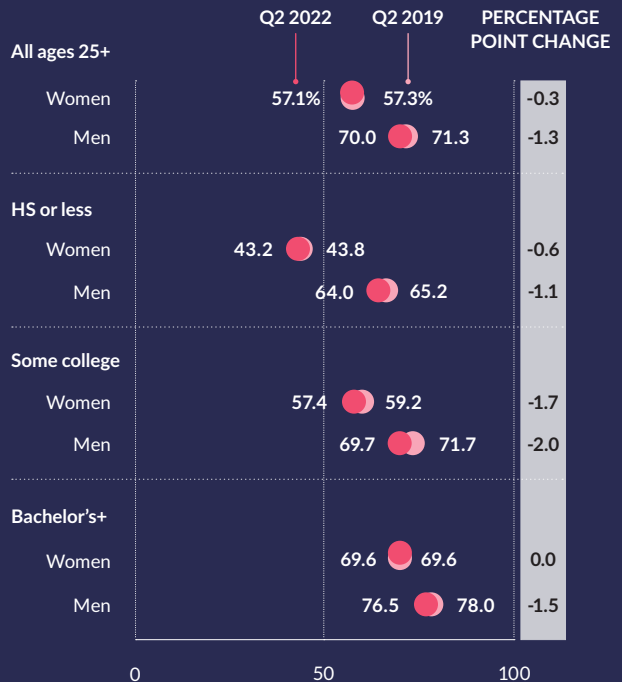
Labor force of women without a college degree has shrunk since 2019

Number of people ages 25 and older in the U.S. labor force, in millions



College-educated women are participating in the U.S. labor force at the same rate as before the pandemic

Percentage of women and men either employed or actively looking for work, second quarter of 2019 and second quarter of 2022



Note: Percentage point change is calculated prior to rounding. "Some college" includes those with an associate degree and those who attended college and did not obtain a degree.



MENTAL HEALTH IN AMERICA

A podcast from Pew

AFTER
THE
FACT



The pandemic increased concerns about Americans' mental health and exposed a lack of access to treatment and a growing demand for services—all issues that existed before the COVID-19 outbreak. A new series from Pew's podcast, "After the Fact," explores how communities are trying to respond to these needs and how stigma can still be an obstacle to care. Listen at pewtrusts.org/afterthefact.



pandora®



THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS



Members of an Abilene, Texas, Community Response Team discuss their work with nursing students.

When People Face a Mental Health Crisis, What's the Best Response? Page 18
