



Dear Colleagues:

As the current KACAP President, I welcome you to our website and encourage you to look around and learn more about exciting developments within our organization. With the support of our executive committee, including Fareesh Kanga, MD (President Elect) and Amy Meadows, MD, MHS (Secretary/ Treasurer), I am putting forth my Presidential Initiative to promote advocacy for improved access to behavioral health care for the most vulnerable of this state and beyond: our children.

A first step towards this goal is empowering the Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists of Kentucky through engagement in our regional organization. With youth suicide rates on the rise and Kentucky suicide rates higher than the national average, much must be done to improve how we identify and engage those children at risk. Substance use has also taken many lives in our Commonwealth; contributing to individual disability and crises within families.

We recognize the shortage of child and adolescent psychiatrists nationally and in Kentucky. Therefore, it is imperative that we take a leadership role in supporting evidence-based care and limiting polypharmacy among youth. So, how can so few of us make a dent in the mental health of so many Kentuckians without experiencing burnout? Additionally, with so much to think about in our day-to-day practice, how can we apply ourselves to the broader goals of our national organization, AACAP (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry). As a regional organization, we want to support you through education opportunities, collaboration and mentorship in addition to areas you identify.

In the months to come, the executive committee will be sending out a needs assessment to all of you. This short survey will allow me and the KACAP executive team to focus our efforts towards what you, our members, think is most important. This will also help guide us in outlining a KACAP Mission and Vision. The Mission and Vision will provide KACAP a compass as we move forward towards facing the mental health challenges facing our community, state and country.

In the months to come, we will stay committed to the following:

- Develop a Mission and Vision Statement for our Regional organization in line with those of AACAP. We will discuss and vote on these at our KACAP Annual Meeting in December 2019.
- Continue to build our KACAP website. We are striving to make the website an easy resource for you to be able to provide information to your patients and families, as well as stay informed in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. To that end, we are adding resources and toolkits to our website for you to use at any

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time. These include links to popular information from the AACAP website, as well as links to organizations and information that we have found useful in our own practices. Our current information includes depression, suicide and bullying.

- Promote Collegiality. KACAP offers an excellent opportunity to meet and network with your colleagues across the state. To that end, we hope that you will join us at the AACAP Annual meeting in Chicago where, with our colleagues from UK and U of L, we will host a reunion party. Our own annual meeting in December 2019 will be held in Frankfort KY.

It is my true privilege to serve in this role as the President of KACAP for the next 2 years. It is my hope that we support each other as we stay engaged in the work of serving those in need.

With gratitude,

Abner Rayapati, MD, MPH
President, KACAP