



News, April 2021

Each month, our grantees publish groundbreaking investigative reports with our support — and their stories have major impact. We are proud to share highlights below.

Calls to D.C. Child and Family Services Agency Have Dropped, but That Doesn't Mean Child Abuse Has Stopped

For children at risk of abuse and neglect, pandemic-induced distancing created social isolation and meant less face time with adults like teachers who usually spot and report signs of abuse. And for children living in neglectful or abusive homes, the pandemic was the perfect storm, according to grantee Ashley Hackett's [report for the Washington City Paper](#). In Washington, D.C., Children's National Hospital saw a 79 percent increase in patients with abusive injuries. Hackett's story delves into how the systems that are meant to protect D.C.'s children failed during the pandemic.

The Invisible Shield: How qualified immunity prevents victims of police abuse from seeking justice

As more attention is focused on police accountability, much of the public remains unaware of the doctrine of qualified immunity, which protects many government employees, including law enforcement officers, from being sued for violations of constitutional rights. In a three-part series for New York Amsterdam News, Damaso Reyes and Herb Boyd explored the [history of the doctrine](#), [notable cases in which defendants used it](#) to protect themselves from lawsuits, as well as [how activists have pushed lawmakers in several states](#) to limit its use as a defense.

Prosecutors can end a police officer's career without due process, even when the facts are up for debate

Former Millinocket, Maine, police officer Paul Gamble's 18-year career in law enforcement came to an abrupt end in July 2019 when his boss, the police chief, told the local district attorney's office that Gamble had lied on a police report. Gamble was subsequently barred from testifying as a witness and fired. Josh Keefe's [report for the Bangor Daily News](#) details Gamble's case and explores how

prosecutors can end an officer's career without due process or public explanation, even when the facts are unclear or disputed.

Kentucky and Nevada Struggle to Support Informal Foster Parents

For caregivers in Kentucky and Nevada, the pandemic has exposed and exacerbated problems in the states' foster care systems, in which kinship caregivers shoulder the many burdens of parenting with few of the supports afforded to licensed parents. Graham Ambrose's [new report for The Imprint](#), co-published by the Kentucky Center for Investigative Reporting, and Jackie Valley's [report](#), co-published by The Imprint and The Nevada Independent, uncover the lives of the states' kinship caregivers who feel they've been all but abandoned.

PODCAST: Struggling to Breathe in the Bronx in the Age of COVID

More than a year into the pandemic, the Bronx still has the highest death rate from COVID-19 in New York City. In her new podcast episode with Northern California Public Media and The City, "[Struggling to Breathe in the Bronx](#)," Ese Olumhense explores how exposure to air pollution from nearby highways has compounded the effects of COVID-19 from the Bronx to Manhattan's Chinatown and Washington Heights.

Flooding on the Fox: Buyouts work for some, but not others, as a flood mitigation tool in Illinois

The Northwest Herald published a three-day series tackling what local, state, and federal officials in Illinois are doing to mitigate flooding in the Fox River watershed, which has forced many residents to move. The report details how northern Illinois residents have been and could be affected by flooding and stormwater policies. Read Sam Lounsberry's report [here](#).

Grantee's New Book Explores Educational Discrimination Against Immigrant Children

Jo Napolitano's remarkable new book, "[The School I Deserve: Six Young Refugees and Their Fight for Equality in America](#)," details the civil rights battle waged across the country on behalf of immigrant children denied access to education in the nation's public school system. Through one federal lawsuit in Pennsylvania where several young refugees demanded to be heard, Napolitano tells the larger story.

WATCH: Full Webinar Recording on Environmental Coverage With a Racial Equity Lens



The Fund for Investigative Journalism teamed up with the Uproot Project and investigative reporters to hold an online forum on covering the environment with a racial equity lens. You can find a full list of resources from this webinar on our website by [clicking here](#).



Fund for Investigative Journalism Inc
1110 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 500, c/o OpenGovHub
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

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