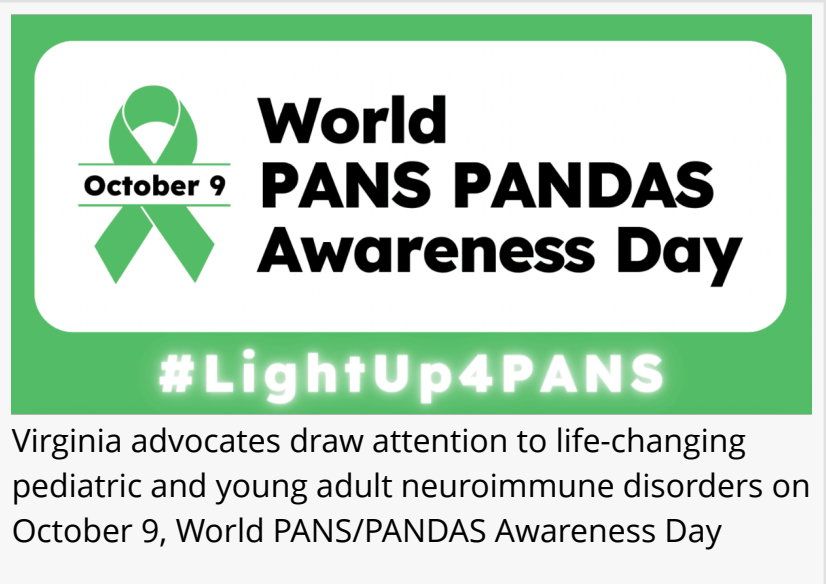


Advocacy Group Shines Light on PANS and PANDAS, Debilitating Disorders Striking Virginia's Young People

Effort builds on new state law mandating Medicaid and insurance coverage for life-saving treatment

ARLINGTON, VA, UNITED STATES, October 6, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Virginia Alliance for PANS/PANDAS Action \(VA4PA\)](#) is partnering with global advocacy organizations and local governments across the state on October 9, World PANS/PANDAS Awareness Day, to draw urgent attention to these little-known illnesses that affect young people after common infections like the flu and strep throat.



Virginia advocates draw attention to life-changing pediatric and young adult neuroimmune disorders on October 9, World PANS/PANDAS Awareness Day

Landmarks will be illuminated in red and green—reflecting the battle against brain inflammation and hope for the young people and families impacted by PANS and PANDAS—including the Ellen M. Bozman Government Center in Arlington, VA, the Wells Fargo Tower in Roanoke, VA, and the Cascade Fountain in Fairfax, VA.

“

Lives are being derailed and even destroyed by a treatable illness. This is a tragic, unacceptable situation that needs urgent attention.”

Renee Gutshall, VA4PA co-founder

Pediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome (PANS) and Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections (PANDAS) are devastating neuroimmune disorders that affect young people following bacterial and viral infections. They are life-altering conditions, causing sudden and debilitating changes in behavior, mood, and neurological function.

“While early diagnosis and treatment are critical for avoiding permanent brain damage and even death, the illnesses are still not well known or understood within the medical community, and

insurers typically deny essential treatments,” says Renee Gutshall, an Arlington-based mother of a young person with PANS and VA4PA co-founder. “Lives are being derailed and even destroyed by a treatable illness. This is a tragic, unacceptable situation that needs urgent attention.”

The Canada-based Inflamed Brain Alliance is behind the global Light Up 4 PANS initiative, which encompasses advocacy organizations from eight countries, including Canada, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, the US and the UK. Some 220 landmarks are slated for illumination on October 9, including 48 in 22 states across the US.

Virginia’s involvement builds on the recent [passage of groundbreaking state legislation](#), spearheaded by Arlington-based Delegate Patrick Hope on behalf of VA4PA, mandating that private health insurers and Medicaid provide coverage for doctor-prescribed treatments for PANS and PANDAS.

The legislation, benefiting young people and families across the Commonwealth, was spurred by a group of Virginia parents desperate to help sick children and young adults secure the life-changing and even life-saving treatments needed to address the condition. The bill passed unanimously in the VA General Assembly earlier this year and became law on July 1.

“PANS and PANDAS are cruel disorders affecting hundreds of children throughout Virginia, taking a massive toll on families desperate for help,” says Delegate Hope. “I’m proud to have supported this legislation to help these young people get the help they need, and continue my work to help build awareness.”

The Light Up 4 PANS initiative comes on the heels of Governor Glenn Youngkin's designation of [October 9, 2025, as Virginia PANS/PANDAS Awareness Day](#).

“By working together, we can ensure that every young person with PANS or PANDAS receives the timely diagnosis and adequate treatment they deserve,” adds Daniela Sosa-Sarkar, VA4PA founding member and clinical psychologist.

Angie Gentile
The Alex Manfull Fund
+1 571-243-0972

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[X](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/855716218>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something

we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.