



# YWCA 2020 Advocacy Agenda

Social Action and Advocacy are the cornerstones of the YWCA. Since our inception almost 150 years ago, “service” has been linked to “action.” In communities across the United States, YWCAs continue to work to improve social and economic conditions for all people. As the nation’s oldest and largest national movement, the YWCA is comprised of over 300 local associations, regional leadership and a national office in Washington D.C. – – who all work together, across the nation work to strengthen our voices in the nation’s capital and in state and local governments.

The YWCA brings first hand knowledge of how federal level policies and programs affect women, girls and their families in communities across the country. Historically the YWCA has fought for issues such as the abolition of child labor, the 8-hour workday and desegregation.

Today, the YWCA carries on their long tradition in social action and advocacy to meet the twin goals of women and girl’s empowerment and racial justice.

## I. Civil Rights

### Protect the Rights and Safety of Marginalized Communities

YWCA’s intersectional mission to eliminate racism and empower women demands that we show up to advocate against the oppression that many groups and individuals endure. We recognize the interconnected experiences of discrimination and disadvantage that women face from their overlapping identities.

#### What we support:

1. A full and fair census
2. Restoration of the full protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965

3. Legal protections for LGBTQ+ people
4. Equal rights amendment

## **II. Racial Justice**

### **Eliminate policies and practices that criminalize people of color**

YWCA is committed to ensuring that everyone is afforded equal opportunity and equal protection under the law. Too often, however, stereotypes, biases, and racial power dynamics are embedded in our laws and public policies. They are also reflected in the use of racial profiling, heightened surveillance tactics, targeted enforcement strategies, and other practices that increase policing of certain racial and ethnic communities (but not others) and criminalize people of color.

#### **What we support:**

1. The End Racial and Religious Profiling Act
2. Ending school discipline disparities and the “school to prison pipeline”
3. Ending mass incarceration

## **III. Immigration**

### **Protect Immigrant Women, Children, and Families**

YWCA is committed to ensuring that those seeking safety and opportunity in the U.S. can arrive and live without fear, harm, or discrimination. Current immigration policies, however, have retraumatized survivors of violence, heightened fears, and exacerbated discrimination against immigrant communities. Any discussion of immigration must prioritize the safety of immigrant women, children, and families who often have experienced violence, trafficking, extreme poverty, and other threats to their safety and health.

#### **What we support:**

1. The DREAM Act
2. An end to family separation and family detention
3. Asylum for survivors of violence
4. Full and fair immigration and asylum proceedings

## **IV. Equal Pay & Workplace Fairness**

### **Improve Women's Economic Security**

Removing barriers and expanding opportunities for women's successful workplace participation is at the heart of YWCA's mission to empower women. No one should have to choose between their livelihood and their health, their family, or their safety. Yet far too many women and families, particularly women and families of color, must make this choice every day.

#### **What we support:**

1. Fair wages and equal pay
2. Safe, fair, and inclusive workplaces free of discrimination and harassment
3. Job-protected safe leave, paid sick leave, and paid family leave
4. Quality, affordable child care and early education programs
5. Access to workforce development and STEM opportunities
6. Safe, decent, affordable, and fair housing

## **V. Gender-Based Violence**

### **Prevent Gender-Based Violence and Support Survivors**

Women and girls of all ages, income levels, racial and ethnic communities, sexual orientations, gender identities, and religious affiliations continue to experience violence in the form of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and trafficking. As the largest network of domestic violence service providers in the United States, YWCA works for practical solutions to protect survivors, hold perpetrators accountable, and eradicate all forms of gender-based violence.

#### **What we support:**

1. Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)
2. Reauthorization of the Family Violence Prevention and Services Reauthorization Act (FVPSA)
3. Preserve and increase the cap of the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) fund
4. Common-sense solutions that decrease the threat of domestic violence gun homicide
5. Job-protected "safe leave" to enable survivors to seek medical and legal support
6. Safe school environments free from sexual violence

## **VI. Health Care**

### **Ensure health care for women, girls, and marginalized people**

Quality, affordable, culturally-competent health care is critical to everyone, but for many women, children, people of color, and trauma survivors, getting the medical care and insurance coverage they need is a struggle. Moreover, unequal access to health care is a driving factor in racial disparities in maternal and other health outcomes in the U.S.

#### **What we support:**

1. The Affordable Care Act
2. Trauma-informed care
3. Comprehensive reproductive health services
4. Improved maternal health outcomes for women of color
5. Elimination of health disparities

## **VII. Federal Budget**

### **Increase Federal Support for Programs and Communities**

YWCA is on the front lines fostering opportunities for women, children and families to achieve economic security and stability. Every day, we see first-hand the critical difference that federal funding for housing, childcare, domestic violence, workforce development, and other services makes in communities served by YWCAs.

#### **What we support:**

1. Full funding for the Family Violence Prevention & Services Act (FVPSA) and for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)
2. Strengthening the pillars of economic security for women and families by increasing federal funding for workforce training and development, STEM careers, safe and affordable child care, and housing
3. Programs like SNAP, WIC, LIHEAP that help families meet basic human needs when economic challenges arise

## **VIII. Strengthening the Nonprofit Sector**

### **Strengthen the health and vitality of the YWCA network**

YWCA is a national leader along with other charitable partners in supporting policies that contribute to a strong civic society and culture of giving so that we can better serve women,

girls, and their families. We support policies such as tax incentives that promote charitable giving and efforts to strengthen our democratic society.

**What we support:**

1. Protection of the Johnson Amendment, which maintains nonpartisanship among nonprofit organizations
2. IRA Legacy Act to expand the IRA charitable rollover for middle-income seniors
3. Incentivizing charitable giving

For more information about our agenda, how to engage in helping us advance our agenda, or to get involved with the YWCA, please call 561-640-0050.

