

The NASW Indiana Chapter Mission Statement:

"To support all Social Workers in their mission to serve and strengthen relationships within diverse populations; to enhance dignity and worth of all people in the State of Indiana through the promotion of quality practice, competent practitioners, integrity and unification of the Social Work profession."

2017 SOCIAL ACTION/PUBLIC POLICY LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Advocate on behalf of the residents of Indiana by providing to the Indiana Governor's Office and administration officials proactive solutions to human service issues:

Areas of Focus:

- a. Promote a fair tax structure, inclusive of tax credits, that protects Indiana residents and supports development of jobs.
- b. Prioritize and ensure adequate funding for human service programs.
- c. Support development of job growth throughout the state that provides a living wage for working families.

Support policies that strengthen children, families and individuals while building communities:

Areas of Focus:

- a. Advocate for every Indiana resident to achieve economic self-sufficiency and support efforts to reduce poverty; inclusive of reduction of food insecurity.
- b. Promote building and sustaining safe home, school and community environments for all children.
- c. In the case of any plans to privatize parts of state or municipal government administered programs or services, we support: 1) careful stewardship of taxpayer funds; 2) evaluation of achievement of program goals and objectives; 3) promote achievement of positive outcomes for clients; 4) realization of economic savings without harming clients; and 5) assurance of due process guarantees so that qualified residents receive all benefits and services which they need to reach their fullest potential.
- d. Monitor and support the Statewide Commission on Children in promoting the overall health and welfare of Indiana's children, and promote equal access for all children to education, mental health services and resources to prevent poverty.
- e. Improve and expand upon the protective and supportive services to aging and disabled adults.

Promote appropriate education:

Areas of Focus:

- a. Promote funding and support for all services and initiatives that improve the success of all students.
- b. Advocate for alternative supports and educational services for all children and families.
- c. Develop and expand Adult Basic Education programs and other adult learning opportunities within the community.
- d. Promote the use of positive behavioral supports and eliminate the use of corporal punishment within school systems throughout the State.
- e. Promote comprehensive and medically accurate reproductive health education in public schools.
- f. Promote the training of school personnel on the needs of children with exceptional mental health, medical, behavioral or other needs.
- g. Promote quality early childhood education services that are accessible, available and appropriately funded which meet the needs of Indiana's children.
- h. Respond to attempts to repeal or diminish laws that ensure student safety, well-being and positive learning environments.
- i. Advocate for legislation promoting policies that limit student removal from learning environments as a discipline model while simultaneously promoting non-removal discipline techniques when physical violence is not a factor.

Advocate for high quality, affordable health care, mental health, addictions and other services:

Areas of Focus:

- a. Improve health equity by expanding or maintaining access to funding for quality health care, mental health, addiction and other health services for all Indiana residents while removing gaps in service and improving coverage, availability and affordability. This is inclusive of socioeconomic, geographic, and cultural impediments, and other access issues.
- b. Promote and support initiatives for specialized programs to address needs among the insured and uninsured.
- c. Support and advocate for funding and services that promote the healthy development of children.
- d. Support initiatives that provide affordable healthcare for vulnerable Indiana residents with chronic and debilitating medical, mental health and/or developmental disability conditions.

Encourage respect and support for civil rights for all types of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI):

Areas of Focus:

- a. Advocate for federal and state laws that afford equal rights and protection for everyone and advocate for amending civil rights laws to include sexual orientation and gender identity.
- b. Oppose any legislative effort to limit, remove or otherwise impede equality for SOGI rights.
- c. Support policies that protect SOGI families and their children, including legal protections against bias motivated crimes while opposing efforts to legalize discrimination against them.
- d. Promote the advancement of positive and supportive therapeutic modalities tailored to the self-determined needs of all types of sexual orientation and gender identity, and oppose modalities that are harmful and that promote stereotypes.

Encourage, honor and support of cultural and ethnic diversity, and work toward eliminating oppression of vulnerable populations by ending discrimination and disproportionality in all areas:

Areas of Focus:

- a. Oppose attempts to develop State immigration laws which do not reflect and uphold Federal policy and practices.
- b. Ensure that State laws and policies protect the best interest of all, and uphold inclusive delivery of services.
- c. Promote increased resources for and access to higher education for minorities and disadvantaged groups.
- d. Advocate for policies and practices that will eliminate racial, ethnic, gender, refugee and immigration status discrimination and other inequities in all systems and legislation.
- e. Advocate for legal protections against bias motivated crimes for all residents of Indiana.
- f. Advocate for laws, policies, and education protecting against crimes stemming from power imbalance, vulnerability and exploitation such as domestic violence, sexual violence and human trafficking.

Advocate for and influence administrative rules, policies, and legislation that promote ethical professional practice of Social Work:

Areas of Focus:

- a. Promote a clear understanding of the Social Work profession, the varied professional activities of Social Workers, the benefits of these activities to Indiana residents, and the value of investing in and promoting Social Work.
- b. Promote licensing for all levels of Social Workers and regulations that protect the value of licensure.
- c. Advocate the fair and reasonable reimbursement of services provided by licensed Social Workers.
- d. Advocate for loan forgiveness legislation for social workers in Indiana and at the national level.

Promote a Fair and Equitable Criminal Justice System:

Areas of Focus:

- a. Eliminate the use of status offenses toward youth offenders in a manner that limits positive youth development and leads towards increased criminal justice system involvement, particularly in relation to truancy and runaway offenses.
- b. Promote an ongoing examination of the appropriateness of sentences assigned, particularly those in which disproportionality is shown to be statistically present.
- c. Advocate for the removal of death penalty assignment in cases where severe mental illness diagnoses are present.
- d. Support and advocate for appropriate and readily accessible health and mental health services for incarcerated youth and adults, including ongoing diagnostic and assessment services.
- e. Promote programming conducive to successful reentry for offenders, including the ability to attain an appropriate and self-sustaining quality of life.

PUBLIC POLICY/LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHARGE

The *Public Policy and Social Action Committee* of NASW Indiana proactively monitors, advocates for, and organizes social action related to:

- Federal, state, local and policies and administrative issues;
- Legislation that affects the clients, consumers and communities served by Social Workers; and,
- Legislation and policies that support and further the profession of Social Work

In conjunction with the Indiana Chapter Board of Directors, the Committee works with local and statewide coalitions *to organize and advocate for social action* in order to secure a just society for those we serve. The Board of Directors empowers the Public Policy Committee to act in accordance with this document, and to act in the chapter's best interest should needs emerge that are not expressly covered in this document.

► For further information, visit www.naswin.org or contact the NASW Indiana Chapter at 317.923.9878 or naswin@naswin.org ◀