LEAD 2023 Agenda & Goals

- Overview of NASW & NASW-Indiana Chapter
- Why Social Workers Advocate
- The Legislative Process
- Types of Advocacy
- How to Use Direct Practice Skills to Effectively Advocate
- Advocacy Concerns and Fears
- Sample Bills from this Session
National Association of Social Workers

- NASW is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world
- Indiana is one of 55 chapters
- Members are welcome to participate in any of our chapter committees
  - Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
  - Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity
  - Public Policy/LEAD Committee
  - Ethics Committee
  - Conference Committee
  - Program Committee

NASW – Primary Functions

- Promote professional development of members;
- Establish and maintain professional standards of practice;
- Advance sound social policies;
- Provide services that protect members and enhance professional status;
- Sponsor professional conferences/CEH events.

Joining NASW Can Benefit You Throughout Your Career

- News and information
- Advocacy efforts
- Career resources
- Training and education
- Ethics and legal guidance
- Practice resources
- Malpractice insurance
- Building a professional network

Building a professional network
WHY SOCIAL WORKERS SHOULD ADVOCATE:

Why Social Workers Advocate

• To represent those whom we serve
• To uphold the NASW Code of Ethics
• To provide professional expertise to policy makers
• To be an empowerment role model for clients and peers
• To empower ourselves as individuals
Social work is the only helping profession which requires social justice advocacy as part of our professional code of ethics.

NASW Code of Ethics and Advocacy

Social work is based on a set of core values and broad ethical principles

- **Value:** Service
- **Value:** Social Justice
- **Value:** Dignity and Worth of the Person
- **Value:** Importance of Human Relationships
- **Value:** Integrity

6. Responsibilities to the Broader Society

6.01 Social Welfare “Social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels, and the development of people, their communities, and their environments. Social workers should advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs and should promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.”
(a) social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.

(b) act to expand choice and opportunity for all people, with special regard for vulnerable, disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited people and groups.

(c) Promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the U.S. and globally. We should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all.

(d) Act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability.

QUESTIONS?
THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS
OR
HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW

A bill starts out as an idea. Once drafted by legislative services, it must make it through the entire process before legislative deadlines to become law.

The Legislative Process

1. 1st reading assigned to a committee
2. Bill gets a hearing. This is an opportunity to make changes and for the general public to testify.
3. If it is approved by the committee, it moves to 2nd reading. If it doesn’t pass the committee, the bill is dead.
4. 2nd reading allows opportunity for legislators to speak on the bill and make any changes. All members of the chamber vote for the bill and if it passes, it moves on. If it does not receive enough votes, the bill will die. The bill can also die if it does not pass the 2nd reading in time.
5. 3rd reading for another vote of the full chamber. If it passes, the bill moves to the 2nd chamber.
6. The bill then goes through the same steps in the 2nd chamber and must pass each step.
The Legislative Process
After Passing Both Houses

• If the bill is changed in the 2nd chamber, the 1st chamber must agree to the changes before the bill can move to the Governor.
• If the 1st chamber does not agree to the changes, a Conference Committee is formed. All members must sign the conference committee report and the report must pass both the Senate and the House. Once this has been accomplished, the bill goes to the governor for signature.
• The Governor can sign the bill or veto the bill.
• If the Governor does NOT sign or veto a bill within 7 days, it becomes law without signature on the 8th day.
• A veto can be overridden, but it requires a constitutional majority of both houses.
• Bills become effective on July 1 of the year they are enacted unless a different effective date is specified.

Who Do I Talk To and When?

• Prior to a bill being heard, target the bill author, committee chair and committee members. You can also talk to your legislator and ask them for help on the bill.
• When a bill moves to 2nd and 3rd reading, you speak to your legislators and other key players. It’s a good time to talk to your friends/colleagues and get their support.
• After crossover – same process, but sponsors as well.
• Make sure your message is clear.
• Remember personal stories of possible impact can help them understand the issue.

QUESTIONS?
TYPES OF ADVOCACY

Types of Advocacy

- Organized rallies and events
- Community informational meetings and caucuses
- Email, phone and letter writing campaigns
- Boycotts of products and services
- Action alerts and talking points to memberships
- Education of legislators and stakeholders
- Direct lobbying activities
- Organized testimonials from those affected by policies
- Helped clients register to vote
- Mobilized and inspired others

Advocacy Activities

- Work with a legislator to write or introduce a bill
- Schedule a meeting to discuss a concern and share your story
- Organize email, phone and letter writing campaigns
- Provide testimony at a committee meeting-personal stories of impact can help them understand the issue
- Create fact sheets and talking points
- Speak to other stakeholders in addition to existing allies
- Make sure your message is clear and concise and requests a specific action.

Advocate at all levels: agency, local community, state, and federal!
Our Fears Can Make Advocacy Seem Hard

• Lack of knowledge on the legislative process
• Lack of knowledge on the bill or issue
• Possible hostile confrontations
• General public speaking anxiety
• Being unprepared for questions
• Saying the wrong thing, being taken out of context
• Not knowing how to navigate the statehouse

BUT WE HAVE THE SKILLS...

Direct Practice Skills You Can Use in Policy Practice Skills

• Engagement Skills help build relationships with legislators
• Communication Skills active listening to understand different perspectives
• Assessment Skills can help understand issues and identify potential solutions/opportunities.
• Problem Solving & Negotiating Skills help identify policy options, partnerships and common ground to help move policies forward.
• Networking & Collaborating Skills help to identify ally organizations and develop coordinated initiatives.

Advocacy “Do-Nots”

• Do not assume their knowledge of the bill
• Do not go in with a hostile attitude
• Do not make threats or accusations
• Do not engage in partisan politics
• Do not overstate your knowledge or “guess”
• Do not make false promises
• Do not argue moral issues or “right and wrong”
• Do not reinforce stereotypes of your field
• Do not forget manners or overuse your time
Addressing Controversial Issues

- Some issues are very polarizing and partisan:
  - Abortion and Reproductive Rights
  - LGBT Rights and Protections
  - Firearm Safety and Gun Control
  - Disproportionality and Affirmative Action
  - Religious Freedom and Expression
- Ask yourself, what do I want to accomplish?
- Am I “preaching to the choir” or furthering divisiveness, fears and misconceptions?
- Always remember, the goal is positive progress

Things to Remember

- You are an expert.
- Stick to your message – and check your facts.
- Remember your Social Work skills:
  - Affirming positive intention
  - Finding common ground
  - Building long-term relationships
  - Understanding of person-in-environment
  - Addressing stereotypes and misconceptions tactfully
- Offer your assistance however you can and follow-up.
- Meet with your legislator outside of session and build your relationship.

QUESTIONS?
NASW Indiana 2023 Public Policy Agenda


Public Policy Agenda

• NASW-Indiana Chapter has a long history of participating in advocacy efforts in the state to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources and opportunities that allow them to meet their basic needs.

Public Policy Agenda

Areas of focus include:

- Advocating on behalf of social workers and the clients we serve in Indiana by providing proactive solutions to human service issues.
- Supporting policies that strengthen children, families, and individuals while building communities.
- Promoting access to affordable education for all residents.
- Advocating for accessible, high-quality, affordable healthcare, mental health services, addictions treatment, and other related services.
- Encouraging and supporting civil rights for all.
Public Policy Agenda
Areas of focus include:

- Encouraging, honoring, and supporting racial, cultural and ethnic diversity while striving to end discrimination and disproportionality in all areas.
- Advocating for and influencing administrative rules, policies, and legislation that promote the ethical professional practice of Social Work.
- Promoting a fair and equitable criminal justice system.
- Advocate for gun safety and prevention of gun violence.

Issues/Legislation 2023

HB 1290 Earned Income Tax Credit (passed to the Senate)
HB 1091 Continuous eligibility under Medicaid and CHIP (passed to Senate)
HB 1372 Medicaid services provided pending credentialing (passed to Senate)
SB 334 Simplified Application for SNAP Benefits (passed to the House)
SB 265 TANF Eligibility (passed to the House)

HB 1407 – Parental Rights – passed 2nd reading in the House (2/16)
HB 1608 – Sexual orientation & gender identity instruction. Hearing Monday 2/20 8:00 a.m.
SB 12 – Material harmful to minors – amend/pass committee 2/15
HB 1569 – Restrictions on DOC provision of gender therapy. (Passed to the Senate)
Where to find information

Online at https://iga.in.gov/ you can find:
• Full text on bills, amendments and fiscal notes
• Your legislator and how to contact them
• Committees, their agendas and bills to be heard
• Live committee and chamber webcasts
• Indiana Code and Constitution

Where to find Information - NASW

For information on federal issues, please check our national website at www.socialworkers.org.
National Advocacy Center
www.socialworkers.org/Advocacy

NASW-Indiana www.naswin.org
Indiana Advocacy Center
https://www.naswin.org/page/actioncenter

For more information on NASW Indiana please visit our website at www.naswin.org

Email us at info.naswin@socialworkers.org
Call us at 317-923-9878

For information on membership, to join or renew visit www.socialworkers.org and click on the join button.