

YWCA Hartford Region Policy Priority Issues for 2011

YWCA Hartford Region, an affiliate of the YWCA USA, is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. The YWCA Hartford Region provides programs and services in the greater Hartford area including, child care, supportive housing, teen leadership development, racial justice awareness and financial literacy. Our policy priority issues for 2011 and what we support are:

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>HIGH QUALITY CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate funding for Care 4 Kids that fully reflects the true cost of providing care; • Income eligibility guidelines remaining at 75% of state median income; • Standards for high quality care and education and systems to evaluate and measure outcomes to support continuous quality improvement; • Increased funding for professional career development programs that provide training and education to meet new state requirements; and • Reauthorization of Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State prioritization of confronting and tackling the achievement gap and lowering high school truancy and drop out rates; • Adequate access to information for students and parents about school options; • Requirement of all schools to adopt higher academic standards for all children including national core curriculum standard requirements and funds allocated to schools to achieve these standards; • Standards for high quality and effective teachers and administrators for all schools; • Higher representation of minority teacher and administrators in all Connecticut schools; and • Requirement of schools to involve parents as full partners in their children's education.
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DOMESTIC SEX TRAFFICKING OF MINORS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention programs that enhance public awareness and provide training for those who interact with victims of human trafficking; • Programs that provide safe and secure housing and appropriate rescue and restoration services to victims; • Collaboration between law enforcement and social service agencies working together to stamp out domestic minor sex trafficking in Connecticut; • Increased research and data collection to understand the cause and scale of the issue while also protecting the victims; • Education and mentoring programs for girls and young women to build self-esteem and self-protection and keep them vigilant against sex trade recruitment schemes; • School programs that teach young people (girls and boys) about healthy intimate relationships, discourages "sexting" and the buying and selling of sex of self or others; and • Efforts to raise awareness that human trafficking is a domestic human rights issue that requires priority and action. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE AND ACCESS TO SERVICES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reproductive and sexual health rights, including the right to choice, for every woman; • Repealing the "Hyde Amendment" and restoring coverage for abortion in services offered to Medicaid recipients and other low-income groups. • In the meantime, issuing regulations and guidelines that ensure the health insurance provided under the Affordable Care Act includes the full scope of reproductive services, including access to abortion, to any woman who wishes to have such a plan, provided that payment for these services comes either from personal or State funds; • Providing quality reproductive health education, resources, information, discussion and counseling for women and girls regarding their reproductive rights; and • Age-appropriate sex education for teenagers which is medically accurate and provides them with the necessary information and skills to make safe and responsible decisions surrounding their sexual health.