Empowerment & Economic Advancement  ●  Health & Safety  ●  Racial & Social Justice

WE’RE ON A MISSION

YWCA Hartford Region is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all

www.ywcahartford.org
Our Advocacy and Policy Agenda sheds light on the issues that directly impact communities in the Hartford region; acknowledging that the needs of these communities are evidence of the inequities that still exist throughout Connecticut. Our agenda is inclusive of our national (N), state (S) and local (L) advocacy and policy efforts. Our focus areas are empowerment and economic advancement; health and safety; racial and social justice.

Our efforts are rooted in addressing systemic and structural barriers to equity, opportunity, and security for women, girls and families; centering on women and girls of color and inclusive of LGBTQIA2S+ communities. We engage a broad network of community members, stakeholders and coalitions to build our capacity, maximize our reach and ensure that our efforts are informed and driven by the people most effected by the issues.

Together, we urge Connecticut lawmakers to pass legislation that dismantles systemic racism, promotes an equitable economic landscape for all and ensures access to quality healthcare for all. Together we strive to fulfill our vision to become a community with unlimited opportunities to un-limit opportunity.

**EMPOWERMENT AND ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT PRIORITIES**

**IMPROVE FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY BY STRENGTHENING THE CHILDCARE INFRASTRUCTURE (S)**

Childcare and early education programs help parents obtain and retain employment and further their education, while promoting child development and school readiness. Insufficient affordable childcare across the state and inadequate pay for childcare workers and early learning educators cause families to make difficult decisions about quality childcare. YWCA Hartford Region, in collaboration with the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance, YWCA New Britain and other partners urge lawmakers to strengthen the childcare infrastructure to provide affordable, high quality childcare for families and a livable wage for childcare workers and early learning educators.

**FAIR SHARE PLANNING AND ZONING AND EQUITABLE URBAN REVITALIZATION (S)**

All families deserve the opportunity to select housing that supports their family vision of success. In Connecticut, disproportionately Black and Latine, single mothers, and other families with high need for affordable housing are concentrated in urban settings like Hartford; unable to access essential resources within their immediate community and unable to relocate to higher resourced communities. YWCA Hartford Region, in collaboration with Open Communities Alliance and the Fair Share Consortium, urge lawmakers to adopt Fair Share Planning and Zoning to ensure that affordable housing is available in every town in the state on a fair share basis and allocate resources for equitable urban revitalization to undo the historic damage of redlining.
EQUITY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SPORTS (L)

Women and girls in sports face gender based discriminations and inequities like lack of adequate resources, unequal pay and media stigmas which cause them to compete with various mental health challenges. The Equity Isn’t A Game initiative advocates to eradicate these inequities and level the playing field. YWCA Hartford Region urges academic institutions to enforce Title IX and conduct regular Title IX auditing to identify discriminatory policies and practices and take appropriate steps to address all inequities; address the inequitable resourcing of women and girls equipment, access to playing locations, uniforms, accommodations, opportunities, pay and media coverage; provide access to high quality mental health supports for young women competing at the collegiate level to address challenges that arise from inequities including: negative body image, performance stress/anxiety and developing healthy relationships with coaching, staff and team.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PRIORITIES

IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH OUTCOMES BY ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO REIMBURSABLE DOULA CARE SERVICES (S)

Doula care is a valuable supplement to clinical care. The vulnerabilities of pregnancy and childbirth render a clear need for additional support in order to reduce maternal mortality rates for women of color. Doulas serve as support advocates for women who are navigating the challenges of birth and the medical system. YWCA Hartford Region in collaboration with the Connecticut Doula Coalition and other partners, urges legislators and the Department of Public Health to create an equitable pathway to sustainable reimbursement for doula services.

REGULATE HEALTH CARE PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (S)

The Connecticut Department of Corrections currently provides health care for inmates without the oversight or accreditation of a third party. This kind of oversight is essential to validate quality of care and ensure the safety of incarcerated people and care staff. Unregulated medical practices leave incarcerated women particularly vulnerable and contributes to poorer health outcomes for returning citizens. YWCA Hartford Region in collaboration with ACLU CT, Planned Parenthood Southern New England and others, urges legislators to pass legislation that ensures the Department of Corrections medical care practices are regulated and monitored properly.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA) (N)

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. VAWA improves services for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking; preserves and expands housing protections for survivors; provides economic security assistance for survivors; enhances judicial and law enforcement tools and helps prevent intimate partner homicides. YWCA Hartford Region stands with YWCA USA urging congress to reauthorize these practical solutions to protect survivors and hold perpetrators accountable.
DECLARE RACISM AS PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS (N)

The transformative legislation that declared racism a public health crisis in the State of Connecticut paved the way to address the existence of systemic racism within our state and the resulting disproportionate health disparities amongst BIPOC communities. YWCA Hartford Region stands with YWCA USA urging congress to Declare Racism a Public Health Crisis in the United States and commit to establishing a nationwide strategy to address health disparities and inequity across all sectors in society; dismantling systemic practices and policies that perpetuate racism; advancing reforms to address years of neglectful and apathetic policies that have led to poor health outcomes for communities of color; and promoting efforts to address the social determinants of health—especially for Black, Latino, and Native American people in the United States and other people of color; and placing a charge on the Nation to move forward with urgency to ensure that the United States stands firmly in honoring its moral purpose of advancing the self-evident truths that all people are created equal, that they are endowed with certain unalienable rights, and that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

PROMOTE INCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION ON MUNICIPAL BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS (L)

Participation on municipal boards and commissions often serves as a pipeline to representation in public office, especially for people of color and those who identify as women. Equitable representation in the state and local government process is critical to improving quality of life for all Connecticut residents. The 50/50 Campaign is an initiative to promote equitable gender and racial diversity on municipal boards and commissions especially those focusing on quality of life issues for all residents. The campaign is a localized effort developed in response to Public Act 21-49, which seeks to diversify State boards and commissions. YWCA Hartford Region, supported by the Governor’s Council on Women and Girls, urges municipalities to make focused efforts to reform policies, processes and practices to promote gender and racially balanced boards and commissions.

JOIN US ON OUR MISSION

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