



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

## **YMCA of the USA Legislative Priorities 2022**

**The Y effects global change from the ground up. Together, we help young people develop into tomorrow's leaders, we help everyone improve their health and well-being, and we strive to create equitable communities for all. Our legislative priorities support federal investments in places and programs that are open to people of all generations, backgrounds and perspectives, and that expand access to the resources, opportunities and relationships that everyone needs to thrive.**

**Ys are responsible stewards of federal funds, adhering to the highest standards of accountability, driving measurable outcomes and leveraging funds to ensure maximum impact and return on investment. While Ys only receive limited federal funding for specific programs and services, this support is critical to our ability to serve those in need and drive innovative community solutions for pressing challenges in our communities.**

### **HELPING NONPROFITS ADDRESS COMMUNITY NEEDS**

**Pass final Fiscal Year 2022 (FY 2022) appropriations government funding bills ahead of the February 18, 2022, Continuing Resolution deadline.** The bills currently under consideration in the House and Senate strengthen our communities by investing in our kids, our health and our neighborhoods. Failing to enact the FY 2022 bills and relying on continuing resolutions would be a missed opportunity to improve the lives of Americans and to support the work of Ys and other nonprofit organizations serving communities as the country continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. FY 2022 funding will enable Ys to provide more working families with quality early learning and out-of-school time programming by investing in child care programs that nurture the social-emotional, academic and physical development of children; will enable Ys to reach more individuals living with the nation's leading chronic diseases and promote drowning prevention by providing critical funding to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and will enable Ys to continue to meet the nutritional needs of their communities by extending the USDA's authority to issue nationwide child nutrition waivers to allow child nutrition programs to respond to the pandemic and its aftermath.

**Support the bipartisan Employee Retention Tax Credit Reinstatement Act (H.R.6161),** which retains the ERTC for nonprofits and small businesses in the fourth quarter of 2021, allowing organizations to keep critical staff on the payroll to continue meeting community needs. The ERTC was created with strong bipartisan support in the CARES Act and has been a lifeline for nonprofit organizations like the Y that are working to serve communities through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The American Rescue Plan Act added third and fourth quarters of ERTC to provide much-needed relief to nonprofits and small businesses, but the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act eliminated the fourth quarter of the ERTC in 2021 to serve as a "pay-for" measure. This retroactive elimination of ERTC has created significant hardships for many Ys, other nonprofits and small businesses.

**Future COVID-19 relief efforts should intentionally bolster sectors hard hit by the pandemic,** such as the nonprofit sector and the health and wellness industry, that support the health and well-being of kids, families and communities, through efforts such as the WORK NOW Act, extension of the Child tax Credit, GYMS Act, housing relief and more.

### **YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL**

#### **SUPPORTING THE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH**

**Support the highest allocation possible for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).** CCDBG supports economically disadvantaged families by increasing the availability, affordability and quality of child care. These funds help secure early childhood and afterschool opportunities for children under the age of 13, so that parents can work or pursue training opportunities. Hundreds of Ys across the country offering quality child care programs participate in their state's child care subsidy program, helping parents offset the cost of child care, which is often the largest family expenditure.

**Support a \$500 million increase over the FY 2022 level for 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC).** These funds support locally designed academic enrichment opportunities before school, after school and during the summer. These programs help inspire kids to learn and make better decisions and give working parents peace of mind knowing their children are in safe environments. Research shows that quality programs give students the academic, social and career skills they need to succeed; can lead to improvements in attendance, class participation and behavior, and homework completion; and can narrow the achievement gap. One in five Y afterschool programs are supported by 21st CCLC funding, in partnership with schools and districts.

**Support the highest allocation possible for Head Start.** Head Start prepares young children for school and life by providing a comprehensive set of services to families, including education, nutrition, health care and social services to enhance child well-being. Head Start also supports parents' engagement in their child's learning and development. Together, comprehensive services and parental engagement ensure the cognitive, social and emotional development of young children and prepare them for future success.

## ENSURING THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF YOUTH

**Reauthorize and increase funding for the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).** CAPTA is dedicated to the prevention, assessment, identification and treatment of child abuse and neglect by providing the necessary resources states need to help develop, implement, and evaluate strategies that prevent child maltreatment, reduce entry into the child welfare system and enhance the overall well-being and outcomes of children and families.

**Support the RISE from Trauma Act (S.2086) and other proposals that address the mental health and wellness of young people and staff in youth-serving organizations.** The RISE from Trauma Act will expand trauma-informed training and workforce development in social service organizations, schools, health care settings, child welfare and justice systems and among first responders. It will also increase resources to bolster community response to those affected by trauma. Ys across the country provide services and supports, including trauma-informed approaches to care, in collaboration with local partners and agencies to mitigate the effects of trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and promote mental health and wellness.

## BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES AND STRONG COMMUNITIES

**Support increased funding for programs that advance the Community Schools model, including the Full-Service Community Schools program.** This model promotes school-community partnerships and strategies that coordinate and integrate local services—including health, nutrition and social services—to enhance children's academic and non-academic outcomes and support family wellness. Grant programs, including Full-Service Community Schools and 21st Century Community Learning Centers, as well as funding under Title I of ESSA can be used to support this model. Ys are partners in hundreds of community school efforts across the country, either as a school partner and service provider or as the lead agency responsible for the coordination, planning and implementation of community school initiatives.

**Support the Civics Secures Democracy Act (H.R.1814/S.879).** This legislation includes \$200 million for nonprofit organizations to provide civics education and history programming to young people. Engaging youth in civics helps them learn about government and how to take an active role in the democratic process, while boosting their development and contributing to stronger communities. Civics education can empower young people with the necessary knowledge, skills and mindset to effectively engage in civics and create positive change. The Y believes that today's youth will help transform tomorrow's communities by influencing systems change, bridging social divides and giving back.

**Support the Youth Workforce Readiness Act (S.1696/H.R.3342).** This legislation seeks to create federal investments and partnerships that will increase opportunities for youth to build knowledge and skills and connect to critical real-life work experiences and learning opportunities. The bill also re-establishes Youth Councils to work in coordination with local workforce boards to elevate youth voice on critical issues. Through an array of youth workforce readiness programs, the Y provides young people with real-life work experiences and learning opportunities that build knowledge and skills and connect them to personal growth and social and economic opportunity.

**Support \$130 million for the Youth Mentoring Program at the U.S. Department of Justice.** The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)'s Youth Mentoring Program provides grants to youth-serving organizations to fund quality mentoring programs, grounded in evidence-based research, to improve outcomes for at-risk and high-risk youth. Mentoring is a critical component in young people's lives, helping them make the decisions and connections that lead to opportunity. Each year, Ys provide positive life experiences to hundreds of youth participating in the Y's Reach & Rise® therapeutic mentoring program, funded through DOJ's Youth Mentoring Program.

# HEALTHY LIVING: ENSURING EVERYONE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE THEIR HEALTHIEST LIFE

## PREVENTING AND CONTROLLING CHRONIC DISEASES AND ADDRESSING INEQUITIES THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH

**Support \$3.8 billion, a tripling of funding, for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion to address the looming tsunami of chronic disease as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.** CDC invests in proven strategies that address the nation's leading causes of death and disability: heart disease, cancer, obesity, stroke, arthritis and diabetes. Increased funding is essential to address skyrocketing chronic conditions and to stem the growing pandemic of sedentary behavior and poor nutrition. Many of these chronic conditions are more common, diagnosed later, and result in health inequities for people of color, members of the LGBTQ+ community, people living with disabilities, older adults, people living with mental and substance use disorders and people with low incomes and lower educational attainment. Y-USA has regranted CDC funding to local Ys to build capacity and deliver evidence-based programs and policy strategies that prevent and control chronic diseases and stem inequities, including:

- The National Diabetes Prevention Program is shown to prevent the incidence of type 2 diabetes by 58% for some of the 96 million American adults living with prediabetes. **Support \$40 million for CDC's National Diabetes Prevention Program.**
- The Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program helps some of the 116 million Americans living with hypertension prevent heart disease and strokes. **Support \$160 million for CDC's Heart Disease and Stroke Division.**
- Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Initiatives at CDC promote walking, biking and rolling in communities and strategies to increase access to healthy, affordable foods and prevent and control overweight and obesity. **Support \$125 million for CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity and no less than \$5 million for Active People, Healthy Nation<sup>SM</sup>.**
- Building a national family-based lifestyle health program at CDC for the 20% of children living with obesity. **Support \$10 million to CDC to support community-based organizations delivering family-based lifestyle health programs for children.**
- The Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program helps reduce racial and ethnic health disparities and the Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC) program makes significant investments to improve American Indian and Alaska Native tribal health. **Support \$102.5 million for CDC's REACH and GHWIC programs.**
- The Enhance®Fitness Program helps some of the 59 million Americans living with arthritis reduce pain, increase flexibility, and improve quality of life. **Support \$54 million for CDC's Arthritis Program to support funding in all 50 states.**
- Building a national cancer survivorship physical activity and well-being program at CDC for the 17 million Americans living with, through and beyond cancer. **Support \$50 million for CDC's Comprehensive Cancer Program to create a national cancer survivorship program.**
- Innovative multi-sector strategies aimed at addressing the social determinants of health impacting health outcomes. **Support \$100 million in funding for states and communities addressing lifestyle health, social and economic factors, and the built environment for activity, healthy eating and to strengthen community-clinic linkages.**

## PREVENTING AND CONTROLLING CHRONIC DISEASES AND ADDRESSING INEQUITIES THROUGH OUR HEALTH SYSTEM

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) supports America's seniors, children and families through the Medicare, Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance (CHIP) programs. The Y supports measures that have been introduced in Congress to address upstream factors impacting health outcomes and help prevent and manage chronic disease, including:

- **Support the Social Determinants Accelerator Act (H.R.2503/S.3039).** This legislation will help states and communities devise strategies to address upstream factors that improve the health and well-being of low-income seniors, children and families participating in Medicaid by providing planning grants and technical assistance to state, local and tribal governments.
- **Support the Leveraging Integrated Networks in Communities (LINC) to Address Social Needs Act (H.R.6072/S.509).** The legislation will serve as a catalyst to enable states, through public-private partnerships, to leverage local expertise and technology to overcome longstanding challenges in helping to connect people to food, housing, child development, supports and services, like many offered at the Y.

- **Support the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA) (H.R.1577/S.596).** The legislation will enhance Medicare beneficiaries' access to the health care providers that are best suited to provide intensive behavioral therapy, including community-based organizations like Ys, and allow Medicare Part D to cover FDA-approved anti-obesity medications.
- **Continue to advance Administration-level fixes to improve the Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program expansion project at CMS.** In 2021, some changes were made through the physician fee schedule to increase the number of suppliers willing to deliver the Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program—improving access to the program for the 50% of all seniors living with prediabetes. While good progress was made, legislation or Administration-level fixes are still needed to provide the necessary payment for Ys and other suppliers to better support low-income and/or under resourced populations with the social supports necessary to successfully complete the program and to alleviate some of the prohibitive red tape involved in becoming a supplier.

## CREATING SAFER FUTURES

**Support \$5 million for Drowning Prevention at CDC's National Center on Injury Prevention and Control.** Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional death among children ages 1 to 4 and is the second leading cause for children ages 5 to 14, with an average of 11 drowning deaths per day. This epidemic disproportionately impacts children of color. These funds would help CDC support national organizations in scaling proven drowning prevention programs, support state and local drowning surveillance and support a national plan on water safety.

**Support \$50 million for CDC's National Center on Injury Prevention and Control for firearm injury and mortality prevention research to determine the best solutions to prevent and reduce gun-related injuries and deaths.** Youth violence is a public health issue. As an organization committed to youth and youth safety, the Y advances community-based violence prevention strategies, which can help reduce both youth violence victimization and perpetration. In addition, the Y has joined the American Academy of Pediatrics in supporting increased research on evidence-based strategies to reduce gun-related injuries.

## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: PROVIDING SUPPORT AND INSPIRING ACTION IN OUR COMMUNITIES

### BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

**Support \$100 million for the National Park Service (NPS) Youth Partnership Programs at the Department of Interior.** These resources have enabled partnerships between national parks and Ys to create youth employment programs and provide over 65,000 youth their first opportunity to attend camp or visit a national park. Increased funding would enable more Ys and youth-serving organizations to deliver the program.

**Support the creation of a national Outdoor Equity Initiative.** A national Outdoor Equity Initiative would increase access to public lands for underserved youth and communities of color. According to a 2020 report by the Center for American Progress, nearly 75% of people of color live in areas where natural spaces aren't accessible. An initiative would also address the chronic and systemic inequities that prevent underserved youth and communities of color from engaging in meaningful outdoor recreation and educational experiences on public lands.

**Cosponsor the Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation (SOAR) Act (H.R.3670/S.1229).** The SOAR Act will increase guided recreational access to federal public lands by improving and streamlining the outfitter-guide permitting systems of the federal land management agencies. This bill would help increase outdoor opportunities for young people and families to experience the outdoors with the assistance of an outdoor leader, educator, guide or outfitter.

## CONNECTING INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES TO NEEDED RESOURCES

**Support the Summer Meals Act (S.1170/H.R.783).** The Summer Meals Act fixes longstanding challenges to child nutrition programs by streamlining programs to support year-round feeding, expanding eligibility to serve more kids, allowing an additional meal or snack to be served during the summer and providing transportation services for hard-to-reach areas. From September 2020 through August 2021, Ys served over 39 million healthy meals and snacks to more than 505,000 children at 5,700 sites through USDA's child nutrition programs. Many of the provisions included in the Summer Meals Act have been utilized during the pandemic, demonstrating their effectiveness in increasing participation.

**Increase funding to the highest allocation possible for emergency shelter, transitional and affordable housing, facility infrastructure, and social services to address social and health inequities.** Additional funding for homeless services will help house vulnerable populations experiencing the trauma of homelessness, enable Ys and other community organizations to expand their services and

respond to growing housing needs, and cover emergency expenses related to COVID-19 enhanced cleaning and disinfection practices. Substantial additional funding to tenants and landlords to prevent evictions will keep people stably housed in safe, affordable homes.

**Enact the Universal Giving Pandemic Response and Recovery Act (UGPRA).** In 2020 Congress enacted a temporary non-itemizer deduction on charitable donations with a \$300 cap for individuals and a \$600 cap for couples. This marked the first time in thirty years that all taxpayers were able to claim a deduction on at least part of their charitable giving, regardless of whether they itemized. Unfortunately, that deduction expired at the end of 2021. UGPRA would raise the \$300/\$600 cap to roughly \$4,000 for individuals/\$8,000 for couples and extend the availability of the deduction to the 2022 tax year, helping to spur more giving as communities continue to recover from COVID-19 and its economic effects. This legislation will democratize giving by further incentivizing all American taxpayers—regardless of their income—to give to charity. It will also provide needed resources for charitable and faith-based organizations to continue providing vital services to families, workers and communities, especially those critically impacted by the ongoing pandemic.

**Support an increase for the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).** CNCS is the largest grant maker in support of service and volunteering. It oversees Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, VISTA, National Civilian Community Corps and the Volunteer Generation Fund. These initiatives tap the energy and talent of citizens to solve problems in their communities, and many Ys nationwide draw upon these programs to meet community needs. The Y supports full funding for CNCS and continues to work with other coalitions to ensure that CNCS receives robust funding to deliver these essential services.

**Support meaningful, bipartisan deliberations on comprehensive immigration reform.** Creating bipartisan legislative solutions that address immigration reform is imperative. The future of the nation depends on our collective ability to create meaningful opportunities for all, including new Americans and immigrants, to make social and economic contributions. America's communities are stronger and more cohesive when everyone can contribute and neighbors from all backgrounds work together toward a shared vision for the future.