



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

YMCA of the USA Legislative Priorities 2023

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.

We ask that Congress ensures nonprofits can continue their important role in meeting community needs and connecting individuals to critical resources by supporting the highest level of funding possible in FY24 Appropriations bills that support quality early learning and out of school time programs, improving the health and well-being of the nation and strengthening our communities.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

SUPPORTING THE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH

Support the highest level of funding 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 the highest level of funding possible 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 level of funding 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 support the highest level of funding possible 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 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 the highest level of funding possible 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.

Co-sponsor the Youth Workforce Readiness Act. 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, REDUCING HEALTH SPENDING AND ADDRESSING INEQUITIES THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH AND OUR HEALTH SYSTEM

Support the highest level of funding possible 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. 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 that result in disease and disability. Many of these chronic conditions are more common, diagnosed later, and result in health inequities for people of color, older adults, those living with disabilities, people with mental and substance use disorders, and those 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. We ask that Congress:

- **Support \$40 million in funding for CDC’s National Diabetes Prevention Program.** 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 the highest level of funding possible for CDC’s Heart Disease and Stroke Division.** These resources help to support scaling of the YMCA Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program, which helps some of the 116 million Americans living with hypertension prevent heart disease and strokes by controlling their condition.
- **Support \$130 million for CDC’s Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity (DNPAO), including funding for Active People, Healthy Nation™.** DNPAO initiatives at CDC promote community-driven approaches to advance walking and biking in communities and to increase access to healthy, affordable foods and prevent and control overweight and obesity.
- **Support \$54 million for CDC’s Arthritis Program to support funding in all 50 states.** Y programs like Enhance®Fitness help some of the 59 million Americans living with arthritis reduce pain, increase flexibility, and improve quality of life.

- **Support funding for community-based organizations delivering family-based lifestyle health programs for the 20% of children living with obesity.** This aligns with the National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition and Health.
- **Support \$102.5 million for CDC's REACH and GHWIC programs.** 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 the highest level of funding possible for CDC's Comprehensive Cancer Program to create a national cancer survivorship program** and scale evidence-based physical activity and well-being programs, like LIVESTRONG at the YMCA and help some of the 17 million Americans living with, through and beyond cancer.
- **Support the highest level of funding possible for multisector strategies in states and communities that address human needs that impact health outcomes,** such as increasing access to lifestyle health programs and improving physical environments that support activity and healthy eating and strengthening clinic-to-community linkages.

CONNECTING INDIVIDUALS TO NEEDED HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SYSTEMS

The Y supports legislation that addresses how community-based health and social service organizations can better partner with public health, and public and private payers to ensure individuals are getting the support they need to achieve optimal health outcomes, including:

Support changes to improve the Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program (MDPP) expansion project at CMS. While progress was made in 2021 to improve MDPP and help reverse the course of diabetes among older adults, legislation or Administration-level fixes are still needed to provide the necessary payment for program suppliers, like the Y, to cover program costs, to better support low-income and/or under resourced individuals in the program, and to alleviate some of the prohibitive red tape involved in becoming a Medicare supplier.

Cosponsor the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA). TROA will enhance Medicare beneficiaries' access to health care providers 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.

Cosponsor the Comprehensive Cancer Survivorship Program Act. This legislation seeks to address the gaps in survivorship care and develop standards to improve the overall patient-centered quality of care and navigation needs of cancer survivors and their families. and follow-up care. Additionally, it would support funding for cancer survivorship programs like the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program.

Cosponsor the Social Determinants Accelerator Act. 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.

Cosponsor the Leveraging Integrated Networks in Communities (LINC) to Address Social Needs Act. 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.

CREATING SAFER FUTURES

Support \$5 million for Drowning Prevention at CDC's National Center on Injury Prevention and Control. More children ages 1-4 die from drowning than any other cause of death, and it is the second leading cause of unintentional injury for children ages 5-14. This health crisis disproportionately impacts children of color. These funds would support national organizations in scaling proven prevention programs, state and local drowning surveillance and a national plan on water safety.

Support the highest level of funding possible for CDC's National Center on Injury Prevention and Control for community violence prevention and firearm injury and mortality prevention research to determine the best solutions to prevent gun-related injuries and deaths. 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. The Y has also 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

STRENGTHENING CIVIC HEALTH & TRAINING A NATION OF BRIDGE-BUILDERS

Cosponsor the Building Civic Bridges Act. This bipartisan legislation would authorize \$25 million to create a new Office of Civic Bridgebuilding within AmeriCorps, establish a competitive grant program for bridgebuilding initiatives, train AmeriCorps members in bridgebuilding skills, and support research on civic bridgebuilding, civic engagement, and social cohesion.

Cosponsor the Civics Secures Democracy Act. This bipartisan legislation expands access to civics education by providing \$1 billion annually for civics and history initiatives, including \$200 million towards competitive grants for nonprofit organizations.

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Support \$100 million for National Park Service Youth Partnership Programs at the Department of Interior. These resources have enabled partnerships between national parks and Ys to create youth employment programs and have provided over 80,000 youth with 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.

Cosponsor the PLAYS in Youth Sports Act. This legislation authorizes grants to support youth sports activities including promotion, training and certification for coaches, efforts to increase participation in youth sports, and activities to promote safety and health, including child abuse prevention. The bill calls on the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a \$75 million annual grant program to support nonprofit organizations working to improve health through youth sports participation.

Cosponsor the Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation (SOAR) Act. 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

Cosponsor the Summer Meals Act. 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. In 2021, grant-funded YMCAs served nearly 47 million meals and snacks at 6,000 sites across the country.

Support the highest level of funding possible to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant programs that support emergency shelters, 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 Charitable Giving Incentives for all taxpayers. 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. The Y supports legislation that would restore the non-itemizer deduction, raise the cap to roughly \$4,000 for individuals/\$8,000 for couples, and extend the availability of the deduction, helping to spur more giving. 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.

Support the highest level of funding possible for AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps is the largest grant maker in support of service and volunteering. This initiative taps 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 AmeriCorps and continues to work with other coalitions to ensure this important agency receives robust funding to deliver 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.