Guiding Principle

YWCA Delaware’s mission is to eliminate racism, empower women and promote peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. We advocate for community action, public policies and practices that improve economic security, health, safety and social equity for women and their families with particular attention to the issues that affect people of color.

Priorities 2021

Racial Justice

➢ Law Enforcement Reform
  • People of color in America are policed at double the rate of their white counterparts. Rates of stop, arrest and officer-involved shootings are disproportionate for Black and brown individuals and especially prevalent in poor communities. YWCA Delaware supports reforms that dismantle individual bias and systemic racism in policing through transparency and accountability, specifically: organized data collection, access to raw data for outside analysis; uniform procedures for handling complaints; expanded, effective training on inherent bias and cultural competency; implementing community policing techniques that foster positive relationships between law enforcement and the individuals in the communities they serve.

➢ Criminal Justice Reform
  • In Delaware, 21 percent of the population are Black but represent more than 60 percent of the prison population, with women of color the fastest growing demographic. YWCA Delaware advocates for policies that decrease the prison population such as reducing sentences for low-level crimes, early intervention for at-risk youth and court diversion programs. YWCA supports re-entry programs and policies that enable returning citizens to rebuild their lives economically and socially after their sentence has been served.

Education Equity

➢ School Funding
  • The percentage of Black students prepared for and graduating from post-secondary schools remain significantly less than the percentage of white students. Inequities in learning supports create an achievement gap by race further exacerbated by the economic health of the communities where students live. YWCA Delaware believes every student deserves equitable access to quality education, culturally sensitive and situationally appropriate learning supports.

➢ School Discipline
  • Zero tolerance and other harsh disciplinary policies for minor misbehaviors disproportionately affect youth of color and consequently contribute to higher dropout rates, court involvement and juvenile detention.
YWCA Delaware Advocacy Positions

YWCA DE supports policies that facilitate trauma-informed schools and restorative over punitive discipline practices to preserve a student’s opportunity to quality education.

Health & Safety

➢ Gender Based Violence
  • About 4.5 million women report having been threatened with a gun by an intimate partner. One-fifth of homicide victims with temporary protective orders (PFA) against their abuser were murdered within two days by their abuser; one-third were murdered within the first month. Gaps in current law allow respondents to a PFA to possess a gun. Gaps in records result in people legally prohibited from owning guns able to purchase guns. YWCA DE supports common sense gun control policies that prevent perpetrators of domestic violence from buying or possessing guns.

➢ Racism as a Public Health Crisis
  • Delaware has the 14th highest infant and maternal mortality rates in the nation. Black infants in Delaware are almost three times more likely to die in their first year compared to white infants. YWCA DE supports policies and practices that support culturally sensitive, quality maternal healthcare, prenatal and post-natal support for women of color.
  • Health disparities resulting from systemic racism are explained by the social determinants of health in which quality of life and health status are linked to economic status and educational attainment. YWCA DE supports policies that address disparities in social determinants of health and ensures low-barrier access to quality healthcare in low-income communities in which people of color are overrepresented, as well as cultural competency and implicit bias education for healthcare system workers.

Economic Opportunity

➢ Childcare Access
  • YWCA DE knows childcare access is essential for working mothers and caregivers and the expense often times exceeds household rent or mortgage costs. YWCA DE advocates for policies that ensure families have access to affordable, high-quality childcare.

➢ Wealth Building
  • The lack of community economic development in neighborhoods with low homeownership and high foreclosure rates, lack of affordable housing, limited access to financial services, living-wage or better employment opportunities and entrepreneurial investment exacerbate wealth inequality and disproportionately affect communities of color. YWCA DE support policies that provide investment in depressed communities with community-informed solutions to increase income opportunity, housing stability, access to affordable housing and mainstream financial services and education.