

PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

League of Women Voters of North Carolina

SOCIAL POLICY

Goals

Promote social and economic justice, secure equal rights for all, and combat discrimination and poverty.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

EQUAL RIGHTS. Promote economic, social, legal, and constitutional equality for women.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Promote fair and equal treatment of all citizens involved in the criminal justice system, including victims and witnesses.

Promote swift, sure, and fair disposition for every defendant and promote measures to assure the relief of overcrowding and inmate idleness; support improved services to juveniles through mandatory statewide guidelines, special training for personnel, and elimination of inter-agency fragmentation; support improvements in education and/or training for employment, and family visitation for incarcerated females; provide special assistance to handicapped inmates; and encourage increased use of alternatives to incarceration for non-violent crimes.

Support the establishment of a witness assistance program in every court district.

Support limited compensation for all victims of violent crimes, including services and financial support for all victims regardless of their income.

Establish community alternatives to incarceration in state training schools and local jails.

Encourage increased attention by policy makers to the needs of females in jails and prisons (family visitation, education, vocational training and work release opportunities).

CHILD CARE

Promote the availability of quality day care to all North Carolina families regardless of socioeconomic status, through adequate state and federal standards, financial assistance, and monitoring the enforcement of those standards.

The League supports:

- higher standards for licensing requirements, abolishing 20% tolerance above the number

- of children in the licensing specifications
- better staff training
- judging compliance at group level, equalization of licensing and certification standards
- strengthening existing monitoring programs and policies, greater emphasis on regulations and monitoring in the areas of health and safety, specific standards and required registration of family day care homes
- requiring an educational developmental program for all center-based day care
- a single state day care unit for licensing, certification, and monitoring
- a citizen majority on the Day Care Licensing Commission
- federal assistance to reimburse cost of care at a ceiling, to assist licensed centers meet certification standards, to help families needing day care but exceeding Title guidelines
- abolishing socioeconomic segregation within the day care system
- encouraging state to purchase care from private centers
- encouraging families to purchase care from certified centers
- diversity of child care options
- more services to families with special needs, including: transportation, after-school care, migrant workers, families with handicapped or emotionally disturbed parents/children
- industry supported day care through tax incentives to businesses, scholarships for purchasing care, on-site care.
- a program of community and parental awareness.

ELDER CARE

Support the state in taking an aggressive role in the provision of services to dependent older adults.

Create standards and enforcement mechanisms.

- Establish, monitor and enforce standards defining state and county responsibilities for institutions ranging from in-home residential care to nursing homes
- Expand and improve Ombudsman program services.
- Improve opportunities for citizen participation in establishing and monitoring county and state policies and programs

Ensure access to services.

- Establish, in each county, a single point of entry for information, referral, and intake for

SOCIAL POLICY

dependent older adults and families in need of assistance with their care

- Guarantee equitable access to all services
- Equalize formulas for county funding from the state based on age, race, poverty and other demographic status of the county
- Establish eligibility for public subsidies for services based on age, income, functional impairment, and type of residence and family support
- Expand and improve Medicaid eligibility

Require minimum services. Create, in every county, access to the following core services, not necessarily provided by the county, but accessible through county referral, for example: transportation, adult daycare, in-home aides, congregate meals, home-delivered meals, protective services, medical equipment, and therapies.

EDUCATION

Promote quality education for all students through the secondary level, with a continuing emphasis on the equalization of financing of public schools, and consolidation of school districts, when feasible, to provide for improved administration, better use of facilities, and broadened school instructional offerings.

Support developmentally appropriate early childhood education.

Improve quality of teaching through such means as in-service training, more comprehensive teacher training programs, and higher salaries.

Support appointment of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Support increased citizen participation through formation of school site and district public school advisory committees.

Continue efforts to improve administrative efficiency and judicious use of funds. State funding should be sufficient to support state curriculum requirements in all counties.

EARLY INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN AT RISK

Support policies and programs at all levels of the community and government that promote the well being and encourage the full development and ensure the safety of all children. These include: 1) child abuse/ neglect prevention; 2) teen pregnancy prevention; 3) quality healthcare, including nutrition and prenatal care; 4) early childhood education; 5) developmental services, emphasizing children ages 0-3; 6) family support services; and 7) violence prevention.

HOUSING

Promote equal access to housing for all citizens of North Carolina. Support the adoption of a statewide housing policy and a minimum statewide housing code. Support a state initiative to increase the supply of housing for low-income persons in the wake of decreased federal funding.

LWVNC and local Leagues may act upon any of the positions taken by LWVUS. A complete list of the LWVUS positions can be found at www.lwv.org.