



2021 IOWA ACES POLICY COALITION PRIORITIES

ADVANCE TRAUMA-INFORMED, EQUITABLE SYSTEMS

The past year has illuminated the important role our systems play in the prevention and healing of trauma. The education, health, and human services sectors and workforce have directly witnessed the impacts of the pandemic and natural disasters and understand the healing that is needed. They have also witnessed the continued impact of systemic discrimination on our state. Advancing policy related to the health and well-being of all children and families requires the following strategies in all sectors:

- **Implement protective policies to support family well-being and basic needs**, decreasing community and environmental risk factors that contribute to childhood and family trauma.
- **Assess policy impact on priority communities**, including low-income Iowans and Iowans who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
- **Establish intentional workforce strategies** to increase the number of providers of color in the health and human services fields.

ENHANCE SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN IOWA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

- **Increase flexible funding for Iowa schools and AEAs to expand social-emotional supports for students**, enhancing community-based partnerships.
- **Expand training on adverse childhood experiences and resiliency** to include cultural humility and extend to educators in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program.

CONTINUE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

- **Ensure adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding for Iowa's mental health system** across the lifespan, ensuring equitable access regardless of zip code, race, or income.
- **Establish telehealth payment parity across all payors.**
- **Expand access to policies and programs that support prevention, early identification, and early intervention for children's social-emotional development** to mitigate long-term, chronic, and expensive health conditions later in life.

IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF IOWA'S KIDS

- **Protect Medicaid from harmful changes and funding cuts** that would take away health care from eligible children and families.
- **Increase family stability through access to safe and affordable housing**, reducing family stressors and community conditions that can contribute to childhood trauma.

INCREASE PRENATAL AND MATERNAL HEALTH COMMUNITY SUPPORT TO ADDRESS DISPARITIES

- **Increase access to prenatal and maternal health home-visitation services** as a primary prevention and early intervention strategy for childhood trauma and family stress.
- **Extend postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 days to 12 months**, strengthening financial stability and health care access for new mothers.

ADVANCE A TRAUMA-INFORMED CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

- **Reduce disparity between the financial support provided to kinship caregivers and non-relative foster families**, implementing monthly financial support to relative caregivers and increasing access to child care assistance.
- **Enhance data and reporting systems to increase early identification and intervention for child abuse cases**, including integration of data systems across state programs and extending record retention timeframes.