



2017-2018 Policy Agenda

Strengthening Chicago's Youth (SCY) supports public policies that will prevent violence and build resilience among our youth. These policies generally share the following principles:

- Developmental approach that recognizes how violence emerges over the life course and the impact of trauma on development.
- Ecological approach which notes that violence and its solutions occur at the individual, family, community, and societal levels.
- Knowledge that each child, family, and community is unique.
- Recognition that it is better to keep a child or family from being exposed to violence than to treat the effects of exposure.
- Strength-based approach that focuses more on development of assets and skills than on remedy of deficits.
- Acknowledgement that violence prevention requires involvement from many different disciplines.
- Emphasis on data including encouragement of strong surveillance, use of local data, evidence-based polices, and evaluation.
- Attention paid to enhancing existing infrastructures, sustainability, implementation, and funding.
- Participation of the people and organizations most affected by the policy in its development.
- Acceptance of the fact that violence cannot be addressed without addressing race, segregation, gender, sexual orientation, and poverty.
- Basis in social justice, ensuring that potential negative effects of policies should not be borne disproportionately by already oppressed populations.

For 2017-2018, SCY will focus on supporting the following policy recommendations. This list was prioritized by members of the SCY collaborative on the basis of timeliness, implementation and political feasibility, importance, and alignment with SCY's policy principles.

1. Raise public awareness of how positive parenting contributes to academic, economic and family success, and promote culturally competent parenting enrichment opportunities.
2. Develop strategies to build needed capacity for community-based organizations in high-need areas to deliver quality programs for youth and families.
3. Support gun violence prevention policies that have been shown to make a difference, including anti-trafficking laws and enforcement measures and evidence-based approaches to keep guns from dangerous people.
4. Decrease detention and incarceration and minimize arrests, and reinvest savings into community-based resources alternatives, prevention, and early intervention.
5. Implement sustainable funding mechanisms for school-based, community-based, and faith-based mental health and substance abuse services, including health promotion, standardized screening, connection to services, and outcome tracking.
6. Support justice policies in all settings that reflect evidence regarding brain development, including knowledge about the impact of trauma.
7. Build cultures of compassion at schools across all levels of the socioecological model.
8. Promote economic and community development, including strategies such as affordable housing and quality of life planning.
9. Reduce use of disciplinary practices that remove children from school in Chicago Public Schools and promote approaches that foster supportive school climates.
10. Redefine the concept, process and impact of "arrest" for youth.