



## 2019-2020 Policy Agenda

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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.
- Recognition of the interconnectedness and co-occurrence of many forms of violence, including child maltreatment, teen dating violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, community violence, and bullying.
- Knowledge that each child, family, and community is unique.
- Recognition that it is better to keep a child or family from being exposed to all forms of violence than to treat the effects of exposure.
- Strength-based approach that focuses on development of assets and skills over remedy of deficits.
- Acknowledgement that violence prevention requires involvement from many different disciplines.
- Use of data, data visualization, and mapping to monitor emerging health and safety issues, develop evidence-based policies, and implement ongoing evaluation of violence prevention interventions.
- Attention paid to enhancing existing infrastructures, building local capacity, 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 2019-2020, 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. Adopt and implement evidence-based, trauma-informed gun violence prevention policies that reduce access to illegal firearms and keep our communities safe.
2. Decrease detention and incarceration and minimize arrests, and reinvest savings into community-based resources, alternatives, prevention, and early intervention.
3. Support publicly funded organizations with youth programming, including schools, to require professional development training for all staff on the effects of all forms of violence and trauma on children and youth.
4. Reduce use of disciplinary practices that remove children from school in Chicago Public Schools and promote restorative justice practices that foster supportive school climates.
5. Support policies in education, law enforcement, and the legal system that reflect evidence regarding brain development, combat systemic racism, and address the impact of trauma on individuals and communities.
6. Encourage investment in programmatic, organizational, and fiscal capacity building for community-based organizations in high-need areas to deliver quality programs for youth and families.
7. Promote economic and community development that prioritizes employment, education, and affordable housing, to create neighborhoods that are vital, livable, and safe.
8. Implement sustainable funding mechanisms for school-based, community-based, and faith-based mental health and substance use services, including health promotion, standardized screening, connection to comprehensive services, and outcome tracking.
9. Adopt policies to ensure transparent and equitable government investments in communities suffering from concentrated disadvantage.