

# Policy Recommendations to Address the Grand Challenges for Social Work

## Ensure Healthy Development for All Youth

- Ensure that 10% of all public funds spent on young people support effective prevention programs.
- Increase local and state capacity to support the high-quality implementation of effective preventive interventions.
- Develop community-level systems to monitor risk, protection, and behavioral-health outcomes.
- Provide tested, effective, family-focused, preventive interventions without cost to patients or families through primary health-care providers.
- Reduce the duration of untreated mental illness in young people.
- Train and enable a workforce for effective prevention practice.

## Close the Health Gap

- Focus on settings-based research and interventions to improve the conditions of daily life.
- Advance community empowerment and advocacy for sustainable health solutions and prevention.
- Cultivate health innovation in primary care and community-based centers.
- Promote access to health care and insurance for all.
- Foster development of an interprofessional health workforce.
- Develop a global health policy agenda on reducing alcohol misuse.

## Stop Family Violence

- Increase federal funding for prevention and intervention activities, including efforts to reduce the structural inequalities that perpetuate gender-based violence.
- The national institute of justice, the national institutes of health, and the administration for children and families should increase research funding for evidence-based interventions that strengthen and enhance safety in families victimized through abuse and violence.
- Link data systems to identify opportunities for preventive services.

## Advance Long and Productive Lives

- Create flexible and transitional employment arrangements.
- Provide financial support to caregivers.
- Expand the Corporation for National and Community Service's support for engaging older adults.

## Eradicate Social Isolation

- Increase access to high-quality child care that strengthens social connections.
- Build more age-friendly communities that strengthen social connections.
- Reform solitary confinement.

## End Homelessness

- Expand access to housing subsidies, including Housing Choice Vouchers.
- Ensure that evidence-based psychosocial interventions accompany housing assistance for those in need.
- Develop and evaluate housing-led interventions for specific populations.

## Create Social Responses to a Changing Environment

- Adopt and implement evidence-based approaches to disaster risk reduction.
- Develop policies targeting environmentally induced migration and population displacement.
- Strengthen equity-oriented urban resilience policies and proactively engage marginalized communities in adaptation planning.

## Harness Technology for Social Good

- Expand Internet connectivity for underserved households.
- Unlock government data to drive solutions to social problems.
- Open the possibility for social work practice across state lines.

## Promote Smart Decarceration

- Use incarceration primarily for incapacitation of the most dangerous.
- Make reduction of disparities a key outcome in decarceration efforts.
- Remove civic and legal exclusions.
- Reallocate resources to community-based supports.

## Reduce Extreme Economic Inequality

- Strengthen labor standards and reform employment policies.
- Expand active employment creation through public programs and support for business start-up and capitalization.
- Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit.
- Convert the child tax credit into a universal child allowance.
- Expand child care access to enable stable employment in the context of healthy child development.
- Create new lifelong policies for inclusive and progressive wealth building.

## Build Financial Capability for All

- Support a strong Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to help ensure the transparency, safety, fairness, and affordability of financial products and services.
- Start lifelong asset building with universal and progressive Child Development Accounts.
- Create a web-based Financial Capability Gateway to build financial capability for all.
- Prepare social work and human service practitioners to build financial capability and assets for all.
- Expand access to and use of savings accounts.
- Create incentives to save for emergencies.
- Expand tax-time savings opportunities.
- Expand access to safe and affordable banking products.
- Protect consumers who access loan products.
- Expand options for consumers to build credit.
- Protect consumers from abusive financial system practices.
- Expand access to banking and financial services in underserved communities.

## About these policy recommendations

These policy recommendations emerged from Social Innovation for America's Renewal, a policy conference organized by the Center for Social Development the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in collaboration with the American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare, which founded the Grand Challenges for Social Work initiative to champion social progress through a national agenda powered by science.



## Achieve Equal Opportunity and Justice

- Accelerate Latino immigrant integration, expand coverage under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA).
- Enhance, expand, and strengthen federal antidiscrimination laws, including the Voting Rights Act.
- Eliminate zero tolerance policies in schools and promote the use of evidence-informed practices and policies to address racial disciplinary disproportionality.



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