



## 2024 Issue Paper: Children and Families

### Position Statement

LWVWA addressed children's issues early in its existence. In the 1920's they looked at child labor laws while the 1940's found the LWVWA focused on adoption procedures. The 1980's and 1990's saw studies of the effectiveness of services for at-risk children and child custody and support laws. As a result, the LWVWA supports "stable and adequate funding for children at risk" and "vigorous, efficient, and innovative child enforcement methods".

### Recent Legislation

Recent bills that LWVWA supported that were passed and signed into law:

- [SB 5256](#) Making permanent and expanding the child welfare housing assistance program
- [SB 5124](#) Supporting guardianships and voluntary placement with non-relative kin

### Summary of Issues for the 2024 Legislative Session

Much of the work in the last few legislative sessions has been to support and strengthen the Department of Children Youth and Family (DCYF) initiative to reduce the number of children and youth in foster care. Legislation last year supports that aim. We can expect more bills directed toward that end as well as those that improve the quality of care for those children and youth in the care of the state.

### Important issues concerning children and families include:

- Development of a continuum of income maintenance programs and family support services sufficient to meet individual and family needs for food, housing and clothing
- Mandated reporting by clergy
- Increased support for youth aging out of state care
- Preserving public benefits for children/youth in state care
- Adequate funding to provide for children/youth who have been sexually trafficked.

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