



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Kansas State Alliance of YMCAs 2025 POLICY PRIORITIES

The Kansas Alliance of YMCAs represents the collective voice and impact of 10 Kansas YMCA associations serving almost 510,000 Kansans in 24 communities. Kansas Ys work together and in partnership with other organizations and coalitions to strengthen the foundation of our communities through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Nurture the potential of every child and teen



- Increase access, affordability and quality of early learning, school-age, and middle school youth programs and services, which leads to: more income for families for quality food, education and savings; more jobs and inclusive economic growth; better futures for children; and more productive working adults.
- Invest in and elevate in-person and virtual programs and opportunities for middle school youth (grades 6–8) that impart essential career readiness skills and experiences and contribute to a future pipeline of Kansas workers.
- Support the early education and school-age program workforce by investing in child care workforce development funding, recruitment and retention opportunities.
- Address administrative and systemic operational barriers and concerns that increase provider costs and reduce child care access, including aligning minimum facilities standards for school-age programs with existing facilities standards for school buildings.
- Increase family eligibility for child care assistance and pay 100% of the cost of quality child care to providers participating in the child care assistance program.
- Create greater awareness of the education achievement gap and explore opportunities for best practice policy implementation and increased funding for out-of-school (OST) time programs.



HEALTHY LIVING

Improve communities' wellbeing

- Increase access to and affordability of healthy foods.
- Encourage evidence-based chronic disease prevention and management programs that promote quality of life for all, while lessening the burden on the state budget from skyrocketing costs associated with diabetes, heart disease, cancer and arthritis.
- Embrace healthy initiatives in early childhood and school-age programs.
- Support and adequately fund programs that promote healthy living among seniors, children, and families, including increased access to safe and convenient places to walk, exercise and play.
- Support policies which promote healthy choices for teens and prevent or reduce youth tobacco and vaping use.
- Invest in mental health supports and resources for out-of-school time (OST) programs that benefit children, their parents and the OST workforce by promoting resilience and fostering socialization, relationships, and adaptive functioning.



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Giving back and providing support to our neighbors

- Advance policies that seek to protect children from various forms of abuse and neglect and which reflect or model the Y's rigorous commitment to child safety.
- Support funding opportunities and regulatory relief for nonprofit organizations that align with our mission.
- Support funding for and increased access to drowning prevention programs, such as the YMCA's Safety Around Water program.
- Preserve the tax-exempt status of charitable organizations and incentives for donating to and volunteering for such organizations so they can continue to lead, provide essential services, and be effective and responsive to the needs of their local community.