

Advocacy IMPACT

2021 AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

The American Psychological Association's strategic priorities are rooted in equity, diversity, and inclusion. In keeping with these strategic priorities, the APA's advocacy priorities encompass the guiding principles of non-discrimination, health equity for underserved and vulnerable populations, and health promotion across the lifespan and settings. Keeping the guiding principles at the forefront of advocacy for psychology ensures the greatest impact on the many challenges facing society.

PRIORITIES UNIQUE TO APA

Access to health services, including mental and behavioral health services

- » Ensure access for evidence-based health and behavioral health services within public and private healthcare delivery systems. Expand the role of psychologists on interprofessional, integrated teams.

Funding for basic and applied psychological research

- » Advocate for increased funding for basic, clinical and applied psychological research within key agencies, foundations, and funding sources (e.g., NIH, NSF, CDC, VA, DoD, Ed, EPA). Expand opportunities for application in public and private sectors.

General applied psychology promotion

- » Educate APA membership and advocate across key private sector stakeholders regarding the various contributions of psychology and roles of psychologists in areas such as human performance, motivation, leadership and personnel assessment, conflict resolution, and civic engagement.

Psychology education and training financing

- » Improve access to graduate study for psychology, including student financial aid programs, loan repayment, and loan forgiveness programs.

Psychology workforce development

- » Improve training and leadership skills of next generation of culturally competent, diverse psychologists, engage students, and secure federal funding for psychology workforce training programs, including accredited internships, and post-doctoral fellowships that expand interprofessional training opportunities working with underserved populations. Increase opportunities for basic and applied psychology trainees.

Reimbursement and scope of practice

- » Ensure equitable reimbursement for the full range of psychologists' services, including psychotherapy, health and behavior, testing, and telehealth services. Promote psychologists in federal health programs, such as ensuring psychologists provide Medicare services to the full scope of their licensure and supporting VA recruitment and retention of psychologists. Leverage federal with state efforts promoting licensure and credentialing and fighting encroachment from other providers.

PRIORITIES WHERE APA MAKES A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION

Application of psychological science to Pre-K, K-12, and higher education

- » Ameliorate education disparities from pre-K through higher education, including universal pre-K and supporting social and emotional learning programs, psychology as a STEM discipline, and APA high school psychology curricula standards.

Criminal justice

- » Use psychological research to advance criminal justice reform, police-community relations, and to address the disparate impact of mass incarceration on minority and low-income communities.

The future of work

- » Advance the role of applied psychology in preparing society and the workforce to manage significant impacts from emerging changes in demographic trends, technological innovation and global competition.

Health equity for underserved and vulnerable populations

- » Promote health equity for diverse populations by reducing disparities in health attributed to race, ethnicity, sexual and gender identity and orientation, geography, disability, age, socioeconomic status and poverty, and underserved and vulnerable populations, including tribal communities, children, immigrants, veterans, and individuals living with HIV/AIDS.

Health promotion and prevention throughout lifespan and settings

- » Support the wellbeing and healthy development of children and adults, including access to developmentally appropriate mental health services and population-based prevention and health promotion programs across the lifespan and settings.

Science infrastructure and regulatory environment

- » Promote ethical, non-human animal and peer-reviewed psychological and interdisciplinary research.

Substance use disorders and opioid and other drug epidemics

- » Advocate for policies and increase opportunities that promote the role of psychology and psychologists in the prevention and treatment of opioid and other substance use disorders, including non-pharmacological interventions for pain management.

Violence and suicide prevention

- » Utilize psychological research to reduce suicide and interpersonal violence, including gun violence. Increase school safety and educate the public, policymakers, and law enforcement about non-violent conflict resolution, impact of trauma exposure, and the need for trauma-informed interventions.

PRIORITIES IN COLLABORATION WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Climate change

- » Educate the public and apply psychological research to combat climate change and address its impacts.

Discrimination

- » Combat discrimination in all forms and settings, including education, healthcare, and workplace. Oppose efforts to curtail rights of women, sexual and gender minorities, individuals with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, and other marginalized populations.

Immigration

- » Continue advocacy around federal immigration policies, and inform policies related to humane treatment of immigrants and refugees.

Protect and strengthen safety net programs

- » Protect and strengthen safety net programs, such as Medicaid, CHIP, child-care, family leave, nutritional assistance, economic stability, and housing programs.