

Advocacy for WOMEN, CHILDREN, AND FAMILIES



nyjl.org/advocacy · advocates@nyjl.org

The New York Junior League (NYJL) champions policies that support women and children, and advocates for public policies on their behalf alongside state, federal, and city public policy makers and community partners.

For more than a century, the New York Junior League has been at the forefront of the United States' defining historical events, including immigration and the settlement movement, the suffragist movement and ratification of the 19th Amendment, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Civil Rights Movement.

In the 1990s, the NYJL began collaborating with the New York State Public Affairs Committee of the Junior League (NYSPAC), which represents 21 Junior Leagues throughout the state. Today, the NYJL remains dedicated to serving the New York City community and improving the lives of women and children with two focused committees: City Advocates for Public Policy and State Advocates for Public Policy.

The **Junior League of the City of New York, Inc.**, is an organization of women whose mission is to advance women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training.

The NYJL supports community partners and NYJL volunteers who wish to advocate for policies that align with their missions.

NYJL's History of Advocacy and Achievements

1970-90s

The early decades of NYJL's advocacy focused on childhood education, job discrimination, insurance coverage, domestic violence, *the Equal Rights Amendment*, and reproductive health.

2006

The NYJL and NYSPAC collaborated on *Timothy's Law*, which increased mental health parity in health insurance coverage by eliminating some insurance limitations.

2008

The NYJL successfully championed for New York State funding to support shelters for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking.

2007-15

The NYJL called for the passage of the *Trafficking Victims Protection and Justice Act*, which was signed into law, along with seven other bills in the Women's Equality Act, in late 2015.

2015

At State Advocacy Day, the NYJL urged legislators to pass the *Paid Family Leave Act*, which was enacted in the 2016 NYS Budget.

2017-19

The NYJL supported the *NYC Salary History Ban*, which prevents employers from asking job applicants to disclose previous salaries.

2022-26

In memory of NYJL member Michelle Go, the NYJL is advocating for the federal *Michelle Alyssa Go Act* to repeal the Medicare facility limitations to increase support of mental health.

2024

The NYJL supported the *Stop Addictive Feeds Exploitation for Kids Act*, which restricts social media algorithms for minors.

2025

The NYJL successfully advocated for *Universal School Meals*, which was funded for the 2025-2026 school year and provides breakfast and lunch for 2.7 million students in New York.

Current Advocacy Focus Areas

The New York Junior League Advocates for Public Policy committees select bills each year that reflect the challenges facing women, children and families related to our focus areas. Committees work with lawmakers and other stakeholders to progress these bills including at our signature events Legislative Breakfast and City and State Advocacy days.

Mental Health Equity

- The NYJL supports access to mental health care and coverage in New York
 - Mental health symptoms affect as many as 1 in 5 New Yorkers each year. 1 in 10 adults have challenges that interfere with their functioning at work, family or school.
 - The NYJL supports improved access to care and insurance coverage for all New Yorkers without stigma.
 - At the federal level, NYJL continues to advocate for the passage of the *Michelle Alyssa Go Act* which will expand mental health coverage for Medicare facilities by repealing size restrictions.

Women's Health and Equality

- The NYJL advocates for policies that improve women's access to healthcare and support gender equality.
 - The NYJL was proud to support the *New York State Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)*, which codified reproductive choice in New York when it passed in 2024. We continue to support the federal *ERA*.
 - NYJL City and State committees advocated for bills *restricting chemicals in menstrual products*, which passed in 2025. We also support policies that *restrict chemicals in cosmetic products*, which disproportionately affect women and people of color as both workers and consumers.
 - The NYJL supports legislation that delivers improved health outcomes for all women, including funding women's healthcare research, increasing access to medical and maternal care, expanding insurance coverage, and protecting women's health data.

Poverty Relief

- The NYJL advocates for financial policies that support families and children.
 - The NYJL successfully advocated, with a coalition of more than 350 non-profits, for the Universal School Meals as part of the FY2026 Final Enacted Budget, which was funded for the 2025-2026 school year and provides breakfast and lunch for 2.7 million students in New York.
 - More than 80% of New Yorkers cannot comfortably afford childcare for even one child. NYJL supports Universal Child Care and its expansion to cover New York families across New York City and New York State.

Domestic Violence

- The New York Junior League stands with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.
 - In the U.S., as many as one in four women and one in nine men are victims of domestic violence. Domestic violence includes stalking, sexual and physical violence, psychological aggression, and coercive control, including emotional abuse and financial abuse.
 - NYJL supports the *Speak Your Truth Act*, which protects survivors from retaliatory defamation lawsuits, helps cover legal costs if survivors are sued, and makes it safer to speak out without fear.
 - Domestic violence is one of the leading causes of family homelessness in New York City. NYJL supports legislation that expands access to affordable housing options for survivors of domestic violence.

1.) https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/mental_health_and_substance_abuse/mental_health.htm

2.) <https://www.health.ny.gov/community/adults/women/>