

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH

**Adopted 1965, 1967, 1969; revised 1977, 1989, 1997**

- I. LWVMI supports a system of comprehensive and coordinated services for all children and families in order to provide basic resources for an adequate quality of life. These basic resources are nurturance, access to health care, and sufficient income to assure decent standards of food, clothing and shelter.

LWVMI supports policies and programs to provide preventive, protective and rehabilitative services for all children and their families. Programs should be staffed by sufficient and well-trained personnel. These programs include, but are not limited to:

- A. Daycare—flexible and varied licensed programs including before and after school care;
  - B. Medical and dental services including prenatal services;
  - C. Family counseling;
  - D. Homemaker service;
  - E. Mental health facilities for diagnosis and treatment;
  - F. Protective services on a statewide basis;
  - G. Family preservation services;
  - H. Foster care facilities to provide group and family care for long and short-term placement;
  - I. Provision for shelter care for non-court situations;
  - J. Head Start; and
  - K. Parental leave.
- II. Juvenile Justice

LWVMI supports the concept of "individualized justice" for children within the framework of due process of law, adequate and coordinated court services, and unification of qualified staff for Michigan courts that deal with children. Children sometimes commit status or adult offenses but the justice system must recognize that they are still children.

- A. Rights
  1. Judgments and dispositions of the juvenile court should be based upon a careful study and evaluation of the needs of children brought before it, within the framework of their family, and consistent with proper protection of the larger society.
  2. Children before the juvenile court should be assured the same safeguards of due process of law accorded to adults in adult court.

3. Juvenile court should adhere to uniform procedural rules which safeguard due process of law.
  4. Detention should be used only for those who are a danger to themselves or the community.
- B. Services
1. Adequate but separate care for delinquent and neglected children under court jurisdiction.
  2. Improved and expanded probation services for those under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court.
  3. Improved and expanded services to prevent juvenile delinquency and to augment measures to rehabilitate delinquents.
  4. Provision of services where lacking and organization to eliminate duplication between courts.
  5. Services for children and juveniles should be separate from adult services.
- C. Personnel
1. All court personnel should meet minimum standards and receive in-service training and adequate compensation.
  2. Establishment of one system of employment for juvenile court personnel.
    - a. The judge should participate in the system of employment to ensure a compatible staff.
    - b. The employment system should provide adequate protection for the rights of personnel.