

League of Women Voters of Oregon

Children at Risk

Adopted January 1995

- A. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports comprehensive statewide, locally based programs and services for teen pregnancy prevention and for teenage parents. Such programs and services should include elements of the following:**
- 1. family planning services,**
 - 2. school-based health centers,**
 - 3. parenting skills' education,**
 - 4. cooperation/coordination among agencies providing services,**
 - 5. evaluation and accountability measurements,**
 - 6. easy and appropriate access to information and services,**
 - 7. mentoring and counseling for teenagers and their parents, including peer counseling,**
 - 8. community involvement and support groups,**
 - 9. abuse prevention,**
 - 10. male responsibility in teen pregnancy prevention,**
 - 11. broad public education, and 12. substance abuse prevention.**
- B. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes the state should have the primary responsibility for funding programs addressing teenage pregnancy prevention and teen parenting. Elements to be included, but not limited to, are:**
- 1. equitable funding of programs for young women and young men,**
 - 2. adequate funding for state agencies with responsibilities to children,**
 - 3. cooperative efforts with the private sector,**
 - 4. funds earmarked for community programs, urban and rural, which provide after school and weekend activities for teens, and**
 - 5. shared funding responsibility, when appropriate, among state, local and private sources.**
- C. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports development of required curriculums for all school districts relative to teen pregnancy and parenting, accompanied by implementation requirements, which covers, but is not limited to, the following areas:**
- 1. comprehensive, age-appropriate family life sexuality education K-12,**
 - 2. parenting skills education,**
 - 3. specialized education programs for pregnant teens and teenage parents, and**
 - 4. teacher training at the baccalaureate level and as continuing education.**
- D. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports programs directed to assist pregnant teens and teen parents. These programs include the following:**
- 1. job training and adequate wages,**
 - 2. involvement and financial support requirements for fathers,**
 - 3. counseling to break the cycles of abuse, poverty, and teen pregnancy,**
 - 4. health care, including prenatal care,**
 - 5. accessible, affordable housing,**
 - 6. child care,**
 - 7. transportation access,**
 - 8. completion of secondary education, and**
 - 9. self-esteem enhancement, career opportunities, and transition to self-sufficiency.**

**Children at Risk
Updated Position 2015**

In the Spring of 2015, League members throughout Oregon studied early childhood education, discussed consensus questions posed by the LWVOR study committee, and submitted their views to the state League. Those views were combined to formulate the following position, which can now be used for advocacy by local Leagues as well as the LWVOR Action Team.

WVOR Children at Risk Position Statement The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that the early years of a child's life are crucial in building the foundation for educational attainment and greatly impact success or failure in later life. Early intervention and prevention measures are effective in helping children reach their full potential. The League supports policies, programs, and funding at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development, and ensure the safety of all children. These include:

- Nutrition and food access for vulnerable children and families
- Access to affordable, safe, and stable housing
- Early screening (physical, dental, mental, and behavioral) for all children; early prenatal care and ongoing health care for children (physical, mental, dental)
- Access to affordable, quality child care (see LWVOR Child Care position) Access to early literacy and pre-school programs, including but not limited to Early Head Start and Head Start
- Programs for mental health and addictions treatment for parents
- Family support, including but not limited to home visiting, parenting classes, and family relief nurseries
- Comprehensive services for children with developmental and cognitive disabilities
- Use of evidence-based practices in child welfare and foster care
- Programs to reduce poverty by providing parents with assistance in job training and education Policies and legislation to reduce racial or ethnic minority status inequities

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that governments, at all levels, have a responsibility to oversee and coordinate a comprehensive network of services to maximize children's readiness to be successful in school while optimizing available resources.