

Insider Outsiders: Navigating Child Welfare Advocacy, Policy, and Partnership

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Social Work Code of Ethics

6.04 Social and Political Action

- (a) Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.
- (b) Social workers should act to expand choice and opportunity for all people, with special regard for vulnerable, disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited people and groups.
- (c) Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people. (d) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, or mental or physical disability

Ethics of Public Service / Spirit of Partnership

- Prohibition from using public resources to take a position on a specific position or advocate for a candidate for elective office
- Relational and political impact of advocacy in opposition to the positions of the agency that funds you.

Where advocacy is needed ... a starter list

- Children on the border
- Racial Justice in child welfare
- Respect for tribal sovereignty / ICWA
- Agency culture and work conditions
- Justice for people in poverty
- LGBTQ youth
- Involvement of fathers and kin ...
- Best and culturally grounded practices
- And so much more

Rothman's three approaches to Community Intervention

- Social Action
- Locality Development
- Social Planning /Policy



Rothman's three approaches to community intervention

Social Action

Social Justice / Direct opposition to Confrontational tactics like demonstrations, strikes, marches, boycotts and other disruptive or attention gaining moves

The potential to pressure and disrupt'.

mobilize low power constituencies and equip them with skills to impact power.

Locality Development

Building power, voice and capacity in communities

Promote change through broad participation by a wide spectrum of people at the local community level in determining goals and taking civic action

(Helping people to help themselves)

Social Planning & Policy

Gather and analyze data, maneuver large bureaucracies forward.

Heavy reliance on needs assessment, decision analysis, evaluation research

Conceptualizing, organizing and delivering services to people,

Facilitating coordination among agencies, identifying gaps and filling them

<https://article1000.com/jack-rothman-models-community-organization/>

Child Welfare Partnership Applications

Social Action

- Perhaps not as available given the essentially oppositional stance this practice takes
- But we can still teach this approach
- Use of art and imagination to 'startle' people awake

Locality Development

- Elevating the voices of parents and youth in our training programs, classrooms, and through grant funded interventions
- Organizing and elevating the voices of staff in child welfare agencies
- Education of social workers to lead and make change in their child welfare agencies

Social Policy and Planning

We are educators, scientists, intervention researchers.

We can testify as expert witnesses in hearings

Op Eds on topics, grounded in our research and data

Developing policies, serving on task forces.

Conducting research on matters of significance and concern.

ETC.

We advocate because we must.

"Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it."



the Talmud

