

2021 PRIORITIES

OCALI's Office of Policy works across public and private sectors to inform decision makers; create practical, innovative policy; and establish partnerships so people with disabilities and their families can live their best lives for their whole lives. We elevate disability to ensure commitments to "all Ohioans" includes the 1.6 million Ohioans with a disability. Disability cuts across geography, age, sex, racial, and ethnic groups. There is not an issue or policy that does not impact people with disabilities. Disability can no longer be a separate discussion or special population; it must be part of the "all."

In 2021, we will work with our partners across systems, across the lifespan to ensure:



COVID response and recovery efforts include the disability community. COVID has disproportionately affected people with disabilities, their families, and support systems. COVID has reduced the availability of home and community-based services, separated people in long-term care from their families and exposed discrimination in the rationing of care and life-saving treatment.



Early care and education initiatives address the needs of children with disabilities and their families. Parents of children with disabilities are three times more likely to leave a job, not take a job, or make significant changes to their work due to problems with childcare. Over one third of these parents are not able to find care.



Disparity and disproportionality discussions include the intersection of race and disability. People of color and people with disabilities are more likely to experience disparities in all areas of life – education, health, employment. Where race, ethnicity, and disability meet, the disparities are amplified.



Healthcare is available, affordable and accessible. People with disabilities are less likely to have private or employer-funded health insurance and access to preventative services, are more likely to report unmet health care needs, have lower social determinants of health, and poorer health outcomes than any other group.



Multi-system youth projects, policy and funding are responsive to youth with disabilities and their families. Youth with disabilities are overrepresented in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems; have difficulty finding community-based care; and have average annual medical costs many times higher than their non-disabled peers.



Community access and opportunity meets the needs of people with disabilities. Housing, transportation, technology – people with disabilities have less access and fewer options than their non-disabled peers.