

# A Blueprint for Strong Families and Communities Public Policy Platform



**Alliance**

*for Strong Families  
and Communities*

[alliance1.org](http://alliance1.org)

# A Blueprint for Strong Families and Communities

## Public Policy Platform

The Alliance for Strong Families and Communities believes that our country thrives when everyone is able to reach their full potential. Our strategic action network of hundreds of social sector organizations across the nation works with millions of people each day to help them build, maintain, and restore their physical, emotional, social, and economic well-being. The knowledgeable staff and leaders from our field of community-based organizations are committed to achieving a healthy and equitable society. Our network holds itself accountable to ensuring that people have equal access and opportunity to the tools and resources needed to thrive over the course of a lifetime.

### Our Foundation and Distinction

All people need to be supported by families; strong families fuel vibrant communities and economies. As the needs of families and communities today are varied and interconnected, it is important to acknowledge that building well-being requires approaches that are diverse and cross-cutting through the lens of advancing equity. There are no singular or simple solutions.

To guide our policy focus and collective advocacy efforts, the Alliance network periodically engages in a series of conversations to identify the foundational and structural building blocks that all families and communities need to foster well-being over the lifespan. We reviewed trend-line data in the areas of health, education, economic security, poverty, safety, and security. Through the process, two main issues emerged:

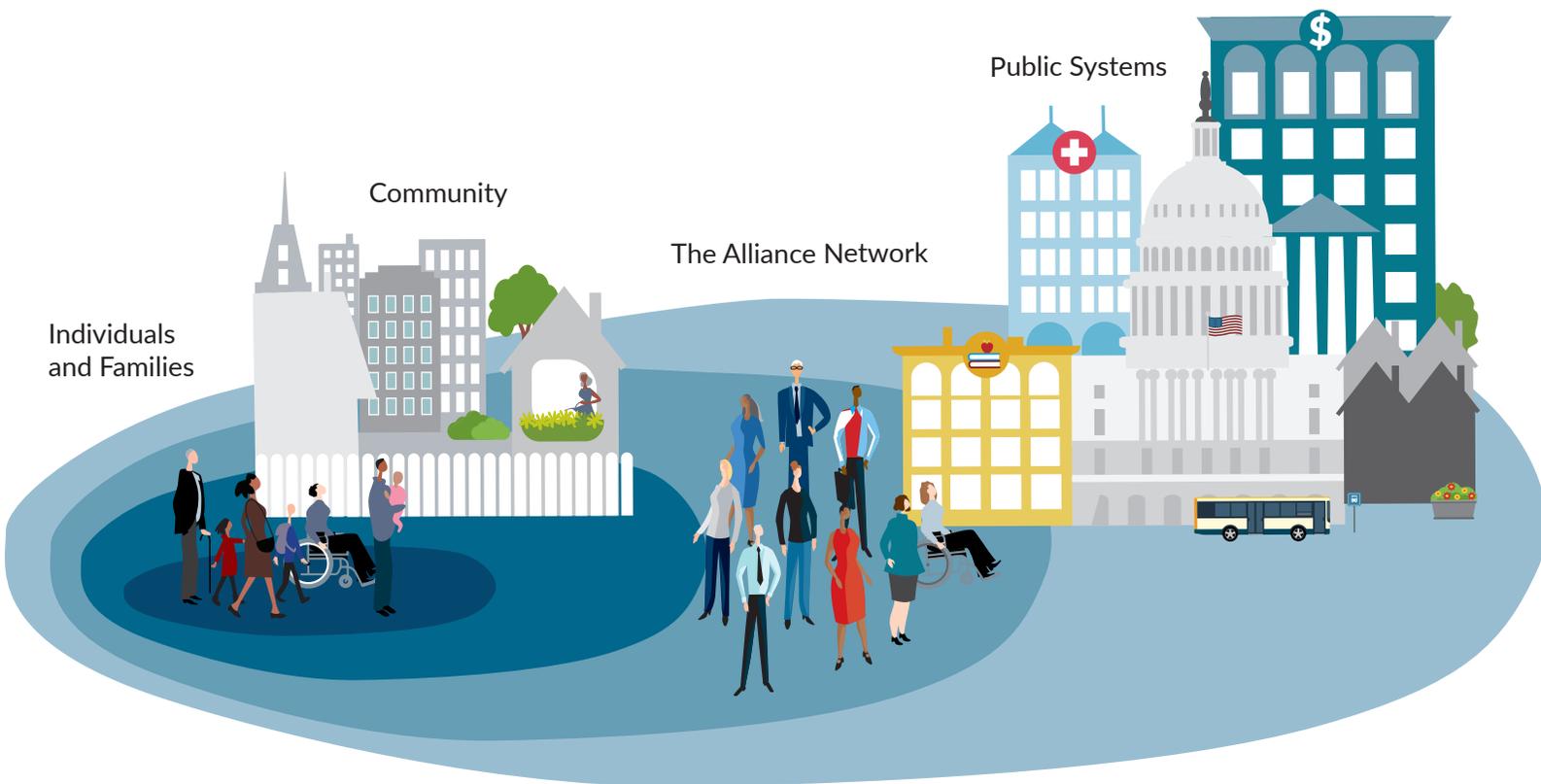
- The prevalence of disparities, largely driven by structural and historical racism and income inequality
- The lack of means and will to provide equity in opportunity and access to the resources that people need to thrive

As members of the health and human service sector, we work at the nexus of people, community, and systems. This gives us a unique vantage point to articulate the public policies that ensure people, families, and communities thrive. As members of the communities where we do our work, we walk with the neighbors we serve. This gives our organizations insights into the vast strengths, potential, hopes, and dreams of the people who live in our communities as well as the challenges they face and the intersecting policies and systems that can either accelerate or thwart their progress. These on-the-ground insights, combined with our knowledge of what works—validated through results, data, and evidence to build well-being—equip us to serve as effective partners with policymakers to advance racial equity and build together across the ecosystem of partners the well-being of our nation across generations.

Many of the families and communities we serve, especially communities of color, face hurdles that they alone did not create or control that impede their ability to flourish. Persistent intergenerational disparities and trauma embedded in racism and systems of oppression can be insurmountable without intentional interventions aimed at addressing root causes.

We know every person, family, and community is more likely to achieve their full potential when they have a strong foundation that enables them to thrive, no matter their current situation, socio-economic status, or geographic location. The following represents the building blocks that are essential for creating and sustaining the well-being of families and communities:

- Safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments that prevent and mitigate the impact of trauma through quality care options across the lifespan
- Equal opportunity employment that provides a living wage, economic mobility, and comprehensive workforce supports
- Affordable, preventive, quality health care that provides parity for behavioral health and addresses the social determinants of health
- Affordable, livable homes in safe, vibrant neighborhoods that have accessible healthy food, transportation, child care, and other fundamental services
- Educational success that begins with nurturing and supportive families and continues with early childhood development through post-secondary advancement



## Our Commitment to Families and Communities

Throughout all of our core values, we recognize that in order to see all people flourish, we must be part of collective efforts focused on dismantling institutional racism. We commit to redressing past discrimination and advancing equity in our nation by advocating for changes in federal policy and law. It is clear, in persistent racial and ethnic disparities, that systemic racism remains the central obstacle to justice and the foundations of well-being for communities of color. We will advocate for significant investment in opportunity creation for communities of color, with particular focus on Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Southeast Asian populations, and continually evaluate our policy work through a lens of mitigating and ultimately dismantling racial disparities and oppression.

The Alliance for Strong Families and Communities seeks to reverse systemic inequities and promote transformational change by aligning and connecting public policies that reflect the following unified set of core values.

### Engage All Voices

We know that positive outcomes can be achieved when public systems and policymakers understand that individuals, families, and communities are interconnected, multi-generational, and possess their own strengths, hopes, and dreams. We recognize and respect the important role of all voices and viewpoints in the pursuit of policy change, with the paramount voice being the individuals and families who need and access social services and the social sector professionals who provide them. We aim to ensure civic engagement is always a part of our collective work, encouraging our neighbors to be active in civic life. We strive to elevate, empower, and prioritize the voices of marginalized communities in partnership with grassroots organizations. We see ourselves as a critical partner with families, communities, systems, policymakers, and the nation for not only promoting human dignity but also building, supporting, and maintaining well-being and a sense of belonging.

### Secure Access and Opportunity

We emphasize the need to advance programs and transparent approaches that will lead to equitable opportunity for all populations with a view to reversing historical and current policy decisions that have created racial and economic disparities. These decisions undermine well-being, exacerbate poverty, and put our society at risk of missing out on people's full and vital contributions to our communities, our economy, and our civic life.

### Bolster Prevention and Early Intervention

We advocate for the integration of strong prevention and early response strategies into all systems to proactively build family and community strengths that are the solid foundation and sturdy structures for well-being, thereby reducing risk and the need for more complex and costly fixes down the road.

## Accelerate Neuroscience Research

We maintain that policies should be results-driven and reflect an understanding of the most recent research on brain development and growth across the lifespan, particularly for families and children that have experienced intergenerational trauma from historical and systemic racism and poverty.

## Cultivate Collaborative and Interconnected Ecosystems

We believe that when public systems (like health and human services, education, housing, etc.) and community-based organizations commit to common goals, values, and outcomes, together they can achieve true systems change. With shared values focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion, and the knowledge of research and results-based practices, these sectors can together improve life for people of all ages in their communities. We support policy changes that modernize public systems through design or re-design, drive cross-system functioning, provide robust and sustainable financing, and remove systemic and structural barriers upholding racist practices or policies that contribute to family and community instability.



