

Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma Informed Care – LWV Monthly Program – April 30, 2018

Welcome to the LWV Appleton program on trauma informed care. For those of you who are not aware, the LWV is a nonpartisan, grassroots, prodemocracy organization whose advocacy is based on positions researched at the local, state and national levels.

A dear friend of mine works in foster care for Outagamie County and recently told me that there are record numbers of kids in out of home placement with fewer foster homes and fewer resources for kids, families and providers. She has provided us with information that is on our registration table for anyone interested. While the state government has been pro-active about trauma-informed care, there is still a need to provide increased mental health services, especially in areas where the need is such as in homes and in schools. In addition, there is a need for comprehensive health care reform to make sure that everyone has access to affordable, accessible health care including medical, dental and behavioral health care. The LWV has a position on that.

At the local level, we also have positions related to trauma including positions on Human Trafficking, Juveniles at Risk, Alternatives to Incarceration and Mental Health Care to name a few. If anyone is interested in details regarding our positions, they can be easily found at LWVAppleton.org. Again, the purpose of the research is to provide a basis for advocacy and there is much need for advocacy regarding behavioral health including ACES scores and trauma-informed care. Recently the LWV Appleton advocated for the Health in All Policies ordinance in Appleton which is a collaborative approach to improving the health of all people by incorporating health considerations into decision-making across sectors and policy areas. There are many other ways to advocate for physical health and behavioral health care including the need for consistent Medicaid funding and affordable health care for all.

My name is Jeanne Roberts and I am proud to be the president of the local LWV of Appleton. I am also proud to have participated in the two local studies that were called out in the Assessment and Transformation Roadmap that was produced by the LWV US. The strength of the League is its unique organization of local, state and national leagues – not branches or units, but individual League’s. Each league has its own identity – its own fingerprint – and this is the strength of the League of Women Voters. The League of Women Voters started locally, not nationally. In fact, local Leagues were working on democracy for over a year before the formation of the LWV US. I would never consider telling the LWV of Rockford, Toledo, Phoenix what was important to them locally. I don’t live there so I don’t have a pulse on their community. Each League knows what their community or state League needs. When we began our study on land-use management and downtown development, it was an update for a study that had been done decades ago. At the time and currently, our community is struggling with how to improve their downtown and make us a more vibrant community. We looked at positions at the state and national levels and found nothing that would pertain to us and allow us to advocate. Same with our current education study. We reviewed national, state and past local positions before voting to update our local study. The LWV of Appleton has increased its membership over 27% from last year and we did not do it top down, we did it bottom up. We met our community where they are at rather than telling them that they had to meet us where we were. We provided programming on issues that were important to our community, not programs that we were told by others were what our community wants. We developed a diversity and inclusion committee of both members and non-members in many of our diverse communities.

