

# VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

## WE BELIEVE...

Every woman, man, and young person, regardless of race and ethnicity, nationality, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, immigration status, disability, or socio-economic status, has the fundamental human right to make personal decisions regarding her or his reproductive and sexual health.

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The reproductive and sexual health of an individual and his or her community is inextricably linked to overall well-being.

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The adverse reproductive, sexual, and maternal health outcomes facing many urban residents, especially the racial and ethnic disparities in these outcomes, contribute to the poor health of urban communities and our entire nation.

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Therefore, it is imperative that we commit to ensuring the reproductive health, rights, and justice of urban residents.



## WE WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS BY...

Protecting and ensuring the right to terminate a pregnancy and the right to parent.

Employing a reproductive justice framework<sup>i</sup> in our advocacy to improve the social and economic conditions that can affect the reproductive, sexual, and maternal health of urban residents.

Using research, evidence, and evaluation to inform the programs and policies for which we advocate.

Building strong and sustainable community environments that support healthy relationships, lifestyles, and decision-making, especially among young people.

Increasing access and eliminating discriminatory barriers to reproductive, sexual, and maternal health information and services that are comprehensive and affordable for both women and men, of high quality, confidential, free of judgment, culturally competent, and linguistically and age-appropriate.

Investing public dollars in reproductive, sexual, and maternal health services in urban areas, which will reduce health care costs associated with cervical and breast cancer, sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies, poor birth outcomes, and other preventable adverse reproductive, sexual, and maternal health outcomes.

Advocating for change that will address the social determinants of health—including poverty, poor education, inadequate housing, racism, and limited neighborhood opportunities—that are the primary causes of unacceptable disparities, particularly by race and ethnicity, in reproductive, sexual, and maternal health.

<sup>i</sup> Reproductive Justice is when we all have the power to protect and advance our human rights, determine the number and spacing of our children, protect our bodily integrity, improve the quality of the environment in which to parent our children, and obtain the necessary social supports to live healthy lives within healthy families, and in safe and sustainable communities.

—Definition provided by SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Health Collective.



## The Urban Initiative for Reproductive Health is a program of the National Institute for Reproductive Health (National Institute).

The National Institute is an innovation institute for state and local organizations working on reproductive health issues. We offer strategic guidance, hands-on support and funding to help state and local leaders remove barriers to health care, win public battles and change public policies. Together, we are helping women in communities across the country gain access to the full range of quality reproductive health care options, the freedom to exercise their reproductive rights and the opportunity to have healthy pregnancies.

[www.UrbanInitiative.org](http://www.UrbanInitiative.org)  
[www.nirhealth.org](http://www.nirhealth.org)



NATIONAL  
INSTITUTE FOR  
REPRODUCTIVE  
HEALTH

470 Park Avenue South, 7th Floor South, New York NY 10016  
P: 212-343-2031, F: 212-343-0119

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