



Discipline Disparities and Children of Color:

A ticket the school to prison
pipeline.

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Background

Federal Safe and Gun – Free Schools Laws from the mid-1990's:

- Mandatory expulsion for possessing a gun on school property.
- Extended mandatory jail sentences for selling drugs near schools.

School Policies:

- 1998, Ohio Legislature zero-tolerance policy.
- Implementation of stricter school conduct codes.
- Mandatory suspensions and expulsions for serious infractions.
- Addition of School Resource Officers in schools.

Results:

- The definition of “weapon” was expanded.
- Other, less serious behaviors came under the umbrella of “zero-tolerance.”
- Development of the “school to prison pipeline” concept.
- Increased involvement in the juvenile justice system.



Discipline Data (Children's Defense Fund-Ohio, 2012)

Economically disadvantaged students are over twice as likely to be suspended as students who are not economically disadvantaged.

African American students in Ohio's eight largest urban school districts are four times more likely to be suspended than White students.

Nearly 70% of Black males will experience at least one suspension or expulsion while in school.

- Suspension is used mostly for non-safety threatening incidents.
- The greatest disproportionality in discipline for Black students is based on subjective and relational-based issues such as "defiance" and "disruptive behavior."

<http://www.rtpcollaborative.indiana.edu>

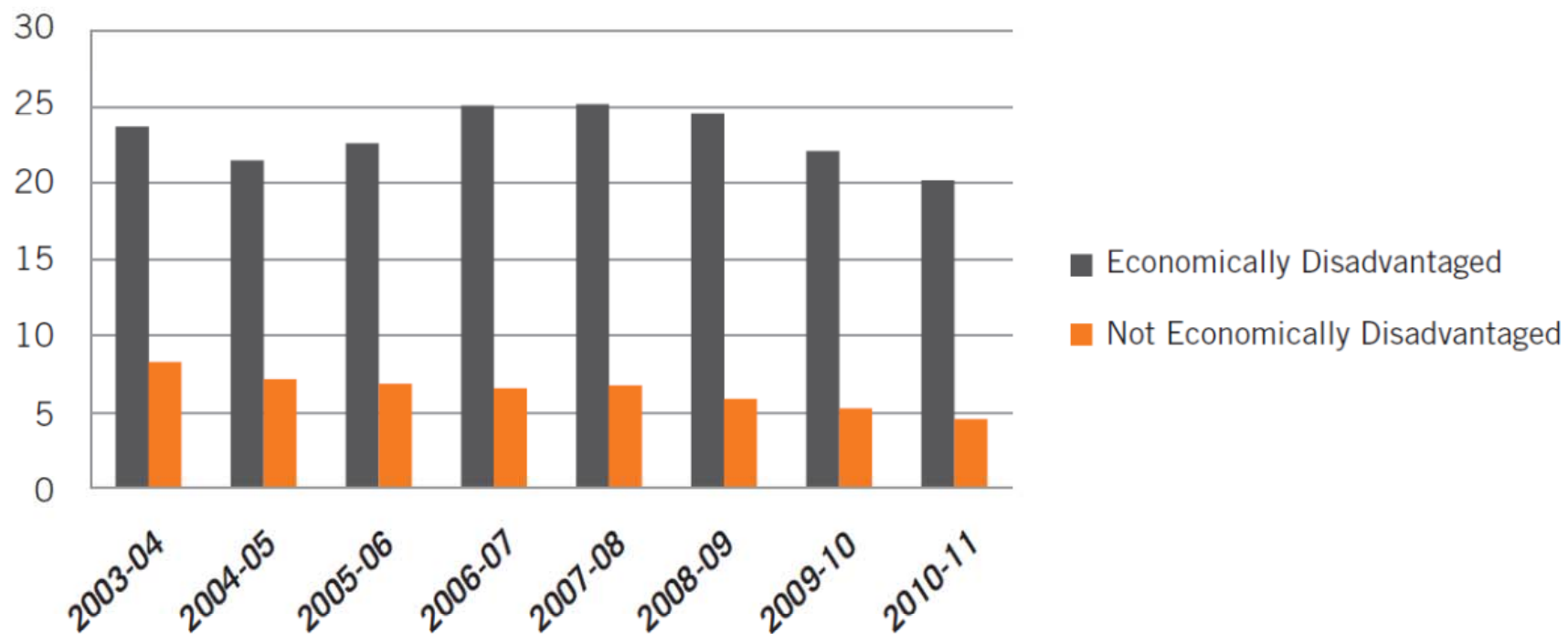
Over 2 million youth in the U.S. under the age of 18 are arrested each year.

Over 600,000 youth are placed in detention centers annually.

Approximately 95,000 reside in secure juvenile correctional settings on any given day.

Many of these youth become involved with the juvenile justice system for relatively minor and nonviolent offenses.

All Ohio School Districts Out-of-School Suspensions per 100 Students Economic Status

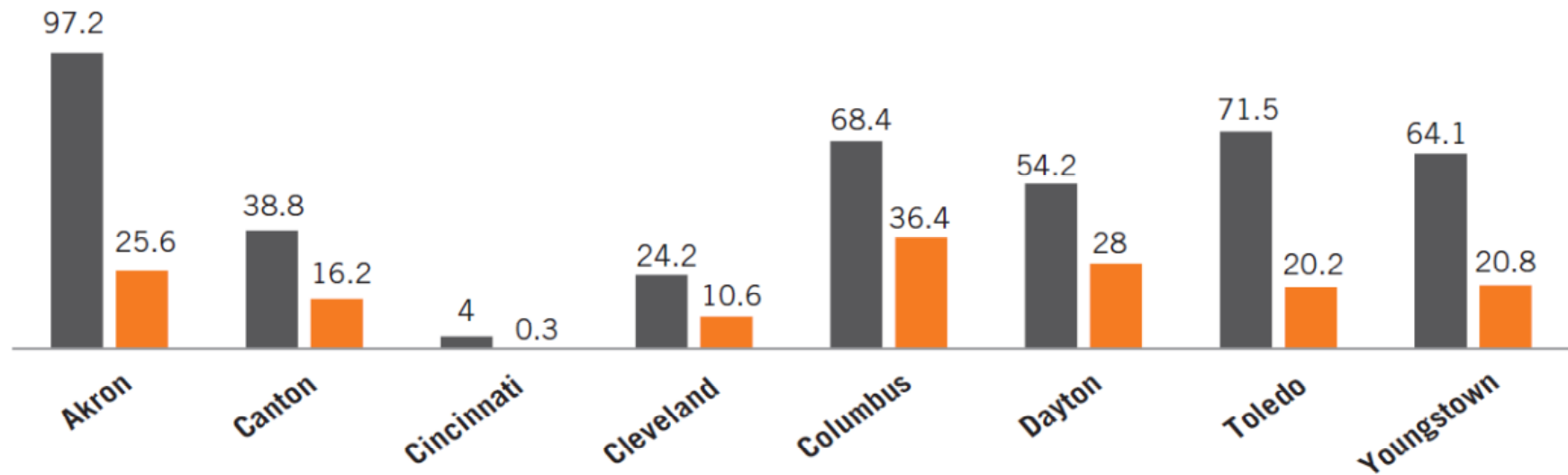


2010-2011

Ohio's Urban School Districts Out-of-School Suspensions per 100 Students Black and White Students

■ Black Students

■ White Students



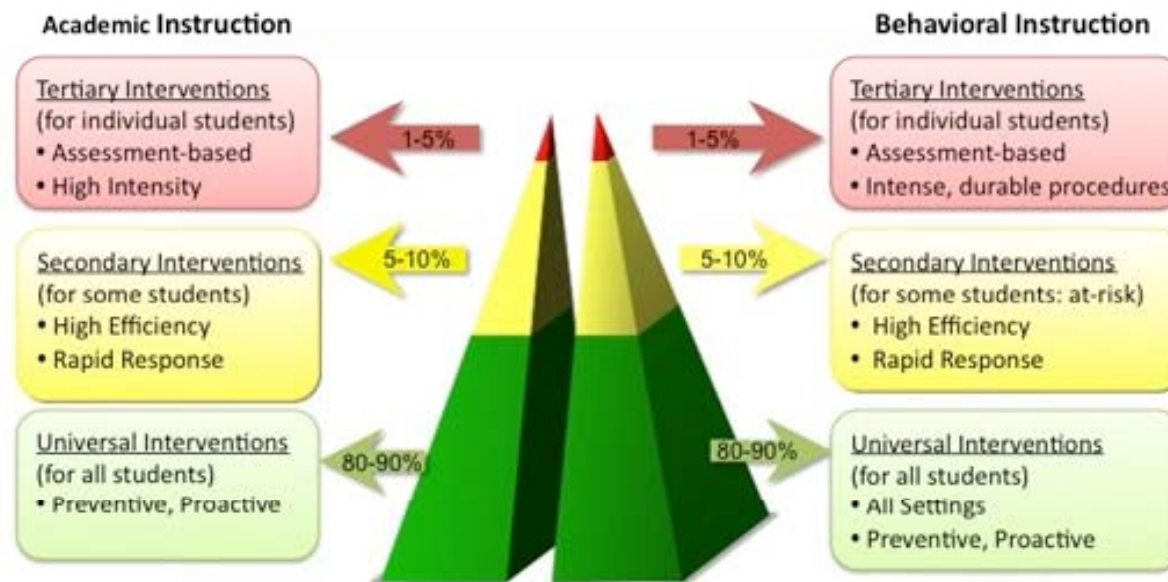
Key Drivers

- The “dangerous Black man” stereotype (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo & Pollock, 2014):
 - During slavery African-American males are cast as aggressive sexual predators.
 - As early as 1700 laws were enacted that mandated death or castration should a Black man attempt to rape a White woman.
 - Between 1889 and 1918, more than 2,500 African Americans were lynched in the United States, primarily for minor grievances like disputing with a White man, attempting to register to vote, asking a White woman’s hand in marriage, or peeping in a window.
- Media portrayals of African-American males in movies and on television.

“In sum, negative, controlling images of the deviant Black person, developed over hundreds of years of discrimination and oppression, remain pervasive in America today. These stereotypes and beliefs have severe, sometimes deadly, consequences, and even more frequently, create disruptions in the life chances of many Black and Brown youth,” pg. 3.

Mitigating the Problem

- Develop culturally responsive instructional and classroom management strategies and train teachers in those strategies.
- Balance zero tolerance policies and consideration of students' intentions for misbehavior.
- Implement positive behavior supports (PBIS): a three-tiered approach with universal, targeted, and intensive interventions:



(Hanover Research, 2013)

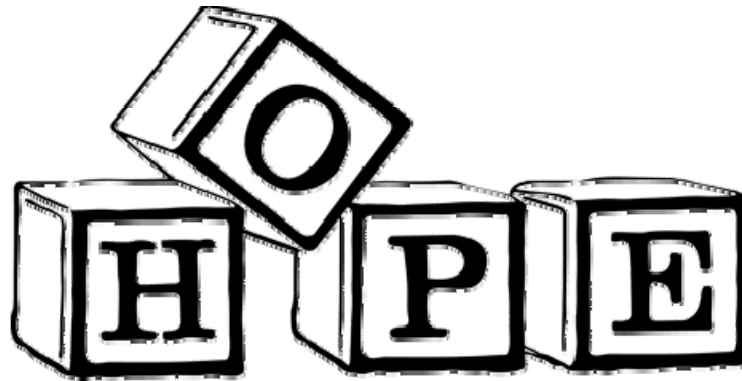
Mitigating the Problem

- Align school discipline policies and practices with the philosophy of the district and community.
- Provision of wraparound services by pooling resources from a variety of funding streams (juvenile justice, community mental health, Medicaid, others) to pay for coordinators who help develop care plans and access an array of services tailored to the needs of youth with behavioral disorders or other mental health conditions.
- Partner with other stakeholders: Juvenile Court System, Police, Child Protective Services, Departments of Jobs and Family Services, Faith-Based Community, businesses.....well everybody!



Promising Practices

- Police in Schools (City of Akron/APS Partnership)
- Wrap-Around Services (Linkage Coordinators/Family Liaisons)
- Juvenile Court Partnership:
 - Responder
 - Barrett Alternative Program Site
 - JDC
 - Family Resource Center
- Mentoring (Community Connectors Grant/iCare Mentoring)
- Cultural Competency Training



Moving Forward

Advocacy

- Flexibility in approach
- Collaboration
- National Networks
 - Models for Change: multi-state initiative working to guide and accelerate advances to make juvenile justice systems more fair, effective, rational and developmentally appropriate.
 - National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice.
 - Annie E. Casey Foundation, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative.
 - ACLU
 - NAACP

References

Carter, P., Skiba, R., Arredondo, M. & Pollock, M. (2014). *You Can't Fix What You Don't Look At: Acknowledging Race in Addressing Racial Discipline Disparities*. Bloomington, IN; The Equity Project at Indiana University Center for Evaluation and Education Policy.

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Jordan, Harold (2015); *Beyond Zero Tolerance, Discipline and Policing in Pennsylvania Public Schools*; American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania.