

Black Girls + School = Discipline

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FACTS:
BY **Black Women**
for Wellness

Black girls get dress coded almost every morning, giving us detention or making us wear P.E clothing but we see other girls of other races wearing the same outfits. Hispanic and Asian girls don't get dress coded the way we do.

Mia Smith, Los Angeles Unified School District 12th Grade

california

1 The suspension rate for young Black girls is 4X the rate of their white female counterparts

• The expulsion rate for young Black girls is 2X the rate of their white peers

• Black girls are referred to law enforcement at 6X the rate of their white peers

• Black girls have 5X more school arrest that their white peers and are the fastest growing population in the juvenile justice system

• Los Angeles Unified School District has an 8.4 % population of Black students; however Black students are 21% of the arrests. The population of white students is 9.8% and their arrest rate is at 2.8 %

national

• Black girls are the only group of girls over represented in all discipline categories for which data is collected by the US Dept of Education Office of Civil Rights

• Black girls in public elementary and secondary schools are being suspended at a rate of 12% compared to only 2% for white girls. Black girls are suspended more than girls of any other race or ethnicity

• 38% of Black teen girls are pushed out of high school due to pregnancy. Strict attendance policies, no childcare and unsafe campuses accelerate the push out.

10 Zero tolerance policies increase the vulnerability of Black girls to harassing behavior as it penalizes them for defending themselves against such acts

School suspension, expulsion, arrest and push out of Black girls perpetuate cycles of poverty due to under education, criminal records and mistrust of systems for help.

Solutions = What To Do?

• Implement School Wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS) – support positive behavior as routine rather than focus on punishment of negative behavior

• Involve parents, trusted adults (including grandparents), community based organizations and a multi generational approach with classrooms, programs and services on site

• Clearly define the rules, and then create flexibility and exceptions as young people are growing and learning

• Convince our schools to use counseling or other conflict resolution strategies to employ discipline rather than punitive systems (restorative justice) **continued on back...**

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“We have a right to protect our daughters.”

-Pam Ward, author/LAUSD parent

Black girls are the fastest growing population in the juvenile justice system.

Solutions *continued from front*

- Cultivate more resources devoted to understanding and addressing the intersections of race gender and environmental impacts on girls
- Sexual harassment, bullying and reproductive justice training of ALL staff, teachers and administrators that focuses on the experience of students.
- Engage Black girls through listening, respecting and honoring their experience, recognizing bias both unconscious and unintentional

[r e f e r e n c e s]

Push Out: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools

Monique W Morris
National Black Women's Justice Institute

ERIC: Against Captivity: Black Girls and School Discipline Policies in the Afterlife of Slavery

Wun, Connie
<http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1084890>

Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Over Policed and Under Protected

Kimberlee Crenshaw
African American Policy Forum

The Notebook: What is it like to be a Black Girl criminalized and pushed out of school

Fabiola Cineas
<http://thenotebook.org/articles/2016/04/01/what-its-like-to-be-a-black-girl-criminalized-in-school> • <http://thenotebook.org/articles/2015/03/06/study-investigates-high-discipline-rates-among-black-girls>

America's Promise

Teen Pregnancy and High School Drop Out
<http://www.americaspromise.org/news/close-link-between-teen-pregnancy-and-high-school-dropouts-detailed-new-report>

Los Angeles School Report

New Diversion Program – Keeping LAUSD Students Out of Court
<http://laschoolreport.com/new-diversion-program-helping-keep-laUSD-students-out-of-court/>

CADRE – Human Impact Partners

Health Impact Assessment of School Discipline Policies
<http://www.cadre-la.org/core/our-library/>

Black Girls & School Discipline

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/black-girls-and-school-discipline-four-researchers-videos.html>

Georgetown Law Center on Poverty & Inequality

Rebecca Epstein
The Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline: The Girls' Story



Black Women for Wellness (BWW) is committed to healing, educating, and supporting Black women and girls. For more information, to volunteer, share information, ask questions, comment or communicate with Black Women for Wellness try one of these sites: www.bwwla.org • [bw4wla](https://www.instagram.com/bw4wla) • T 323 290 5955

