

General Overview:

Three law students interning with TeamChild created this workshop for girls in the King County Juvenile Detention Center. We offered the two-part workshop for one hour on two consecutive days in partnership with Powerful Voices.

Day 1:

The audience:

- 8-10 detained girls

The goals:

1. To introduce the idea that there is a strong link between school punishment and juvenile justice involvement.
2. To identify ways that school and juvenile justice involvement are linked beyond punishment policies.
3. To engage youth in activities that are fun and inspire critical thinking.
4. To learn from youth about their experiences with school punishment.
5. To understand youth perspectives on the link between school and juvenile justice involvement.
6. To facilitate the participation of every girl in attendance.

Overview:

When we conducted the workshop, we used the language “school-to-prison” pipeline to describe the link between school and juvy. However, although they had all been suspended or expelled at one time, the girls did not connect with this language and identified many factors outside education policies that impacted their juvenile-justice involvement. These included poverty, substance abuse, and state involvement in their lives (foster care, welfare). We had hoped that the workshop would inform the advocacy plan we were assigned to create for our internship, and it did. We decided to change our language and begin to identify school not as the beginning point of the pipeline, as the phrase “school to prison pipeline” suggests, but rather as a piece of a larger problem as well as a starting point for solutions. In addition, the pipeline language puts some key allies (School Board members, teachers, school administrators) on the defensive.

We created business cards to inform youth about their education rights as Washington students and to inform them about TeamChild. We handed out the cards at the end of the workshop so

that the girls could have important info on hand. **A business card is included in the hard copy of this curriculum.**

We also passed out recent news articles relating stories about the connection between school policies and juvenile justice involvement.

Day 2:

The audience:

- 8-10 detained girls

The goals:

1. To educate youth about their education rights as Washington youth and to inform them about TeamChild.
 - Discuss education as a right as prescribed by the Constitution.
 - Discuss students' due process rights related to school discipline proceedings.
2. To follow-up/recap the discussion from day 1.
3. To expand on the idea of the link between school policies and juvenile justice involvement and to look at some related issues (racial disproportionality in juvenile justice involvement, funding of schools vs. prisons)
4. To engage youth in activities that are fun and inspire critical thinking.
5. To learn from youth about their experiences with school punishment.
6. To understand youth perspectives on the link between school and juvenile justice involvement.
7. To facilitate the participation of every girl in attendance.

Overview:

We wanted this workshop to compliment Day 1. We wanted to give the girls big-picture information about the link between school punishment and education policies and juvenile justice involvement, so we thought a trivia type of game that got at difficult-to-discuss issues like racial disproportionality in discipline and incarceration would be a good idea. We wanted the girls to see how "the link" plays out over time (what will our education/prison systems look like if we continue in our current direction and under our current policies; how does "the link" impact different generations in a family). In addition, we hoped to offer concrete information for any youth who had struggled with the school discipline hearing process. Also, we wanted to find a way to communicate the value of a child's education to that child.

Looking back, we are not certain how effective “Fact or Fiction?” was for the group we played with. This may be because the group dynamic was very competitive and some of the girls were anxious about their dispositions, and so had a hard time focusing. Also, we think some of the facts were not tangible enough for the girls to connect with and may not have been the most effective way to communicate the issues we wanted to address. However, there was some good discussion amidst the chaos!

Some suggestions for the future:

1. Set aside time on Day 1 or before the game on Day 2 to go over some of the concepts covered in the game so that the girls have a foundation from which to play.
 - For instance, what kind of crimes are kids committing?
 - What is disproportionality?
 - What are the concrete ways the link between school punishment policies and juvenile justice involvement play out for youth? (This relates to the content in the chain link exercise we did Day 1).
2. Update the statements/stats so that they are most useful and make the most impact for the particular group of participants.
3. Adjust the rules based on the mood, size, and energy of the group.

Also, we spent most of the workshop playing the game and so do not know how the other discussion points on Day 2 will go over.

Workshop, Day 1

- Remember: try to weave in personal stories throughout the workshop

OPENING ACTIVITY:

Social Barometer:

Tape up three signs: "Strongly Agree," "Strongly Disagree," and "Neutral"

Read off a series of statements; tell girls to move to the sticker that best represents their feeling about each statement.

- I felt that I was treated unfairly in school
- Alicia Keys is better than Beyonce
- Students who are pushed out of school are more likely to get involved in crime
- The end 107.7 is better than Kube 93
- There should be police at school
- McDonalds is better than Burger King
- Education is key to success in life.

INTRO:

We are really excited to be here with you because we are doing a project this summer and we need some help --- our project is about whether **there is a connection between students who get into trouble at school and kids who get in trouble with the law.** And as far as we are concerned, you are real experts because you have knowledge about how school is these days - we are seeking your advice and thoughts about what should schools do when students get into trouble?

To get warmed up, we are going to do a quick small group activity.

ACTIVITY #1 (10-20 minutes):

Small group brainstorm & word association

- Break into two groups for several minutes – each group does word association and one girl from each group will present while we write their thoughts on the board.

First word: We want to know what you think of when you hear the word "school"

Second word: The word is prison/juvy....

Come together as one group, present associations and **definition of school to prison pipeline:**

- If there is there a relationship/similarities between what the girls thought about school and prison/juvy, tell the girls they are really perceptive and give girls a chance to guess about the connection. Then, draw out the connection if necessary.
 - **When we think about school, we like to think about school leading students to good careers and stability in life. Education should open a lot of doors for people. But, there is this thing some people call the school-to-prison pipeline. When people talk about this “pipeline,” they are talking about school punishment, truancy, and testing policies (among other things) that lead students away from stability. One way to think about these policies is to think about how rules that schools use to punish students end up pushing students away from their education and into the juvenile justice system. For instance, think about what happens in a young person’s day-to-day life after she is suspended or expelled (Can ask girls to brainstorm the day-to-day).**
 - **Feel free to offer an alternative explanation, i.e. the “domino effect” theory conceptualized by a TeamChild intern: “The domino effect is the theory that if homes, schools, and the communities all stand strong and work together then there would be less kids winding up in the streets. If home isn’t strong and leans on the school for support, and the schools lean on the communities or outside help and no one is there to catch the kids except for the streets. The dominos of the home, schools, and communities all fall down.” (Yonnie Redmond)**
- Alternatively, if there is no relationship, give girls a chance to guess about the connection. Then, draw it out and discuss the irony that two different ideas are so connected: “It is great to see that you guys see prison and school as being two really different places. We think that is the way it should be. Unfortunately, there is a strong connection between schools and juvy/prison...some people call it the “school-to-prison pipeline.”
 - **See explanation above**
- Field questions: Try to get a sense of whether the girls get the idea of the pipeline and what their responses are...

ACTIVITY #2: Paper Chain (a chain made of paper rings stapled to one another):

The goal of this activity is to flesh out the many ways a child can get lost/be diverted on the way to graduation. The chain is a physical object that the girls can hold and which can show a physical connection among youth who, for individual and varied reasons, are impacted by punishment, truancy, and testing policies. Every participant agreed to read the cards and two instructors held one sign each at either end of the line of participants; one sign read “School” and the other read “Juvy/Prison.”

- Show the paper chain. To explain the pipeline, we are going to give examples of how eight youth got tripped up on their way to graduation, and cut off from their education and the workforce...things that happen to direct kids towards the criminal justice system instead of away from it.
- Ask for volunteers to stand in a line across the room and read the note cards –The first youth reads her card and then passes a piece of the link to the next reader...by the end of the activity, the each participant hold a piece of the chain and it extends from the person who represents “school” to person who represents “juvy/prison”
 - Write the bolded words below on one side of a 3x5 note card. On the backside of the card write the description/explanation of the word. When we did this exercise the first participant read her card. When she passed the chain, she asked the girl to her left (without being prompted), “how did you get into the pipeline?” The girl responded, “Truancy: I skipped school...” Then she handed the chain to the next girl, and so on.

After explaining the exercise, we began by saying, “There are different ways that young people get caught up in the pipeline policies”:

- **Truancy:** I skipped school 10 times this year. Seattle school district filed a truancy petition against me and the judge ordered me to go to school. I still didn’t go. Now I am in juvy.
- **Zero tolerance:**
- A student brought a gun to school and threatened another student. She was expelled for a year.
- I went camping last weekend and forgot to take my knife out of my backpack. A teacher saw it and now I am expelled for a year.
- **Police:** There are police at my school and last week when I got into a fight at school, an officer arrested me.

- **High-stakes testing (WASL):** My teachers are so focused on getting everybody ready for the WASL. I didn't pass it and now I am in class with younger kids – I don't think I want to go to school anymore.
- **Discouragement:** It seems like my school cares more about what I do wrong than what I do right – maybe I don't belong here.
- **Disability:** I just don't understand what my teachers are teaching and I have a hard time writing and I know my teachers think I don't pay attention and don't try hard enough...I wish I liked school but I just feel dumb. I have been to the vice principal's office three times for acting up in class – I just got kicked out for the rest of the year.
- **Suspension:** I got suspended from school for swearing at my teacher. I am getting really bored sitting at home and I don't really want to go back to school either, now that I am so far behind.

Ask:

- Which of these are reasonable?
- What would you have done to deal with such-and-such?
- Whether girls can think of any other ways students get pushed away from school and into the system.

PERSONAL STORIES & QUESTIONS:

Ask the girls:

Who are your biggest supporters at school?

- Each girl had a story to tell about this.

Who do you have the hardest time interacting with at school?

If we asked the adults in your lives, who would they say are your biggest supporters at school (the people who are there to help you)?

Think about developing language that takes into account all the struggles youth face and incorporating those into the conversation – maybe “School to prison pipeline” doesn't quite do the trick – maybe the term excludes. For instance, the group we talked to identified state involvement in their lives, poverty, and struggles at home as more central to their involvement with the juvenile justice system than school. Some girls identified school suspension and expulsions and truancy as purely choice on the part of a student and did not see a connection between school and juvenile justice/prison.

PV - Workshop 1, Day 2

1. RECAP:

Ask the girls for a quick recap of day one and field any questions

- The original group did not see a connection between their experiences with school discipline and their juvenile justice involvement, so we briefly acknowledged that we do think there is a connection, and acknowledged that the connection operates on such a large scale that each individual might not feel its impact as much as she might simply feel the impact of her personal situation.

2. TRIVIA GAME: “Fact or Fiction?”

Depending on the energy/size of the group, this game can be played first or last. It can take 20-30 minutes depending on how much discussion is involved.

- Divide girls into teams (the game might work better as a whole group game rather than a competition depending on the group dynamics).
- The first group selects a question (“Yellow for \$600”) and gets first shot at answering the question. We gave both teams time to discuss quietly and took their answers at the same time. To stimulate conversation and investment in the game, we awarded point to both teams if they both got it right. On some questions, we awarded more points for the team that was able to develop and articulate the rationale behind their response.
- **“Fact or Fiction?” statements follow this overview...**

3. EDUCATION & PROPERTY

- Discuss education as a property right. Describe how it is something that belongs to youth and is connected to their ability to create a future and build wealth.
 - In WA you have a basic right to education – language in the Constitution describes providing an ample equal education as the state’s *paramount duty...*
 - There are some exceptions, but generally, youth between 8 and 17 are required by law to attend school.
 - Your education cannot be taken away without a fair process. (We can tell you what a fair process is).
 - You have a right to challenge schools if a punishment for behavior is not fair
 - Schools are allowed to call the police if you get in trouble at school.

4. HEARING PROCESS (Optional portion, depending on interest):

- Keep in mind that girls might have valuable info about the suspension/expulsion process.
- Explain that we want to give girls some important info about what should happen if they or someone they know gets kicked out of school:
 - Things to know if you or someone you know gets kicked out of school (gauge how much detail girls want and proceed accordingly):
 - **Students have a right to challenge schools if the punishment is not fair or there is a disagreement about what happened.**
 - The school (usually vice principal or principal) must tell the student he/she will be suspended or expelled
 - The school must tell the student which rule he broke and the reasons he/she is getting kicked out
 - The student must have a chance to tell his side
 - If the child is short-term suspended (10 days or less), students have a right to meet with the school district and tell his/her side of the story before he student serves the short-term suspension
 - If the child is long term suspended or expelled, he/she has a certain amount of time to ask for a hearing to challenge being kicked out
 - Kids and parents can collect info and even witnesses who can support their side of the story – families can bring a lawyer to the hearing also.

5. ARTICLE & DISCUSSION:

Pick one of the articles related to the pipeline that we handed out on Day One. Find out if anyone read the article.

- Give a brief synopsis and ask for responses.
- Develop questions to guide the discussion.

6. Bringing everything together:

Team Child Advocates are available...

- If you or someone you know has gotten in trouble in school and needs help getting back into school or doesn't think the punishment fits the crime, there are people who can answer your questions. We will give you info about them (hand out info business cards).

1. Over the last 28 years the number of women in prison has tripled.

Fact. <http://www.prisonactivist.org/women/women-in-prison.html>

2. If a person graduates from college she can make \$1 million over a lifetime.

Fiction: \$2.1 million. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p23-210.pdf>

3. Students as young as five are affected by the pipeline.

Fact. http://www.nydailynews.com/news/2008/01/25/2008-01-25_5yearold_boy_handcuffed_in_school_taken_.html

4. In NYC, schools with metal detectors suspended the same amount of students as schools without.

Fiction: Schools with detectors suspended 48% more.

- <http://vids.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=vids.individual&VideoID=21217870>

5. Youth who struggle to follow rules at school are dangerous criminals and should be treated with caution.

Fiction.

6. College grads make \$5K more per year than a person with a high school diploma or GED.

Fiction: \$20k more. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p23-210.pdf>

7. Black youth who have never time ??? are just as likely to be incarcerated when arrested for a drug offense as white youth.

Fiction: They are 48 times more likely than white youth to be incarcerated when arrested for a drug offense.

- Vincent Schiraldi, President Justice Policy Institute, DC.
Source: Documentary film, *Books not Bars*.
http://www.witness.org/index.php?Itemid=178&alert_id=28&option=com_rightsalert&ask=view

8. Latino kids are more likely than white kids to get locked up on drug offenses.

Fact: 13% more likely.

- Vincent Schiraldi, President Justice Policy Institute, DC.
Source: Documentary film, *Books not Bars*.

http://www.witness.org/index.php?Itemid=178&alert_id=28&option=com_rightsalert&ask=view

9. In recent years the US spent less money on inmates than on students.

Fiction.

10. Kids are responsible for most violent crimes.

Fiction: Kids are responsible for 15% of violent crimes.

- Vincent Schiraldi, President Justice Policy Institute, DC.
Source: Documentary film, *Books not Bars*.
- http://www.witness.org/index.php?Itemid=178&alert_id=28&option=com_rightsalert&ask=view

11. It cost more to send a person to prison for a year than to Harvard University.

Fact. <http://www.prisonactivist.org> (PARC)

12. The safety and police officers used in NY state to keep schools safe make up one of the smallest police forces in the country.

Fiction: The NYC school safety division is the 5th largest force: bigger than the police forces of Detroit, DC, Vegas, and Boston.

- <http://www.gothamgazette.com/article/fea/20080211/202/2428>

13. Locking up more people addresses the real problems in our society.

Fiction.

14. Most people in prison are there for violent offenses.

Fiction. The majority of prisoners have committed drug and other non-violent offenses.

- http://www.witness.org/index.php?Itemid=178&alert_id=28&option=com_rightsalert&ask=view
- <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/199812/prisons>

15. Most women in prison do not have children.

Fiction:

- In the early 2000s, 90% of female prisoners were single mothers.
 - Linda Andrews, a writer for www.prisonactivist.org
Source: <http://www.norwich.edu/about/guidon/22mar2001/prison.html>

- 80% of women in prison are mothers.
 - Source: Documentary film, *Books not Bars*.
http://www.witness.org/index.php?Itemid=178&alert_id=28&option=com_rightsalert&task=view

16. Most of the public thinks that kids are responsible for most violent crimes.

Fact: 60% of the public thinks so.

- Vincent Schiraldi, President Justice Policy Institute, DC.
Source: Documentary film, *Books not Bars*.
- http://www.witness.org/index.php?Itemid=178&alert_id=28&option=com_rightsalert&task=view

Intro to School to Prison Workshop:
Fact or Fiction?

“Fact or Fiction?”

The purpose is to facilitate thought and discussion around the relationship between the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems and public education.

There is one “Tie Breaker” card in addition to 15 cards that are attached to the game board, which can be made from a large piece of poster board. We propped the board up vertically – having an easel available is useful.

The “Fact or Fiction?” board looks something like this:

A statement card is attached in each of the three slots in each column; the facilitator reads the statement and the youth participants take turns discussing and answering. (See curriculum for more specifics).

The rules (see attached curriculum) can be adjusted to fit the group.

We had candy on hand for prizes.

FACT or FICTION?

\$200	\$400	\$600	\$800	\$1000