

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:

- 12-18 years olds with likelihood of experiencing school discipline.
- 10-15 youth are ideal.

The goals:

1. To introduce the idea that there is a strong link between school punishment and juvenile justice involvement.
2. get them to reflect on their experiences with school punishment.
3. To learn from youth about their experiences with school punishment.
4. To understand youth perspectives on the link between school and juvenile justice involvement.
5. To facilitate the participation of every girl in attendance.

Overview:

We introduced our selves and explained the work we have been doing this summer on the school to prison pipeline.

- We started the work shop with an ice breaker called Common Ground. We asked the youth to stand make a circle and then asked questions such as: Are you from Seattle?, Did you ever play on a basketball team?, Do you like roller coasters? The purpose was for the youth to see that they might have similarities with the others in the group that they had not known about before.
- The We showed the NYCLU video produced by youth about the school to prison pipeline.
- We gave time to discuss their impressions of the phenomena and whether they felt they had been impacted by it. Some girls said yes others said no.
- We informed them that we would be coming back to interview them tomorrow and asked them to think about what we showed them.

Day 2:

The audience:

- 12-18 years olds with likelihood of experiencing school discipline.
- 10-15 youth are ideal.

Goals:

- Major goal was to get the youth to describe their experiences in their own words.
- Reinforce the idea that they have powerful voices and that policy makers, school principals, and teachers should listen to them.

Overview:

- We reintroduced ourselves and reminded the youth about the topic. We gave them time to talk a little more about it, which was a mistake because it left less time to conduct the actual interviews. We then broke the youth up into 3 or 4 person groups with a law student or other staff member at every table. This was a very effective way of focusing the youth and minimizing disruptive behavior. Some of the youth were comfortable writing their responses to the questions while others needed prompting or asked one of the staff to write for them. It is always best to have the youth write for themselves because as hard as one tries to quote them word for word it is difficult not to inject your own language into their story. The most powerful and useful interviews were always the ones written by the youth themselves.

Activity 1: Common Ground - 5 to 7 minutes

This activity serves as an “ice-breaker” as well as an introduction to the issues to be addressed during the workshop. It provides participants with the opportunity to see the differences and commonalities in the room. Ask participants to stand in a large circle without chairs. The facilitators proceed to read a series of statements that require participants to step inside the circle if the statement applies to them. Facilitators can make up their own statements, depending on the group they are working with. Some examples include:

Please join me on common ground if:

You are from the West Coast

You like to watch movies

You know how to ride a bike

You have ever played basketball

You have ever received an A at school

You like to write

You like to hang out with friends

You like sweets

(Have each participant come up with their own common ground statement)

Activity 2: NYCLU DVD - 18 to 21 minutes

Introduce the school to prison pipeline briefly

1. Question – Ask for yes or no responses.

Ask participants if they think there is a connection between students who get in trouble at school and kids who get in trouble with the law.

- Do you think these are two separate issues that have nothing to do with each other?
 - Note how many say yes or no before video?.

2. Introduce videos – Tell what is about, who made it, and why they made it (*For instance: Students who get in trouble at school and are juvenile justice involved may or may not be related, but there are a group of students and adults that believe there is a connection between school and prison*)

- Watch first three clips of video - 15 to 18 minutes
- Debrief - 5 minutes

1. Recap Day 1

2. Revisit Day 1: Again, ask participants whether they think there is a connection between students who get in trouble at school and kids who get in trouble with the law.

- Have the students responses changed? Why or why not?

3. Introduction into interview process - 5 minutes

- **Explain what we are doing** - If possible, connect to previous discussion about relationship between kids who get in trouble at school and in trouble with the law.

4. Telling Story Exercise: Break the youth up into 3 or 4 person groups with a law student or other staff member at every table.

- **Powerful voices theme** – Discuss the importance of having their story told
 - Perhaps ask questions about why this may be important? (optional)
 - Read some examples from previous workshops
 - Have youth write their stories - 25 to 30 minutes
 - Ask for their permission to post stories (with aliases) on website

School Discipline Interview Workshop, Day 2:
Interview Questions

POWERFUL VOICES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

My name is _____(alias) and this is my story . . .

Have you ever been suspended or expelled from school? If yes how many times?

Think about each time you were kicked out of school. Can you remember what they suspended you for?

Did getting suspended motivate you work harder in school or did it make you mad at the school? How did you feel?

Did you behave better when you got back into school?

Did you get suspended again? If yes what happened?

What did you do while you were suspended?

Did your teacher give you work packets to complete? If yes did you complete them?

Did you have a parent or guardian stay home with you when you were suspended?

Did you hang out in the streets while you were suspended? What kinds of things did you do?

Did you ever get arrested while you were suspended or expelled from school? Explain what happened

Did you ever get arrested for something that happened in school?

Did you ever quit going to school for a long time or drop out? Explain why you quit going?

What could schools do instead of suspending students if they do misbehave?

School Discipline Interview Workshop, Day 2:
Writing Examples