PRESCHOOL SUSPENSION & EXPULSION

ICS Webinar Series
Thursday, May 7, 2020
ICS Mission: Why We Care

The success of all young children.
Today’s Agenda

Overview of Preschool Suspension & Expulsion

The Impact on Children

Tackling Preschool Suspension & Expulsion

Proceeding with Equity in Mind
Defining the Terms

SUSPENSION

• Temporary removal from the classroom or learning area as a response to “problem behavior”

• May be in-school or out-of-school

EXPULSION

• Permanent dismissal from school or program as a response to “problem behavior”
Poll Question #1
New Data Reveal 250 Preschoolers Are Suspended or Expelled Every Day

By Rasheed Malik | November 6, 2017, 9:01 am

Private preschool suspension and expulsion numbers have been known to be twice as high on average. The daily total is likely higher than 250, as private preschools are largely unaccounted for.

“Problem Behaviors”

Three and 4-year-olds may be suspended or expelled due to:

- Crying or throwing tantrums
- Being hyperactive
- Hitting or exhibiting other forms of physical aggression
Poll Question #2
Poll Question #3
This Issue Has a Race and Gender

- 82% of suspensions and expulsions are boys, who make up only 51% of the school population.

- Black children are 2.2 times more likely to be suspended or expelled.

Who’s Really Being Excluded?

Zero-tolerance school policies and exclusionary discipline practices such as preschool suspension and expulsion disproportionately affect Black children.

Out-of-School Preschool Suspensions Are Disproportionately Implemented!

Source: US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (March 2014)
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Out-of-School Time Can Harm Children

“Consider the costs of barring children from the classroom…In normal times school helps level the playing field. Without it, the achievement gap between affluent and working-class children will grow.”

Source: <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2020/04/30/when-easing-lockdowns-governments-should-open-schools-first>
Creating the School-to-Prison Pipeline

Nationwide, Black boys receive \( \frac{2}{3} \) of all school suspensions, starting in preschool.

By age 18, 30\% of Black boys have been arrested at least once – 49\% by age 23.

I came to see the streets and the schools as arms of the same beast...Fail in the schools and you would be suspended and sent back to those same streets...The society could say, “He should have stayed in school,” and then wash its hands of him. (p.33)
Causes of the School-to-Prison Pipeline

- Failing Public Schools
- Disincentives to Graduate
- Disciplinary & Alternative Schools ★
- In-School Policing ★
- Exclusionary Discipline ★
- Court Involvement & Juvenile Detention

Source: ACLU School-to-Prison-Pipeline <https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/school-prison-pipeline>
Disciplinary and Alternative Schools: In Lieu of Suspension

Students return to their schools academically ill-prepared and set up to fail out.
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ICS Recommendations

- Fair and appropriate policies
- Invest in and support highly skilled workforce
- Universal developmental and behavioral screening
Recommendations Continued

- Specialized supports for administrators & educators
- Strengthen family partnerships
- Set goals & track data
What Does it Mean to Be Fair and Appropriate?

Policies implemented without bias

- Minimize exclusionary practices
- Exclusionary as last resort only in cases of violence
The Need for a Highly Skilled Workforce

Invest in educators with trainings:
✓ Implicit Bias
✓ Equity and Inclusion
✓ Cultural Humility

Support educators:
✓ 1:10 teacher student ratios
✓ Monitor & minimize stress
✓ Fair compensation
What is Implicit Bias?

“Implicit bias refers to the automatic and unconscious stereotypes that drive people to behave and make decisions in certain ways.”

How Can We Best Prepare for Aggressive/Disruptive Behaviors?

Implement universal development and behavioral screenings, so that we know what is truly happening and can provide children with what they need.
The Benefits of Specialized Supports

- Mental Health Consultants & Behavior Coaches
- Identify Needs
- Manage/Prevent Behavior & Promote Development
Strengthen Family Partnerships

Identify Concerns  Collaborate on Solutions  Share Strategies
Commit to Learning More

✓ Set goals and track data

✓ Identify disparities
Poll Question #4
Pre-K Suspension & Expulsion Legislation

CA 2014
CT 2015
NJ 2016
TX 2017
IL 2017
MD 2017
OH 2018

Source: 50States.com Blank Outline State Maps <https://www.50states.com/maps/>
Overview and Common Themes

- Legislation since 2014
- Includes pre-K through grade 3
- Specifies “out-of-school-suspension”
- **Exceptions**: threats to health and/or safety
Today's Agenda

1. Overview of Preschool Suspension & Expulsion
2. The Impact on Children
3. Tackling Preschool Suspension & Expulsion
4. Proceeding with Equity in Mind
EQUITY

fairness, equity, justice, diversity, inclusion, opportunity, money, fair, goal, better, choice, Wakanda, firm, living wage, reciprocated, wealth, flourishing, home, voice, policy, power, even, harmony, equality, ownership, hopeful, equal, growth, investment, team, agency, compensated, symbiotic, starting off in the same place, level playing field, safety net, quality education, equal opportunity, access, misunderstanding, system that works, veil of ignorance, support, tribal, whole, fruitful, politics, possible, balance, equality, fairness in systems, the least of these.
What Is Equity?

The state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial, and fair.

Trying to understand and give people what they need to enjoy full, healthy lives

Source: Race Equity & Inclusion Action Guide
Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014
Leading With an Equity Lens

Systemically marginalized populations often require different and consistently informed approaches in order to reach a place of equity.

Seeking out and including the voices of these populations are necessary steps in early childhood research & policy work.

When parents, grandparents, guardians, & other caretakers are doing well, the young children they support will be better equipped to thrive.

Committing to inclusive and equitable internal operations fosters an environment in which ICS can serve authentically and w/integrity, maximizing & sustaining our impact.
Equity vs. Equality: Meeting Children Where They Are

Equity does not equal Sameness.

Picture Source: Race Equity & Inclusion Action Guide Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014
Another Look: Equity vs. Equality

Removal of Systemic Barriers

Picture Source: Internet/unknown source
Access Does Not Equal Inclusion!

INCLUSION

Experience    Voice    Belonging
"[Inequity and bias] generate a feeling of inferiority as to [a child's] status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone."

~adapted from Chief Justice Earl Warren and the Brown v. Board decision
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
Resources

• Preschool Suspension and Expulsion: Defining the Issues

• Exploring the Prevalence of Suspension and Expulsion Practices in Child Care Settings in South Carolina

• New Data Reveal 250 Preschoolers are Suspended or Expelled Every Day

• Black Students Bear Uneven Brunt of Discipline

• Black Boys in Crisis: Is Punishment too Harsh?

• Do Early Educators’ Implicit Biases Regarding Sex and Race Relate to Behavior Expectations and Recommendations of Preschool Expulsions and Suspensions?