



School Safety

What Parents Need to Know

Presented by Advocates for Justice & Education, Inc.



Agenda

- Examining D.C. Public School Police Trends
- Effects of Zero Tolerance Disciplinary Policies
- Tips for Parents

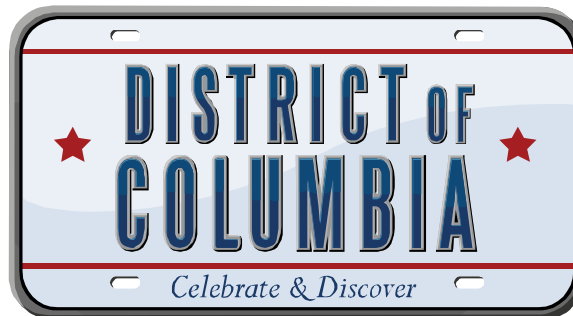


In 2009...

- The U.S. Dept. of Education reported that 11.3 percent of D.C. High School Students reported being “threatened or injured” with a weapon while on school property during the previous year.
- This rate is well above the national average

The Washington Post reported in 2007....

- That nine violent school incidents are reported on a typical day in Washington, D.C.





2001 Report

- Most assaults and robberies against juveniles in D.C. occur between 3pm and 4 pm, at the end of a traditional school day.
- The weekday after-school commute had the highest frequency of crimes against District juveniles.

Crime-Related Incidents at D.C. Public Schools

As Reported to the Metropolitan Police Department During School Year 2007–2008

Type of Crime	All D.C. Public Schools		D.C. Schools with Enrollment Data	
	Incidents	Rate per 100 students	Incidents	Rate per 100 students
Violent				
Homicide	1	0.002	1	0.002
Sex Offenses	43	0.09	41	0.09
Robbery with Weapon	17	0.04	17	0.04
Robbery Excluding Weapon	41	0.09	41	0.09
Aggravated Assault	114	0.23	105	0.23
Simple Assault	648	1.32	608	1.32
Assaulting a Police Officer	15	0.03	15	0.03
Domestic Violence	33	0.07	32	0.07
Total Violent Incidents	912		860	1.87
Property				
Burglary	82	0.17	78	0.17
Theft	446	0.96	441	0.96
Theft from Auto	304	0.65	301	0.65
Stolen Auto	205	0.44	202	0.44
Arson	8	0.02	8	0.02
Property Damage	293	0.63	292	0.63
Total Property Incidents	1,338		1,322	2.87
Other				
Suicide	13	0.03	13	0.03
Drug Offenses	41	0.09	41	0.09
Disorderly Conduct	461	1.00	459	1.00
Sounds of Gunshots	49	0.10	48	0.10
Indecent Exposure	9	0.02	8	0.02
Weapons offense	0	0.00	0	0.00
Police Officer in Trouble	3	0.01	3	0.01
Other Crimes	674	1.46	671	1.46
Total Other Incidents	1,250		1,243	2.70
Total Incidents	3,500		3,425	7.40
Number of Schools	129		128	
Enrollment				46,109

Sources: Heritage Foundation calculations based on data from District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department, 911 tape of crime incidents in District of Columbia schools, Freedom of Information Act Request No. 09-125; District of Columbia Public Schools, public school enrollment data; District of Columbia Public Charter School Board, Audited Enrollment Figures, 2007–08; and U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Private School Universe Survey, 2007–2008, at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pss/index.asp> (August 13, 2009).



School Discipline

- **Sometimes school discipline policies are not successful in correcting problem behaviors**
- **The child does not learn what the school staff intended through the use of punishments such as suspension**





Zero-tolerance policies

- defined as consistently enforced suspension and expulsion policies in response to weapons, drugs and violent acts in the school setting.
- Over time, however, zero tolerance has come to refer to school or district-wide policies that mandate predetermined, typically harsh consequences or punishments (such as suspension and expulsion) for a *wide degree* of rule violation.



School to Prison Pipeline



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graph TD; A[Suspensions] --> B[Expulsions]; B --> C[Referrals to Alternative Schools]; C --> D[Policing of School Hallways]; D --> E[Referrals to Juvenile Justice];
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Suspensions

Expulsions

Referrals to
Alternative Schools

Policing of School
Hallways

Referrals to
Juvenile Justice

*Adapted Slide
from ECAC
Conference
May 2010*

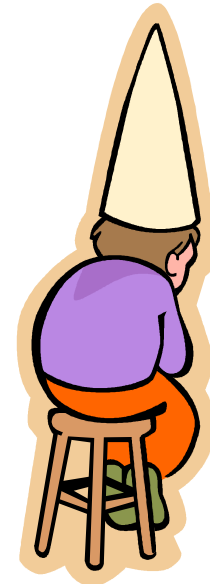


National Statistics

- In 2004, more than 3 million students were suspended and 106,000 were expelled
- This represents a 9.3% increase in suspensions and a 7.4% increase in expulsions since 2000

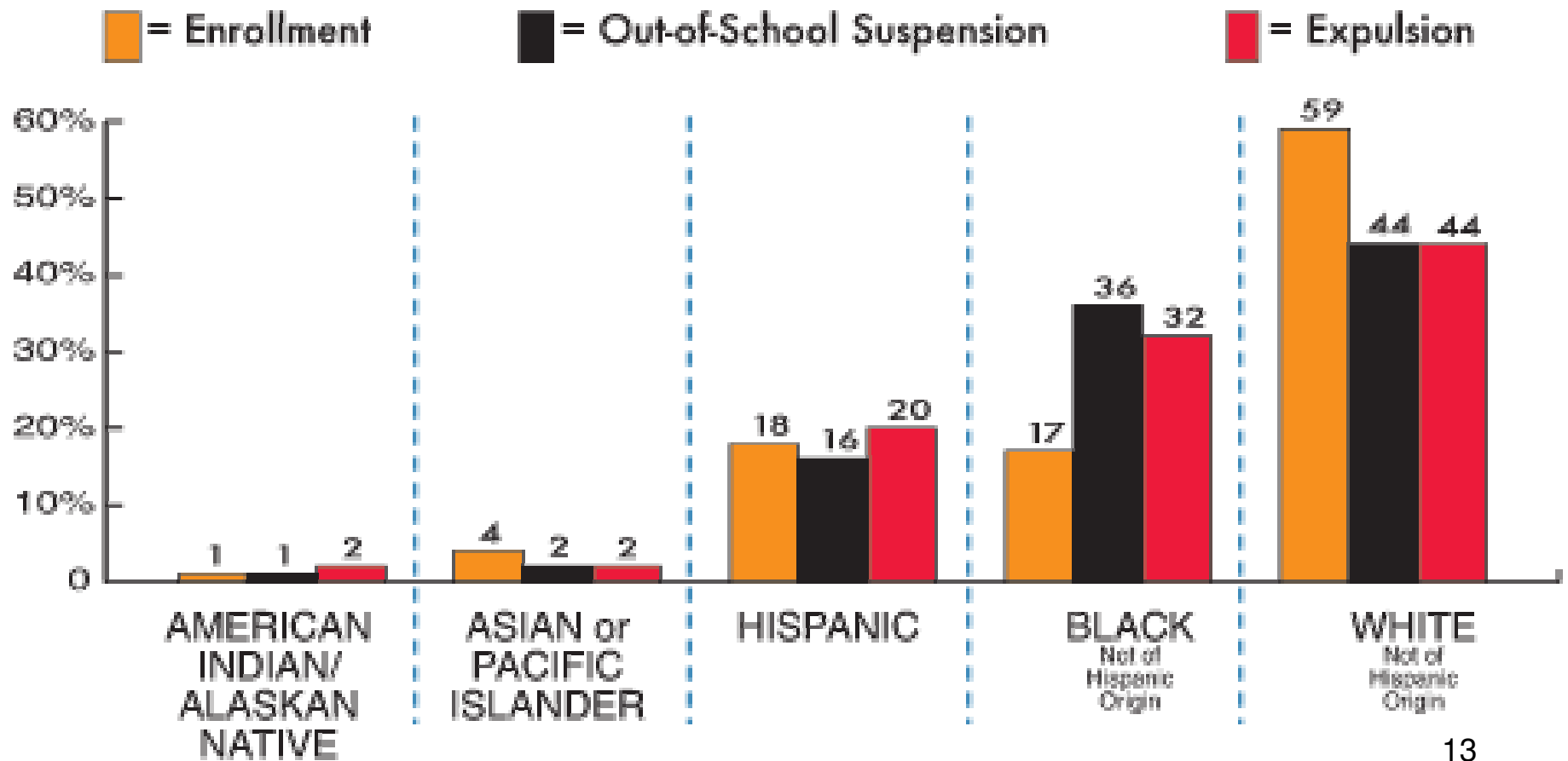
Why Zero-Tolerance Policies?

- They can remove difficult students from school
- Fast-acting interventions that send a clear, consistent message that certain behaviors are unacceptable at school.



National Enrollment vs. Disciplinary Actions

Source: Office for Civil Rights, 2002 Elementary and Secondary School Survey



National Trends

- African American students represent 17% of public school enrollment, but 36% of out-of-school suspensions (OSS)
- Latino students represent 18% of public school enrollment, but 16% of OSS
- White students make up 59% of public school enrollment and represent 44% of OSS
- OSS results in student removal from school for at least one day

Zero-tolerance policies

There is little scientific research to show that zero-tolerance or other "get tough" measures are effective in reducing school violence or increasing school safety.



Discipline and Students with Disabilities

- A conservative “self report” survey data shows that **one third** of the students in the juvenile justice system are IDEA eligible
- However, youth with disabilities may account for as much as **two-thirds or more** of the total number of youth in the juvenile justice system, while only accounting for 10-12% of the general population in school
- Yet, research shows that many incarcerated youth with disabilities have not been identified for special education

Adapted Slide from ECAC Conference May 2010

- A national study has shown that 32% of all youth with SLD and 57% with ED are arrested at least once
- Children with ED are more than three times as likely to be arrested before leaving school in comparison to other students
- The vast majority of juveniles in the juvenile justice system are children with Emotional Disturbance (ED) and children with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)



Alternatives to Out of School Suspensions

- Small, personalized schools
- School-based violence prevention programs
- Individual and group counseling
- In-school suspension
- Restorative justice programs
- Saturday, after-school, or lunchtime detention coupled with “pro-social behavior skills-building
- Participation in community-based intervention programs
- Conflict resolution programs

What Can You Do To Help?

- Communicate with your children
- Know Your Child's Friends
- Know Your Child's Teachers
- Know When School Begins and Ends
 - Know the route home
- Get Your Children Involved in Extracurricular Activities



More Recommendations...

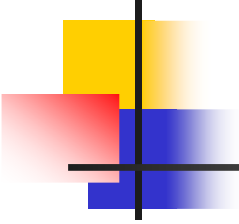
- Get a copy of your school's disciplinary policy
- Know Your Rights!
 - Persistently Dangerous School Rights

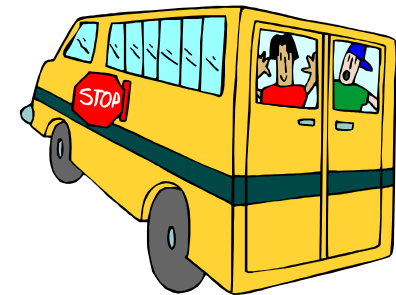




Persistently Dangerous Schools

- According to DC law, a school will be designated as persistently dangerous if the annual number of officially reported violent crimes against students on the school grounds during school hours over a period of two consecutive years is equal to or greater than:
 - **Five (5) for schools with enrollments of 500 students or less; or**
 - **1 percent of the school's official enrollment for schools with enrollments of 501 students or more.**

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- Students who attend such schools, or who are the victims of a violent crime while on the grounds of the school they attend, are allowed to transfer to a safe public elementary or secondary school, including a public charter school, in the same district.



DCPS Persistently Dangerous School Numbers

Zero





For More Information

- Contact AJE at our two locations:
 1. “The Big Chair”: 2041 Martin Luther King Jr, Ave. SE (202) 678-8060
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