

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: BREAKING THE CYCLE FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH

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INTRODUCTION

Restorative Justice (RJ) is a framework that centers on showing respect, taking responsibility, and strengthening relationships. The School-to-Prison Pipeline disproportionately targets poor students of color with biased application of school discipline policies which leads to high suspension rates and arrests for minor offenses. Students of color are therefore pushed out of school and into the prison system. Given the research that shows that adolescents are relationship driven, Restorative Justice is a proactive practice that will stop the School to Prison Pipeline.

RESEARCH QUESTION

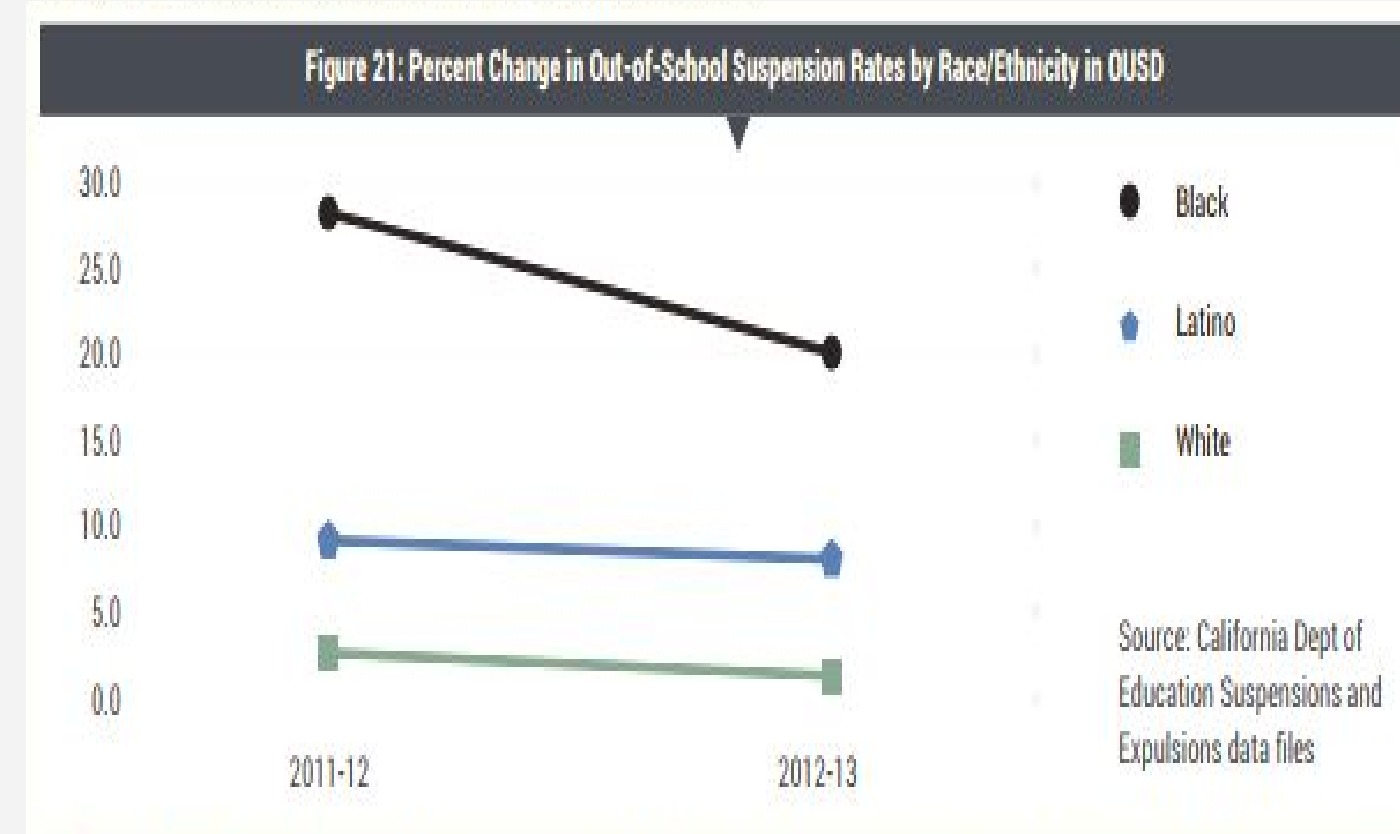
Could the framework of Restorative Justice eliminate the effects of the School-to-Prison Pipeline for African American students?

METHODOLOGY

I analyzed the Restorative Justice Educate Scholar Trainings created by Student U and Racial Equity Report Cards created by the Youth Justice Project. I looked at specific case studies of urban school districts implementing restorative justice practices. Organizations focused on equity in education and another study done by executive findings done by various school districts.

COLLECTIVE DATA

As the trend lines show, out of school suspension rates for all groups declined. Black students saw the largest decline by nearly 7 per 100 enrolled, compared to 1 per 100 White students.



"CHILDREN HAVE NEVER BEEN VERY GOOD AT LISTENING TO THEIR ELDERS, BUT THEY HAVE NEVER FAILED TO IMITATE THEM." JAMES A. BALDWIN



Students and teachers participate in a Restorative Justice Circle in OUSD.

RESULTS:

- ❑ The School-to-Prison pipeline has affected many African American youth.
- ❑ Even in our own communities, we have witnessed scenarios of the school-to-prison pipeline based on minor incidents that could have been avoided.
- ❑ Teens of color are misguided to the path of education. Many are likely to not graduate high school and barely graduate college.
- ❑ RJ programs in school show that many students at risk just need communicate with someone to fix whatever harm was caused or done by them.
- ❑ Restorative justice is a way teachers who have issues with students can talk out the problem instead of suspending the student.

CONCLUSION

- ❑ Restorative justice can eliminate the effects of the school-to-prison in the near future.
- ❑ School environments are safer for teacher and students.
- ❑ Black students' reading scores increased under with RJ practices.
- ❑ The high-school graduation rate increased for African American students.
- ❑ I plan to be an advocate for equal justice in the school system for students of color.