



**Department of
Youth & Community
Development**

TESTIMONY

BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

**COMMITTEES ON JUVENILE JUSTICE AND YOUTH
SERVICES**

**Oversight: Reentry Programs for Formerly Incarcerated
Youth**

PRESENTED BY

Assistant Commissioner Tracy Caldron

Assistant Commissioner Daphne Montanez

November 13, 2018

Good afternoon, Chair Rose and Chair King and members of the Committees on Youth Services and Juvenile Justice. I am Tracy Caldron, Assistant Commissioner for COMPASS Afterschool Programs at the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, and I am joined by Daphne Montanez, Assistant Commissioner for Workforce Connect. Thank you for inviting DYCD to testify today on reentry programs for youth.

DYCD supports New York City youth and their families by funding a wide range of high-quality youth and community development programs. We strive to meet the needs of New York City's youth in our programs, and that includes youth who are or have been involved in the juvenile or criminal justice system.

DYCD currently funds three afterschool programs for youth in secure and non-secure detention facilities. Two of these operate in Department of Education District 79 alternative schools, Bronx Hope and Belmont, and serve 65 youth in nonsecure detention and placement, overseen by the Administration for Children's Services. The third program operates at Crossroads secure detention, which serves 60 youth, including some who have been transferred from the Horizon facility in the Bronx. These three programs are provided by the Center for Community Alternatives and Sheltering Arms. Our programs served 2,627 youth in fiscal years 2016 through 2018. The youth served ranged in age from 11 to 22, although more than half were ages 16 and 17.

The programs in District 79 and in secure detention include enrichment activities such as creative and visual arts, STEM, literacy and leadership development, which teaches youth socially responsible behaviors. The programs also include physical activity and healthy living, such as sports, dance, and yoga. They work with expert consultants and subcontractors, including Theater of the Oppressed, the Good Dog Foundation, Better You Fitness, and Community Connections for Youth Mentoring. The programs are offered for 12 hours per week over a 36-week school year.

Many of these programs have developed methods to connect with participants after their departure. They have shared information about internship opportunities, supported participants through court appearances, and hosted activities promoting career development. Overall, the comprehensive model is intended to help youth develop life skills in a targeted way to youth involved in the justice system.

Daphne Montanez, Assistant Commissioner for Workforce Connect, will now discuss DYCD's youth workforce development programs.

Good afternoon. DYCD's employment programs help youth between the ages of 14 and 24 gain work experience and further their education. Our programs are designed to consider barriers to employment faced by youth, including involvement in the justice system. The Summer Youth Employment Program, which served 75,000 youth in 2018, allocates most of its jobs through a lottery system. However, the SYEP vulnerable youth option provides slots outside the lottery system that are reserved for youth who are justice involved, homeless or have run away from home, or who are in foster care or ACS preventive programs. We work closely with ACS, the Department of Probation, and the Department of Homeless Services to recruit youth for this option. In summer 2018, SYEP provided jobs to 1,527 justice-involved youth through the Vulnerable Youth option, and an additional 256 who enrolled through the lottery and identified themselves as having involvement in the justice system.

The Intern & Earn program, formerly known as the Young Adult Internship Program or YAIP, is a workforce development program targeting young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not working and not in school, and includes a combination of counseling, professional development workshops, and short-term paid internships of up to 300 hours. It operates in three 12-week long cohorts per year. In Fiscal Years 2016 through 2018, the program served 353 court-involved youth, about 7 percent of participants.

The Intern & Earn Plus program, now entering its third year, is an initiative specifically for youth who are currently or formerly receiving foster care or juvenile justice services through ACS. This specialized program includes intensive case management with smaller caseloads, providing more time to coordinate services with other partners. Each participant's progress is shared with ACS case workers, and may be used to advocate for closure of that participant's legal case. In the two years the program has operated, it has served 53 youth who were referred from the juvenile justice system. They comprise about 25 percent of the participants in Intern & Earn Plus.

The federally funded program Train & Earn, formerly known as the Out of School Youth Program or OSY, is also aimed at youth between the ages of 16 to 24 who are not in school and not working. The program includes occupational skills training in high-demand industry sectors, including healthcare, food service, construction, information technology and retail; work readiness training and career exploration; High School Equivalency preparation and basic skills instruction; employment and college placement assistance; and work experience, including paid and unpaid internships and on the job training and job shadowing. Participants receive comprehensive supportive services including case management, assistance with housing, childcare, healthcare, and legal challenges, as well as life skills training such as financial literacy, health and nutrition awareness, healthy relationships, and parenting skills. The program also includes twelve months of follow-up services after completion.

In the last five years, 103 youth disclosed at the point of enrollment that they were considered "offenders" according to the federal definition for this program, which includes adults and juveniles who have been subject to any stage of the criminal justice system, and who require assistance in overcoming barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction. Because these participants require additional assistance in entering or reentering the workforce, DYCD has contracted with Youth Represent, an organization that provides both individual legal services and Know Your Rights workshops to Train & Earn participants. Youth Represent assists participants in researching and correcting the criminal history information in their records so that potential employers do not receive misinformation. They advise participants on employment discrimination as well other legal areas that can affect a participant's ability to maintain employment, such as eviction and family court matters. Collectively, this representation minimizes the barriers to jobs, education, housing, and family stability that participants may face. Youth Represent also provides technical assistance training to staff at contracted provider organizations.

Our main service areas for justice-involved youth are COMPASS and Workforce Connect, but our other program areas also strive to meet the needs of participant youth who have involvement with the justice system. The Young Adult Literacy Program (YALP) is aimed at disconnected youth who lack the reading, writing, and/or mathematics skills to be ready to enroll in a high school equivalency test preparation program. YALP is designed for youth who are not working and not in school, ages 16 through 24, who are reading at the 4th through 8th grade level. In addition to the basic literacy skills instruction, participants receive comprehensive case management services. Last year, more than 100 participants in YALP identified

themselves as court-involved youth. About half of these youth were served through a contract with the Fortune Society, an organization whose mission is to support successful reentry from incarceration and promote alternatives to incarceration through an array of services that include education, employment, substance use treatment, and benefit application assistance.

DYCD funds services for runaway and homeless youth that includes comprehensive case management. DYCD providers operate drop-in centers and residential programs. Participants develop individualized service plans that consider their particular needs. Programs also include life skills components to assist participants in transitioning to independence.

DYCD's Fatherhood program includes an option that is specifically aimed at fathers with prior involvement in the court system. Programs help non-custodial fathers address six core areas: parenting skills development, effective co-parenting, employment and education, child support, child's education and well-being, and visitation and placement. The program served more than 1000 fathers last year and is successful in helping increasing parental engagement and financial responsibility for their children. Last year, 43 percent of participants in the Fatherhood program reported some prior involvement with the court system.

In addition to services provided to youth, DYCD engages with other government agencies and relevant stakeholders. DYCD is the home of the Interagency Coordinating Council on Youth (ICC), an inter-agency body that includes all City agencies that work with young people, including ACS, the New York City Police Department, the New York Public Library, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and many others. The ICC hosts a workgroup on Court-Involved Youth that meets regularly to discuss the particular needs of this population. Last year, the work group published a resource directory entitled "Coming Home: Transitioning Back into the Community." It was designed with the input of young people and includes information about resources for youth leaving detention, including housing, practical assistance, legal rights, drug and alcohol treatment, and job searches. The guide has been circulated to youth in the custody of ACS and their parents, in public libraries, and through the Law Department, Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Human Resources Administration. The document is available for download on DYCD's website.

Thank you for inviting DYCD to discuss our commitment to serving youth involved in the criminal and juvenile justice systems. We will be happy to answer the committee's questions.



**The New York City Council,
Committee on Juvenile Justice
November 13, 2018**

***“Oversight – Reentry Programs for Formerly Incarcerated
Youth”***

**Testimony by
New York City Administration for Children's Services**

**Felipe Franco, Deputy Commissioner
Division of Youth and Family Justice**

**Charles Barrios, Associate Commissioner
Division of Youth and Family Justice**

**Sara Hemmeter, Associate Commissioner
Division of Youth and Family Justice**

Good afternoon Chair King and Chair Rose, and members of the Committee on Juvenile Justice and the Committee on Youth Services. I am Felipe Franco, Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Youth and Family Justice (DYFJ) within the Administration for Children's Services (ACS). With me today are Charles Barrios, Associate Commissioner for Juvenile Justice Programs and Services, and Sara Hemmeter, Associate Commissioner for Community Based Alternatives and Close to Home. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the services and supports that DYFJ, our sister City agencies, and our non-profit partners provide for youth as they transition back to their home communities from juvenile justice facilities. This joint committee hearing exemplifies NYC's focus and our national leadership in integrating positive youth development within our juvenile justice system and strategies.

DYFJ Overview

DYFJ administers a continuum of juvenile justice services, which includes community-based preventive and alternative services for youth and their families, detention services to youth who are arrested and awaiting court resolution, and residential services through Close to Home for youth who are adjudicated by the Family Court. Close to Home placement includes residential care and supervision upon return to the community on aftercare.

Admissions to juvenile detention and Close to Home have decreased significantly year after year. The average daily population in detention has decreased steadily for many years and declined an additional 29 percent from 119 in Fiscal Year 2017 to 85 in Fiscal Year 2018. Likewise, the number of young people entering Close to Home placement declined 40 percent from 227 in Fiscal Year 2017 to 136 in Fiscal Year 2018. These decreases are due in large part to the decline in juvenile crime, the use of evidence-based risk assessment instruments, and the increase in community-based services to help prevent at-risk young people from ever entering the system.

ACS has worked in close collaboration with DOP, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, and the courts to increase the use of Alternative to Detention programs, and we have worked in partnership with DOP to develop Alternative to Placement programs to keep young people who do not need to be confined safely in the community with necessary services and supports. Raise the Age has now given us the opportunity to extend our entire continuum to older adolescents and to continue building on the tremendous work that has been done to transform the juvenile justice system in New York City.

I will now turn to Associate Commissioner Barrios to discuss some of the work done in our detention facilities to help prepare youth for discharge to the community.

Detention and Helping Detained Youth Prepare to Return to the Community: Associate Commissioner Charles Barrios

Good afternoon. I am Charles Barrios, Associate Commissioner for Juvenile Justice Programs and Services in DYFJ. ACS operates two secure detention facilities—Crossroads and Horizon—and oversees a network of smaller, nonprofit provider-operated Non-Secure Detention residences throughout the City. As Deputy Commissioner Franco noted, the average length of stay for most youth in detention is very short and the timing of each youth's release is unpredictable and up to the Family Court or Youth Part, so DYFJ has deliberately developed a robust menu of services and programming for our young people that is designed not only to enrich their experience in care by helping them build skills and competencies but to also expose them to interests and opportunities that they may wish to pursue when the Court discharges them from ACS custody.

All youth in detention receive education, health care, mental health services, recreational activities, and case management for the duration of their stay. An important part of the case manager's job is parent engagement. This includes establishing contact with family (such as

parents/guardians) at intake, arranging visits, confirming the youth's authorized call lists and keeping parents informed about their child's well-being during detention. Case managers assist in facilitating youths' contact with their attorneys. Case managers also collaborate with Close to Home Permanency Planning Specialists and Friends of the Island Academy mentors to support the transition planning as well as aftercare efforts. These efforts help prepare both the family and the young person for the youth's return to the community and his/her family.

The NYC Department of Education's (DOE) District 79 Passages Academy operates a fulltime educational program across our entire juvenile justice residential continuum, with schools for youth in detention and Close to Home. We have worked closely with DOE to develop internships, new career certificate programs and better access to vocational schools. DOE has invested in Transition Specialists—typically social workers and counselors—who participate in the development of a comprehensive discharge plan prior to release and support youth in their transition back to the right community school. Transition Specialists develop transition plans with students, including short-term goals and, most importantly, their immediate next step after leaving Passages Academy. The specialists engage with students and their families about the key decision to either return to their previous school or to transfer to a different school.

ACS has opened our detention facilities to a variety of community-based organizations, faith-based groups and mentors to help connect our youth to supports and networks in the community before they are released from our care. DYFJ and the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) collaborate with an extensive array of partners to provide a range of recreational programs and services to justice-involved youth in our facilities. Through positive activities and strong role models, we hope to develop the skills young people need to redirect their lives in a positive direction when they leave our care. We have vastly expanded our portfolio of programming and services, including our arts and enrichment programs and vocational

options, to better address the interests of all youth in our system, including the older adolescents. We have also partnered with Friends of the Island Academy to provide programming and reentry services for young people housed at Horizon and Crossroads, as well as with the Center for Community Alternatives to provide additional programming for youth at Crossroads.

Earlier this year, ACS announced that we've expanded our partnership with Health and Hospitals by building on the success of the work we've been doing with Bellevue Hospital Center, and thoughtfully planning and collaborating with Correctional Health Services to help manage contracted health services at Crossroads and Horizon. This ensures that young people in detention continue to receive high-quality health care and serves as an important step toward ensuring continuity of care for young people throughout the juvenile justice system, from detention through placement and aftercare, and beyond as needed post-release.

I will now turn to my colleague, Associate Commissioner Hemmeter, to discuss Close to Home and the aftercare services, both of which prepare youth to return to their community.

Close to Home: Associate Commissioner Sara Hemmeter

Good afternoon. I am Sara Hemmeter, Associate Commissioner for Community Based Alternatives and Close to Home at ACS.

If a Family Court judge finds that a young person committed an offense and at Disposition finds that the youth needs rehabilitative services, the judge may order the youth to be placed in a residential placement program for a period of time, generally 12 or 18 months. Youth are initially placed in small group home-style residences throughout the City that are run by our non-profit provider partners—referred to as Close to Home. There the youth receive approximately six to nine months of intensive and therapeutic programming, based on their length of placement as ordered by the Family Court and their individualized needs, before returning to the community on aftercare for

the remainder of their placement period. Youth's behavior, level of participation, and personal growth while in placement are key factors in determining a date for their step-down to aftercare. In addition, youth participate in community passes and home visits while in residential placement, allowing DYFJ and provider staff to observe and assess the youth's and their family's readiness for reunification.

DYFJ understands the importance of empowering families, so Close to Home uses the ACS practice of Family Team Conferencing to plan for youth and to ensure that ACS and our providers respond appropriately to youth behaviors and circumstances. Conference Facilitation Specialists (CFS) convene Planning and Support Meetings at all critical program transition points for youth and when youth are not following established expectations. CFS also ensure that the youth, their family and all other relevant stakeholders are present at each meeting.

Planning for re-entry to the community begins on the very first day of a young person's placement in Close to Home and continues for the entire duration of the youth's residential placement and as they transition to aftercare in the community. Once the Family Court places a young person in Close to Home, a DYFJ Placement and Permanency Specialist (PPS) is immediately assigned to the youth and maintains regular contact with the youth throughout the entire duration of the placement period. To promote continuity of care, each ACS Close to Home provider is assigned to a specific youth and also remains with that youth throughout the duration of the youth's placement, including their time on aftercare. The PPS and the Close to Home provider work together to ensure that the youth's needs are being addressed through appropriate services, both in residential placement and in the community on aftercare, creating a tighter network of supervision and ensuring that youth are held accountable for their actions.

Aftercare Services and Community Support

After residential placement, most young people return to their home communities on aftercare for the remainder of the placement period. The goal of Close to Home aftercare is to build on the skills youth acquire while in placement and help develop a network of support that will allow them to succeed in the community. On aftercare, youth and their families receive individually-determined aftercare services and continue to receive intensive supervision by the provider agency, with support from the assigned PPS. We partnered with DOP to conduct a training for ACS and Close to Home provider frontline and supervisory staff on best practice community supervision strategies for youth.. In addition, youth participate in employment programs in partnership with the NYC Department for Youth and Community Development (DYCD), as well as targeted gang prevention services through the Cure Violence initiative, made possible through funding from the New York City Council.

Under the Cure Violence adaptation for Close to Home, providers¹ connect with youth who have a history of gun possession or gang participation. They engage youth in residential placement through workshops and individual meetings, and support youth as they re-enter the community. Cure Violence staff challenge youths' thinking and serve as positive, credible role models, providing youth with an alternative to a violent and/or gang involved life.

To improve youth outcomes and public safety, Close to Home has worked closely with the Department of Probation to implement the Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) Framework, a best practice in juvenile justice. RNR uses a validated risk and needs assessment to drive case planning and ensure that services are based on youths' assessed needs. Close to Home providers create individually designed service plans for each youth to target behaviors that are likely to result in

¹ Bronx: Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence (BRAG); Brooklyn: Gangtas Making Astronomical Community Changes (GMACC); Manhattan: Getting Out and Staying Out (GOSO); Queens: Life Camp; and Staten Island: True 2 Life.

subsequent offenses. For example, youth with negative peer relationships or who struggle to appropriately structure their leisure time may be connected to community-based organizations such as YMCAs, where they can participate in constructive youth development activities with positive peers. Similarly, youth with family relationship or parenting needs may be connected to evidenced based services, and youth with educational or vocational needs will receive services specifically tailored to support their success in school or work.

Other Community Supports

As a City it is imperative that we all work to ensure our youth have the tools and the supports they need to become successful adults, and DYFJ is committed to supporting youth, families and communities to achieve this goal. In summer 2018, DYFJ announced contract awards for the Mentoring and Advocacy Program (MAAP) to four providers in Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and the Bronx. MAAP is a new community-based program that is designed to support youth by providing them with mentors and advocates, with a focus on school engagement, education and workforce assistance. Services began in November 1st and are available to any youth with justice system involvement, including those who are no longer in the system.

In June of 2017 ACS opened a Family Support Center in the South Bronx, which provides a multi-service, one-stop space for youth and their families. I would like to thank Chair King and members of the Juvenile Justice Committee for visiting the Center over the summer and learning about the array of programs and services we offer there. As we discussed during the Committee's visit, the Bronx Family Support Center houses DYFJ's Family Assessment Program (FAP)², Juvenile Justice Initiative (JJI)³ and Close to Home initiative and enables families with justice system involvement to have many of their service needs met in one centralized location. However,

² FAP provides assessment and diversion services for status offenders or persons in need of supervision (PINS).

³ JJI is the largest alternative to placement program in New York City and uses evidence-based models of delinquency prevention to provide intensive, home-based services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

services offered at the Bronx Family Support Center are not limited to families with justice system involvement and are open to anyone in the community. DYFJ partners with Community Connections for Youth to provide workforce development, parenting groups, housing assistance, and education workshops, and plans to add yoga classes to the public in the future. The space is designed to be shared with the whole community, welcoming everyone—including those whose children aren't at risk or court-involved. The Bronx location is presently the only Family Support Center in the City, and we are planning to open a Queens Center in 2020.

Closing

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the supports that ACS, our provider partners and our sister city agencies provide for youth and their families in the community. New York City's multiagency focus on building competencies and supports for youth is commendable and often emulated by other cities and jurisdictions across the state and the nation. As always, we are happy to work with the Committee in our continuing efforts to improve the system and services for the City's justice-involved youth. We are happy to take your questions.



Mark L. Goldsmith
President and CEO

Testimony to the City Council Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Committees
Getting Out and Staying Out
November 13th, 2018

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Thank you Chairs Rose and King for recognizing the importance of the issue of reentry services and for the opportunity to testify about this issue. I'm Geoffrey Golia, Associate Executive Director of Getting Out and Staying Out (GOSO). Founded in 2003, GOSO is a comprehensive reentry program, serving 16- to 24-year-old young men who have been involved in the criminal justice system. We work with participants from all five boroughs; many we meet during the four days a week we provide services in the jails on Rikers Island, others join our community program - located in East Harlem - through referrals from probation and parole officers, judges and District Attorneys, defense attorneys, alternative-to-incarcerations programs and other participants. Additionally, we correspond with hundreds of participants currently incarcerated in upstate and Federal prisons. GOSO works with more than 2,300 young people a year from all five boroughs of New York City, and our recidivism rate is low—15 percent compared to a much higher local and federal averages for this age group. The vast majority of our clients are below the poverty line and lack a support system, and many suffer from diagnosable mental health disorders.

GOSO believes reentry starts the day a person is incarcerated, and we support our incarcerated and detained participants by encouraging them to go to school and start planning for a productive life when they return home. For the last 15 years GOSO social workers have worked with thousands of young men on Rikers Island, juvenile facilities, and in upstate facilities. We currently meet regularly with close to 250 participants in the sentenced and unsentenced buildings on Rikers Island to discuss educational and employment goals and how to avoid re-involvement in the criminal justice system. GOSO is also unique in that it provides robust reentry training for youth sentenced to upstate facilities and continues to keep in contact with this population once they are in custody upstate. GOSO provides aftercare reentry services that are essential to ensure that clients have support to transition to their communities and schools.

GOSO's community program is tailored to address educational, employment, and emotional well-being concerns, while also providing individual attention to each participant's individual needs and goals. All participants are linked up with a licensed social worker—LMSWs and LCSWs—who are equipped to provide psychotherapy as well as reentry planning.

Every week, without fail, we run a comprehensive job readiness curriculum which allows participants to be eligible for a number of different additional programs designed to help them achieve personal and professional success.

GOSO has an on-site TASC program run in collaboration with the Department of Education. Participation has grown each year, and this year, we have enrolled 32 participants in our school. We also provide support to our participants who are in college or trade school, including MetroCards and books.

GOSO also provides monthly vocational trainings to prepare our participants for the careers they seek to earn. Just recently, 25 participants completed their OSHA-30 Construction certifications, along with their 4-hour Flagging and 4-hour Scaffolding certifications.

Employment is a huge goal for our participants. Since 2013, GOSOWorks, our employment development program, has placed over 400 participants in internship-to-employment opportunities with over 70 local business and non-profits around the city like Dos Toros and The Horticultural Society of New York. This wage subsidy, which is provided through the City's WPP program, helps level the playing field for our participants, assisting them in entering full-time, on-the-books jobs in competitive fields. Recently, we've had a number of participants accepted into and start training with the Local 79 Mason Tenders Union.

As a staff of mental health professionals, we recognize - and seek to address - the biopsychosocial issues that our participants experience. Even before their first interaction with the justice system, our participants faced poverty, racism, trauma, and a number of broken systems. Often, these issues were exacerbated by the trauma of incarceration. Successful reentry cannot happen without a robust emphasis on mental health and emotional well-being. Through individual and group therapy, trauma-informed interventions, psychoeducation, and referrals to more intensive psychiatric services, the staff of GOSO seeks to destigmatize and demystify mental health treatment and encourage our participants to prioritize their emotional well-being.

GOSO, through its Stand Against Violence East Harlem (SAVE) program, is also engaged in addressing gun violence and gang/crew issues. Based on the Cure Violence model, SAVE's team of credible messengers works in the East Harlem community to respond to acts of violence in an effort to prevent retaliation and bring community members together. From there, they can provide referrals to essential services, including GOSO. SAVE has also been active in providing anti-violence services to GOSO's participants on Rikers Island.

GOSO has developed programming specifically for justice-involved adolescents. Before "Raise the Age" implementation we worked with - and enrolled - nearly every adolescent detained on Rikers Island. Many have come home and into our program, while others - about 70 - have moved to adolescent facilities, like Horizons in the Bronx. For those who have come home, we have a late afternoon program, so as not to interfere with high school. Our staff specializes in adolescent social work and provides age-appropriate educational programming and connection to employment opportunities.

Yet, much of our work remains behind bars. It is essential that the City continue to work with organizations like GOSO, which have provided a successful reentry programming model in Rikers and Horizon, in borough-based facilities which will open when Rikers is closed and in the community. Through continuing to engage, recruit, and provide robust services to those who are detained or incarcerated, reentry and violence prevention programs like GOSO and SAVE can and do have a vital part to play in ensuring that justice-involved young people have the support and resources they need to reenter their communities. Thank you.



JUSTICE FROM COURTROOM TO COMMUNITY

**Written Comments of Balfour Thompson, Youth Represent
New York City Council
Committee on Juvenile Justice
Committee on Youth Services
Oversight: Oversight - Reentry Programs for Formerly Incarcerated Youth
November 13, 2018**

Youth Represent is a holistic youth defense and advocacy organization. Our mission is to ensure that young people affected by the criminal justice system are afforded every opportunity to reclaim lives of dignity, self-fulfillment, and engagement in their communities. We provide criminal and civil reentry legal representation to young people age 24 and under who are involved in the criminal justice system or who are experiencing legal problems because of past involvement in the criminal justice system. We also engage in policy advocacy and train the next generation of leaders through our Youth Speakers Institute. Our interdisciplinary approach allows us to understand the full extent of our clients' legal and practical challenges so we can effectively represent them as they make the journey from courtroom to community. Thank you to Chair King, Chair Rose, and the Committees on Juvenile Justice and Youth Services for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Any involvement with the criminal justice system—from a summons to a sentence of incarceration—threatens a young person's stability and opportunity. For this reason, comprehensive, youth-centered legal services are a critical component of reentry services for court-involved and formerly incarcerated youth. And like other reentry services, appropriate reentry legal services must be available to youth at every stage in the process from arrest to aftercare.

Justice involvement disrupts education by triggering school suspension, missed days of school to attend court dates, or simply reduced achievement due to the stress of a criminal case. The heavy presence of police officers in public schools and racially disproportionate rates of suspensions have led to students being pushed out of school and into the criminal justice system.

Justice involvement can also impact housing in both the short and long term. When the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) brings termination of tenancy proceedings based on the arrest of a tenant, a common practice is to allow the family to stay in their apartment on condition of "permanently excluding" the person who was arrested. This is true even in the frequent cases when that person is only a teenager and has no other place to go.

Later, justice involvement undermines employment and earning opportunities. According to a report by Center for American Progress, "having any arrest during one's life decreases employment opportunities more than any other employment-related stigma, such as long-term unemployment, receipt of public assistance, or having a GED instead of a high school diploma."¹

¹ Vallas, Rebecca and Dietrich, Sharon, *One Strike And You're Out*. Center for American Progress (December 2014), p. 9. Available: <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/VallasCriminalRecordsReport.pdf>.

Criminal records can prevent young parents from being present in their own children's lives, because they make it so difficult to get a job and thus keep up on child support payments. As the Marshall Project reported, "Research shows that the two most important factors in a former prisoner's successful reentry into the community are employment and positive relationships with family. Both of these are hindered by the aggressive pursuit of child support arrears: garnishing 65% of a father's paycheck, so he is tempted to earn cash off the books; suspending his driver's license so he can't get to work; [and] sending him bills that are so far beyond his capacity to pay that he keeps his distance from his family."²

Together, this constellation of laws and practices erect barriers to successful reentry for even the most hardworking individuals leaving the criminal justice system, especially for youth who inherently have less work experience than older New Yorkers and who have had little time to build strong education or credit backgrounds, let alone professional networks.

Youth Represent has developed a proven model for helping young people overcome these barriers and positioning them for lasting success. We partner with over 20 community-based organizations citywide to meet youth where they are—in their neighborhoods, where they are receiving education, programs, and services. We also serve as "in-house counsel" for youth-serving organizations, providing "Know Your Rights" workshops and comprehensive legal services to their participants as well as training and technical assistance to staff. Every week, our lawyers travel to job training programs, schools, settlements houses, health centers, and jails. And we incorporate youth development principles like motivational interviewing, strengths-focus, and meaningful participation into the legal services we provide to ensure that we get real results for youth.

As a fellow at Youth Represent, I see day in and day out the harms of justice involvement for young people in New York City, especially youth of color. But I also see the incredible impact that high quality legal services can have.

"Melissa"³ is a student in college who was looking for a job to help pay for her living expenses. She received a job offer from a shelter to take a position as a resident aide. After offering her the position, the shelter asked to do a background check and subsequently denied Melissa the job. Melissa expressed that the denial made her feel like she was getting punished all over again. Youth Represent contacted the shelter and argued that the denial was a flagrant violation of the Fair Chance Act. After our advocacy, the shelter reversed their decision. But the story doesn't end there. Melissa had originally been offered a full time position; during the onboarding process she was informed that her position was on call. Youth Represent intervened again, and after further advocacy the shelter returned the offer back to a full-time position. Not only did our services help Melissa secure stable, full-time employment; they also gave her confidence in her ability to work and move forward in her life in spite of her criminal record.

² Hager, Eli, *For Men in Prison, Child Support Becomes a Crushing Debt*. The Marshall Project (October 2015). Available: <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/10/18/for-men-in-prison-child-support-becomes-a-crushing-debt>.

³ All names of Youth Represent clients have been changed.

“Johnathan” lived in a New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) apartment with his foster mother. After his foster mother passed away he was given legal possession of the unit. Soon after, Jonathan was arrested. NYCHA immediately moved to evict Jonathan on the grounds that he was an “undesirable” tenant. Jonathan, who was only 21 at the time, has no other family. Eviction would have meant entering the shelter system. We met Jonathan through a partner organization where he had obtained an internship at Goodwill and was working as a sales associate at Bloomingdales. We offered to represent him in the eviction proceeding. Through advocacy with NYCHA, we helped Jonathan avoid eviction and keep his apartment with two years of probation. Today, he continues to live in the apartment and is employed through one of Youth Represent’s partner organizations.

TESTIMONY

Oversight: Re-entry Programs for Formerly Incarcerated Youth

The Council of the City of New York

Committee on Juvenile Justice
Andy King, Chair

November 13, 2018
New York, New York

The Legal Aid Society
199 Water Street
New York, NY 10038

The Legal Aid Society thanks the Committee on Juvenile Justice and Chairperson King for inviting us to provide testimony about this important topic. The Legal Aid Society is the nation's largest and oldest provider of legal services to low income families and individuals. The Society's Juvenile Rights Practice provides comprehensive legal representation to children who appear before the Family Courts in all five boroughs, in abuse, neglect, juvenile delinquency, and other proceedings affecting children's rights and welfare. Youth prosecuted in Family Court on juvenile delinquency petitions can be held in non-secure and secure ACS or ACS contracted facilities and, if placed, can spend extended periods of time in ACS contracted non secure and limited secure placements under the aegis of Close to Home. The Criminal Practice's Adolescent Intervention and Diversion Project has a dedicated team of lawyers, social workers and investigators devoted to the unique needs of adolescents charged in adult court—some of whom spend lengthy periods of time in DYFJ secure detention pending trial.

Our perspective comes from our daily contacts with children and their families, and also from our frequent interactions with the courts, social service providers, community based organizations, State and City agencies, including ACS DYFJ.

Characteristics of Court-Involved Youth

Stabilizing the lives of adolescents charged with committing offenses is a crucial component to effective representation and to successful outcomes. All of our young clients are low-income, and many have experienced trauma and at least one significant social issue beyond poverty that causes instability in their lives. We strongly believe that with enhanced access to effective programs and services, including mental health services, many fewer young people would enter the court system.

The vast majority of individuals processed through the juvenile and adult courts come from five New York City communities: Harlem, Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brownsville, East New York and the South Bronx.¹ South Jamaica and the Rockaways also have high representation in this category. These neighborhoods also share significant problems of poverty, inadequate services to meet the high needs, low performing schools, higher than average prevalence of health and mental health issues and substandard housing stock.

The needs of detained and placed youth are far greater than those of youth in the general population. Children and teenagers in New York City jails are almost exclusively poor, African-American or Latinx, and live in under-resourced neighborhoods with low-performing schools and high rates of child abuse, neglect, substance abuse and mental illness. Indeed, “approximately 85 percent of young people assessed in secure detention intake reported at least one traumatic event, including sexual and physical abuse, and domestic or intimate partner violence. Furthermore, one in three young people screened positive for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and/or depression.”² Exposure to trauma can also lead to substance abuse, mental illness and other self-harming behaviors.

In our testimony, we highlight the aftercare services that we believe are worthy of the Council’s review and should remain funded in order to meet the needs of young people transitioning out of incarceratory settings.

¹ http://gothamist.com/2013/05/01/these_interactive_charts_show_you_w.php

² <http://www.vera.org/sites/default/files/transition-brief-juvenile-detention-reform.pdf> at 12.

Friends of Island Academy Youth Reentry Network³

In August, 2016 New York City invested in an historic initiative to provide neighborhood based pre- and post-release support for adolescents leaving Rikers custody. Friends of Island staff work with young people ages 16-21 and when the 16 and 17 year olds were moved from Rikers Island to the Horizon Juvenile Center, Friends of Island staff moved with them. Staff starts working with the youth for discharge upon entry to detention. Through a combination of work with the young person, outreach to his or her family, attorney and community support system, a plan for discharge is developed. Friends of Island staff help connect young people to community based services and to develop plans to support release.

Upon release, teams of Friends' Youth Advocates work with youth in their neighborhoods, connecting them to community and public resources, helping with scheduling, accompanying them to appointments, activities and court dates, facilitating adjustment to school, reconnections with family, local resources and community life.

The relationships between Friends of Island staff and our clients have provided necessary support where some of them have little upon release. And even where our clients have a supportive parent or guardian, additional support for the most vulnerable young people is always welcome, particularly for working parents or those managing competing needs of their other children. Many of our clients look to the support provided by Friends of Island staff as critical to their re-entry success. We encourage the Council to learn more about this program and ensure that funding continues for vital services.

³ <http://www.friendsny.org/home-grey-revised/youth-reentry-network/>

Mental Health Transitional Planning

Another service that transferred with the sixteen and seventeen year olds moving from Rikers Island to the Horizon Juvenile Center is mental health discharge planning. As the result of a class action lawsuit filed in the 1990s, Brad H., et al. v. The City of New York, et al., the City has been required to provide discharge planning services to individuals with mental health diagnoses held in the custody of the Department of Correction since 2003. Now, young people with identified mental health services in Horizon are entitled to comprehensive discharge planning.

As part of implementation planning for raise the age, Bellevue Hospital Center, which provides quality mental health services for our clients in Horizon, hired a social worker specifically to engage in discharge planning for young people with identified mental health diagnoses. While it is too early to assess these services, we are optimistic that the addition of discharge planning will provide much needed connections to ongoing mental health services in the community upon release. If successful, we hope that mental health discharge planning services would be expanded for all young people transitioning from custodial settings.

Educational Transition Services

All youth in detention and in Close to Home placements go to schools run by the NYC DOE. The fact that a youth is system-involved is a potential indicator that such youth is at high risk of dropping out of school and that his or her needs were not being adequately addressed in their prior educational setting. As a result, detention or placement of a particular youth presents as an opportunity for re-assessment of their educational needs and the appropriateness of their school placement.

One of the most effective services that have been put in place for students in detention and placement is the DOE transition counselor program. The model relies on guidance counselors who get to know the young people while in the detention or placement schools. Upon release, these same counselors work with the youth and their families to ensure re-enrollment in appropriate community schools or educational/vocational programs. The counselors provide support and encouragement as young people make what can be a difficult transition. The counselors also act as liaison between the detention schools, a setting with small classrooms and a high adult to student ratio and community schools which present much larger environments. Transition counselors share information about what methods have been successful with students and work with the community schools to set up appropriate supports for returning students. Transition counselors often meet with community schools with the student and family to develop a program and schedule that meets the students needs. Transition counselors provide ongoing support and encouragement to students which have seen them through to graduation or acquisition of their high school equivalency in the community. We encourage you to review some of the incredible success stories of these transition counselors and the youth they serve at <https://sites.google.com/d-79.com/d79ysn/recent-success-stories> .

We believe it is critically important that funding for the transition counselor program continues in order to support the smooth transition of our clients to community schools and educational and vocational programs upon their release.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about this important topic. We urge the Council to continue its oversight to ensure effective aftercare services and for youth transitioning back into the community.

Contact: Nancy Ginsburg, Director, Adolescent Intervention and
Diversion Project, Criminal Practice
Phone: 212-298-5190; nginsburg@legal-aid.org



Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

**Testimony to be delivered to the New York City Council
Committees on Juvenile Justice and Youth Services**

RE: Oversight - Reentry Programs for Formerly Incarcerated Youth

**Alyssa Perrone, Staff Attorney, School Justice Project
Advocates for Children of New York
November 13, 2018**

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Alyssa Perrone and I am an attorney with the School Justice Project at Advocates for Children of New York where I provide education advocacy and legal representation for youth involved, or at risk of being involved, with the juvenile or criminal justice system. My testimony today focuses on the educational reentry programming needs of New York City's formerly incarcerated youth.

School engagement is a crucial component of successful reentry programming. Yet, for too many youth, juvenile detention, placement, or incarceration is the place they become reengaged in school after a long period of disengagement. Sadly, disengagement from school is unsurprising. Research indicates that when behavioral and academic supports are not provided to youth in school and students face school suspension for their behavior, there is an increase in the likelihood that students will be held back a grade, not graduate, drop out of school, receive another suspension,



and become involved in the juvenile or criminal justice system, thereby feeding the school-to-prison-pipeline.

One of the benefits of Close to Home has been the increase in youth engagement in school while in juvenile detention and placement. Students in Passages Academy are earning more academic credits than ever before while in juvenile detention and placement, and those credits appear directly on the students' transcripts. This is particularly notable since the number of youth enrolled in school in New York City's juvenile justice system over the past five years has markedly decreased, leaving the remaining population in school in the juvenile justice system with even greater needs. For example, in the 2016-17 school year, 63.2% of students enrolled in school in Passages Academy had a disability, and more than 90% of students in Passages Academy read below grade level.

Despite the efforts of Department of Education Transition Specialists assisting youth reentering the community from Passages Academy and East River Academy (on Rikers Island), court-involved youth are often inadequately supported – academically and emotionally – within the under-resourced schools they return to or enter for the first time. Indeed, we have heard informally that the percentage of young people with a record of involvement with the juvenile justice system, either in middle school or in high school, who graduate with a high school diploma is in the single digits. When compared with 70% of the students in New York City's general



population who received their high school diplomas, this should be seen as nothing short of a crisis.

Advocates for Children is contacted frequently by programs working with court-involved youth who are struggling with the education aspect of reentry. We see firsthand that students are pushed out of school, drop out, and get rearrested. We also see too many students, particularly students of color, policed in school for typical adolescent behavior. NYPD data indicates that a substantial portion of what School Safety Agents and police officers do in schools falls outside of law enforcement. For example, as shown in Advocates for Children's attached data brief released last year, in the 2016-17 school year, 40.1% of NYPD interventions in school resulted in referrals to school staff for discipline and did not require law enforcement involvement, and 28.8% of police interventions in school involved students in emotional distress taken to a hospital for psychiatric evaluation. Policing in school is traumatic for youth, fails to address the root cause of behavior, and makes successful reentry a daunting challenge instead of a real opportunity.

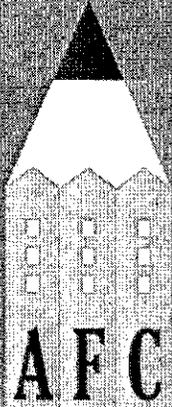
We also see firsthand that formerly incarcerated students often attend schools that do not provide the mental health support or trauma-informed care they need to be successful in school. Because many court-involved youth have experienced trauma, all school staff in Passages Academy are trained in trauma-informed care, all students in Passages Academy get trauma screening, and where necessary, they also get mental health services in school, such as psychologist visits and medication.



However, when youth reenter school in the community, trauma-informed and mental health services are often nonexistent. Indeed, according to a recent report by the New York City Comptroller, in the 2016-2017 school year as many as 45% of New York City schools did not have even one social worker on staff.

Given the importance of improving the education of these students, we respectfully call on the City Council Committees on Juvenile Justice, Youth Services, Education, and Mental Health to hold a joint hearing to examine the educational outcomes of students upon reentry from juvenile detention, placement, or incarceration and ways to improve the outcomes for these students, as well as those at risk of juvenile or criminal justice system involvement. Critical to that inquiry is an examination of how to decrease policing of students in school and expand necessary direct mental health services in school, academic supports, and other resources to help students get on track toward a high school diploma and the opportunities it offers. The hearing could also examine promising research showing the effectiveness of having credible messengers, adults with similar life experiences to court-involved youth, build trusting relationships with youth and help transform their lives.

We look forward to working with the City Council, city agencies, affected youth and families, and other stakeholders to ensure that youth involved, or at risk of being involved, with the juvenile or criminal justice system are fully supported upon reentry to the community and can succeed in school. Thank you.



Data Brief

Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

NOVEMBER 2017

Children in Crisis

POLICE RESPONSE TO STUDENTS IN EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

In 2016, pursuant to a 2015 amendment to a New York City law known as the Student Safety Act, the New York City Police Department (“NYPD”) began collecting and publishing quarterly data reports detailing more of its activities in New York City public schools. Along with information on arrests, summonses, and other police responses to students in school, the reporting includes data on so-called “child in crisis” interventions. *Child in Crisis Interventions, as defined by the NYPD, are incidents where a “student ... is displaying signs of emotional distress [and] must be removed to the hospital for psychological evaluation.”* Broadly speaking, these are instances where police become involved when a child is in an apparent state of mental health crisis. The data illuminates a significant, but oft-overlooked, function of police in schools as responders to incidents of mental health emergency.

This paper provides an overview of the “child in crisis” data reported from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, examples of Advocates for Children of New York (“AFC”) cases

- » Between July 2016 and June 2017, the NYPD intervened in 2,702 incidents in NYC public schools involving students in emotional distress sent to the hospital for psychological evaluation (called “Child in Crisis Interventions”); about half (48%) were children ages 4-12.
- » 95% of these interventions involved students of color; about half (49.6%) were Black students, although they comprised only 26.5% of students enrolled.
- » In 330—or 12.2%—of these interventions, the NYPD used handcuffs¹ on these students, including children as young as 5 years old.
- » Black students involved in child in crisis interventions were handcuffed 15.2% of the time, substantially more often than other racial/ethnic groups; Black students accounted for 61.8% of students handcuffed during this type of intervention.
- » Children of color comprised 100% of the 84 students ages 12 and under handcuffed by the NYPD during this type of intervention.

KEY FINDINGS

¹The term “handcuffs” used in this paper refers to either metal or Velcro handcuffs. The NYPD reports data on handcuffing students using the terms “mechanical restraints” or “Velcro restraints.”

illustrating how the current practices can fail to meet students' needs, and recommendations for reform, including AFC's call for the City to respond to students in emotional distress with clinically trained mental health professionals rather than law enforcement. These recommendations are aimed at addressing students' emotional needs and the striking racial disparities in how students in emotional distress are treated in school.

FINDINGS

Responding to children in crisis represents a significant portion of the school interventions carried out by School Safety Agents and police officers. From July 2016 to June 2017—the period examined in this document—the NYPD reported 9,385 total interventions in schools involving individuals ages 21 and under. Of those, 2,702 (28.8%) were child in crisis interventions in which the student in emotional distress was taken to a hospital for psychological evaluation.

Notably, this figure under-represents the scope of NYPD contact with students in emotional distress. For example, this category does not include students in emotional crisis who were arrested, issued a summons, or issued a juvenile report instead of being sent to the hospital. Nor does it include instances where the NYPD responded to students in emotional distress who were not removed from school to the hospital or a police precinct (categorized as “Mitigated” by the NYPD).

Who are the “Children in Crisis”?

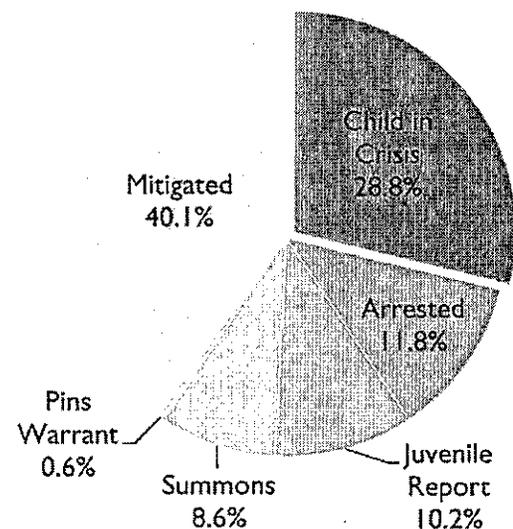
Between July 2016 and June 2017, the NYPD reported 2,702 “child in crisis” interventions involving students ages 21 or younger. The bullets below break down these interventions by age, race/ethnicity, and gender.

BY AGE:

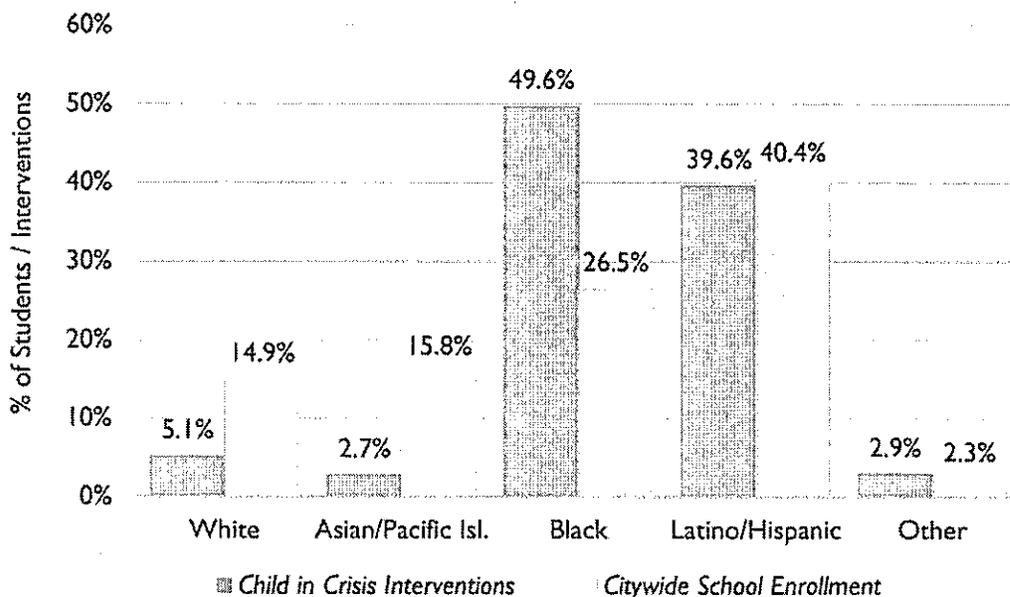
- » 1,295 of the 2,702 child in crisis interventions (about 48%) involved children ages 12 and younger, with some involving students as young as 4 years old.
- » 1,271 of the 2,702 child in crisis interventions (about 47%) involved students in the middle school/early high school years between the ages 12 and 16.

FIGURE 11

Police interventions in schools by intervention type, July 2016–June 2017



2016–17 Child in crisis interventions, representation by race/ethnicity



BY RACE/ETHNICITY:

- » 2,563 of the 2,702 child in crisis interventions (94.9%) involved students of color.²
- » Although Black students made up only about 26.5% of students in 2016-17, about half (49.6%) of child in crisis interventions involved Black students. White children comprised only 5.1% of students involved in child in crisis interventions and Asian/Pacific Islander children only 2.7%, both far lower than their proportions of the total student population (14.9% and 15.8%, respectively). Latino/a students were about proportionally represented: 39.6% child in crisis interventions vs. 40.4% of the student population.
- » NYPD data includes a category for “Arabic” as a race/ethnic group, reporting 28 child in crisis interventions involving students so identified.

BY GENDER:

- » 1,540 of the 2,702 child in crisis interventions (57%) involved boys, and 1,162 out of 2,702 interventions (43%) involved girls. This imbalance is substantially less lopsided in this direction than most other types of NYPD interventions.³
- » About 94.5% of girls involved in child in crisis interventions are students of color, about equivalent to the percentage of boys involved in child in crisis interventions who are students of color (95.1%).

² While all categories of police intervention in schools involved a disproportionate number of students of color compared to the overall student population, none was as stark as child in crisis interventions.

³ Compare, for example, to arrests: 74% vs. 26%. “PINS Warrant” is the only category of police intervention with more female students.

WHEN A CHILD IN CRISIS IS NOT A “CHILD IN CRISIS”

The “child in crisis” designation is applied, in large part, based on how officers respond to a child’s actions when they get involved. These numbers do not reflect students in crisis who are arrested and brought to a precinct, instead of a hospital. For example, last school year, AFC represented a 15-year-old Latina student who became agitated and upset during lunch when another student, who had been bullying her for three months, threw food at her head. Even though school staff knew she had significant mental health challenges, a school administrator called law enforcement instead of deploying a trained mental health professional with the skills necessary to de-escalate the situation and help her calm down during the emotional crisis. School Safety Agents and NYPD precinct officers violently restrained the student with handcuffs. Then an NYPD officer shot the handcuffed student with a Taser gun. The student was subsequently diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (“PTSD”) and transferred out of the school. Because the police arrested her instead of attempting to provide mental health treatment, this intervention, and any similar interventions throughout NYC schools, are not captured under the “child in crisis” category.

Recognizing that students with disabilities are more likely than their general education counterparts to be the subject of school disciplinary action, such as suspensions,⁴ the Student Safety Act specifically provides that police interventions should be disaggregated by disability status “when practicable.”⁵ However, the City does not currently make this information available for a number of reasons. For example, the NYPD does not seek information relevant to disability status from the DOE; nor does it as a policy ask students to disclose their status. Likewise, while the law requires school-level reporting, the NYPD currently reports interventions by building, rather than by school. Since buildings can contain multiple schools, this coding limits the City’s ability to match data to specific schools. The City should explore inter-agency options that enable reporting on NYPD interventions by disability status and by school, while strictly preserving student confidentiality.

Use of Handcuffs

Between July 2016 and June 2017, the NYPD reported using handcuffs on children in crisis as follows:⁶

» Overall, 330 of the 2,702 child in crisis interventions involved the use of handcuffs (12.2%).

⁴ Dan Losen et al., “Are We Closing the School Discipline Gap?” (The Center for Civil Rights Remedies, February 2015), https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/resources/projects/center-for-civil-rights-remedies/school-to-prison-folder/federal-reports/are-we-closing-the-school-discipline-gap/AreWeClosingTheSchoolDisciplineGap_FINAL221.pdf; Katherine Reynolds Lewis, “Why Schools Over-Discipline Children With Disabilities,” *The Atlantic*, July 24, 2015, <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/07/school-discipline-children-disabilities/399563/>.

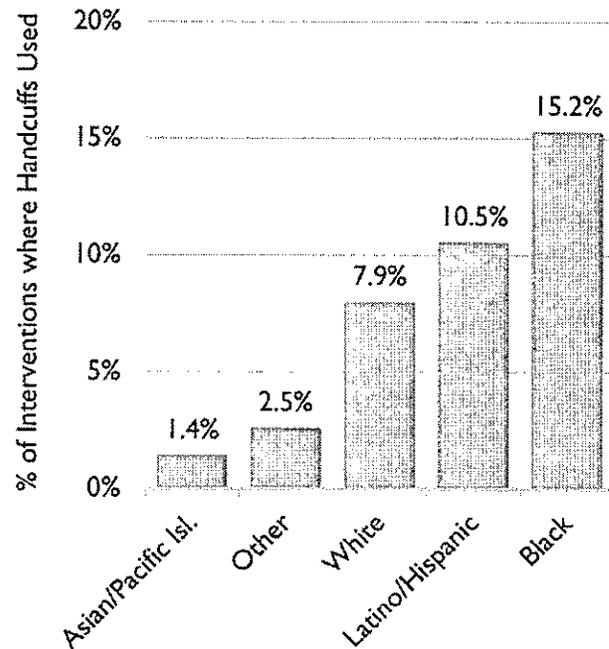
⁵ Vanessa Gibson and Corey Johnson, “A Local Law to Amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York, in Relation to Reports on School Discipline and Police Department Activity in Schools,” Pub. L. No. Int 0730-2015A (2015), <http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2253272&GUID=9BACC627-DB3A-455C-861E-9CE4C35AFAAC&Options=Advanced&Search>.

⁶ The Student Safety Act defines restraints as “any device or material attached or adjacent to the body that restricts freedom of movement or normal access to any portion of the body and that the individual cannot easily remove, including handcuffs and nylon/Velcro restraining devices.” “Student Safety Act,” Pub. L. No. 93, 8–1100 N.Y.C. Administrative Code (2015).

- » The percentage of students handcuffed during child in crisis interventions was highest in the middle and high school years—ranging from 15% to 20%, depending on age.
- » 84 of the 330 child in crisis interventions involving the use of handcuffs were students aged 12 or younger (about 25.5%). This included children as young as 5 and 6 years old.
- » 100% of the 84 children ages 12 and under who were handcuffed were children of color. Black students accounted for about 65.5% of children 12 and younger who were handcuffed.
- » 204 of the 1,341 Black students involved in child in crisis interventions were handcuffed (about 15.2%), the highest rate of any race/ethnicity group. 112 of the 957 Latino/a students involved in child in crisis interventions were handcuffed (about 10.5%). Taken together, Black and Latino youth comprised 95.8% of all students handcuffed during child in crisis interventions.
- » 11 of the 139 White children (7.9%) and one of the 74 Asian/Pacific Islander children (1.4%) were handcuffed during child in crisis interventions.

While there is no federal law prohibiting the use of handcuffs or other restraints on students in school, New York State law explicitly prohibits schools' use of restraints for the purpose of preventing or discouraging specific behavior,⁷ restricting their use to emergency situations.⁸ Emergency situations, however, is broadly defined, including instances where there is no physical threat of harm to people, but rather potential harm to school property or when a student's behavior is interfering with the "orderly exercise" of the school.⁹ These exceptions to the ban on restraints also apply in New York City.¹⁰ Moreover, as members of law enforcement, rather than school staff, School Safety Agents and other members of the NYPD take the position that they are not subject to these restrictions.¹¹

FIGURE 3
Child in crisis interventions, July 2016–June 2017,
use of handcuffs by race



⁷ "Prohibition of Corporal Punishment and Aversive Interventions," 8 NYCRR § 19.5.

⁸ Prohibition of corporal punishment and aversive interventions; "Program Standards for Behavioral Interventions," 8 NYCRR § 200.22(d).

⁹ Prohibition of corporal punishment and aversive interventions.

¹⁰ "Pupil Discipline and Behavior - Corporal Punishment," New York City Dep't of Educ. Chancellor's Regulations § A-420 (2014), <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/EDE42781-64EC-4875-A277-88038EB08277/0/A420.pdf>.

¹¹ "NYPD Patrol Guide, Procedure No. 221-13: Mentally Ill or Emotionally Disturbed Persons," June 1, 2016, https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/ccrb/downloads/pdf/investigations_pdf/pg221-13-mentally-ill-emotionally-disturbed-persons.pdf.

WHEN SCHOOL STAFF DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO

Sometimes school staff are unaware of the school's crisis intervention plan or not adequately trained to de-escalate behavioral crises, so they contact the NYPD to respond. AFC represented an 8-year-old Latino student with a disability who was sitting at the lunchroom table with other students playfully poking each other with plastic sporks (combination of a spoon and a fork). The other students would not let him play so he used a spork to poke at one of them anyway. He became very agitated when school staff singled him out for poking another student and grabbed the spork out of his hand. Instead of contacting school staff trained in de-escalation techniques, staff contacted School Safety Agents, who further escalated the situation. NYPD officers were called in and handcuffed the boy for a couple of hours. They used so much force against the child that they ripped a hole in his pants. Even after the child's parents arrived and the little boy was clearly calm, the NYPD officers refused to take the handcuffs off the child to allow his parents to take him home, instead insisting that Emergency Medical Services transport the child to the hospital in handcuffs. At the hospital, doctors determined that the child did not pose a risk of harm to himself or others and released him shortly after administering a psychiatric examination.

Depending on the circumstances, handcuffing a student in emotional distress may violate the student's civil rights. For example, it could violate the student's constitutional right to be free from unreasonable seizure and excessive force; the right to a free appropriate public education, including positive behavioral supports and interventions that keep students with disabilities in the classroom learning pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);¹² and the right to be free from disability-based discrimination and to receive accommodations pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)¹³ and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.^{14,15}

Regardless of its legality, however, this reliance on police to address students in emotional crisis in schools has far-reaching consequences for students, particularly students with disabilities and students of color who, according to national data and available local data, are often disproportionately policed in school.¹⁶ The use of restraints on these children not only has a traumatic impact on the child, but also can exacerbate the behavior that led to the crisis, increasing the likelihood of repeated incidents, or even causing new problematic behaviors from

¹² When a student with a disability exhibits behavior that impedes the student's learning or that of others, the IDEA requires the IEP Team "to consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address the student's behavior." "Evaluations, Eligibility Determinations, Individualized Education Programs, and Educational Placements." Individuals with Disabilities Education Act," 20 U.S.C. § 1400.

¹³ "Prohibition Against Discrimination and Other Generally Applicable Provisions," 42 U.S.C. § 12132.

¹⁴ "Nondiscrimination under Federal Grants and Programs," 29 U.S.C. § 794.

¹⁵ Nancy Lee Jones and Jody Feder, "The Use of Seclusion and Restraint in Public Schools: The Legal Issues" (Congressional Research Service, April 14, 2009), http://www.spannj.org/information/CRS_Report_on_Legal_Issues_in_Seclusion_&_Restraints.pdf.

¹⁶ Jason Nance, "Students, Police, and the School-To-Prison Pipeline," *Wash. L. Rev.* 93, no. 919 (2016); "Helping Justice Involved Individuals with Substance Use & Mental Health Disorders: Understanding How Laws, Regulations & Policies Affect Their Opportunities" (Legal Action Center, July 19, 2016), <http://lac.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Synthesis-of-Federal-New-York-Barriers.pdf>.

the trauma of being restrained.¹⁷ Psychological injury from restraints may range from short-term, such as fear of going to school, to long-term, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.¹⁸ Physical injuries may range from bruising to bone fractures, and even death.¹⁹ Handcuffing students can also have a traumatizing effect on classmates who observe the incident and may negatively affect school climate.²⁰

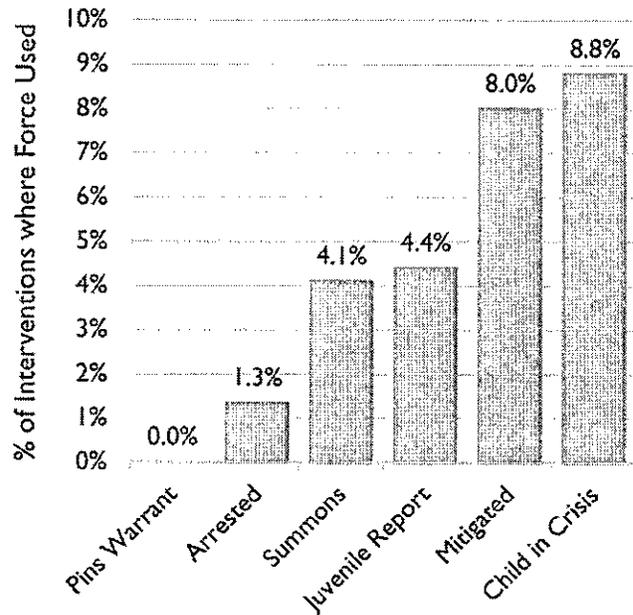
Use of Force

While the NYPD reported use of force for some child in crisis interventions, the NYPD did not tabulate use of force and demographic characteristics (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, age) in the same data sets, so it is not possible to analyze possible relationships between these variables.²¹ The NYPD reported use of force as follows:

- » Officers used force during 32 of the 2,702 child in crisis interventions during this period (1.2%). This rate was about the same as for arrests (also 1.2%), and higher than for summonses (0.6%), juvenile reports (0.7%), and mitigations (0.2%).

FIGURE 4

Use of force during interventions in which student was handcuffed, June 2016–July 2017



¹⁷ U.S. Dep't of Educ., Office for Civil Rights, Assistant Secretary of Educ., "Dear Colleague Letter: Restraint and Seclusion of Students with Disabilities," December 28, 2016, <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201612-504-restraint-seclusion-ps.pdf>.

¹⁸ National Disability Rights Network, "School Is Not Supposed to Hurt" (National Disability Rights Network, March 2012), http://www.ndrn.org/images/Documents/Resources/Publications/Reports/School_is_Not_Supposed_to_Hurt_3_v7.pdf. U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Seclusions and Restraints: Selected Cases of Death and Abuse at Public and Private Schools and Treatment Centers," no. GAO-09-719T (May 19, 2009), <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-09-719T>; Statewide Youth Expert Witnesses, "Youth Position on Seclusion and Restraint," 2009, <http://stophurtingkids.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Youth-Position-Statement-on-Restraint-and-Seclusion.pdf>; "CCBD's Position Summary on the Use of Physical Restraint Procedures in School Settings," *Behavioral Disorders* 34, no. 4 (2009): 223–34.

¹⁹ "CCBD's Position Summary on the Use of Physical Restraint Procedures in School Settings"; National Disability Rights Network, "School Is Not Supposed to Hurt"; Office, "Seclusions and Restraints."

²⁰ *Id.* See also U.S. Dep't of Educ. Secretary of Educ., "Dear Colleague Letter on School Resource Officers ('SROs') in Schools," September 8, 2016, <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/files/ed-letter-on-sros-in-schools-sept-8-2016.pdf>; U.S. Dep't of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, "Dear Colleague Letter on School Resource Officers ('SROs')," September 8, 2016, <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/cops-sro-letter.pdf>.

²¹ In 2016, the NYPD revised its guidelines related to use of force, including more detailed descriptions of different levels of force, but its public materials still do not include a basic description of "use of force." While the Patrol Guide does not define examples of types of "use of force," this term is generally understood to mean any application of physical or chemical control over someone, such as use of control holds or pepper spray. "NYPD Patrol Guide, Procedure No. 221-01: Force Guidelines," June 1, 2016, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/ccrb/downloads/pdf/pg221-01-force-guidelines.pdf>.

- » Almost all—29 out of 32—child in crisis interventions involving use of force also involved use of handcuffs. These 29 made up 8.8% of the 330 child in crisis interventions where the child was handcuffed.²²

It is not surprising that child in crisis interventions involving use of force would be more likely to involve use of handcuffs. However, the data suggests that, for children in crisis who were handcuffed, officers used force more frequently than for all other types of interventions that involved handcuffs (e.g., arrests, summonses, etc.). Given the pattern of racial disproportionality in other areas (see “Use of Restraints” above) and the NYPD’s collection of demographic data, the Police Department should ensure that all data reporting on police actions in schools, including use of force, can be disaggregated by race/ethnicity.

CONCLUSION

The analysis above raises serious concerns about NYPD interventions to address students with emotional distress, in particular considering the racial disparity, use of restraints, and apparent emotional and physical harm. Indeed, the use of handcuffs on children as young as five suggests that taking physical control of these situations, using prevailing law enforcement methods, may at times take precedence over concerns for the psychological welfare of the children involved. In contrast to a policing approach, mental health professionals with appropriate training and skills are best positioned to assess and address the needs of students in emotional distress.

While not limited to responding to children in emotional crisis, best practices exist for responding to school behavioral incidents to prevent behavioral crises and respond effectively when they occur.²³ There are numerous school-wide and district-wide evidence-based approaches to address student behaviors and improve school climate that can be used in combination with each other,²⁴ as well as with individualized positive behavioral supports and interventions for students with disabilities required under federal and state law.²⁵ These approaches emphasize preventing behavioral incidents from occurring and de-escalating

²² The Student Safety Act defines the term “force” to include the use of (i) a firearm; (ii) physical force; (iii) a chemical agent; (iv) a baton; (v) mechanical restraints, except when used in the course of making an arrest; or (vi) a conducted energy device. However, the data suggests that the NYPD does not categorically consider use of handcuffs during child in crisis interventions as use of force.

²³ In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. DOE) provided guidance to states and outlined best practices intended to limit the use of restraints. “Restraint and Seclusion: Resource Document” (U.S. Department of Education, May 2012), <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/seclusion/restraints-and-seclusion-resources.pdf>.

²⁴ Danya Contractor and Cheryl Staats, “Interventions to Address Racialized Discipline Disparities and School ‘Push Out,’” Policy Brief (Columbus, OH: Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, May 2014), <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/ki-interventions.pdf>.

²⁵ The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and New York State Education law and implementing regulations contain specific provisions to ensure that students with disabilities are not removed from their classrooms because of their disabilities, but instead receive necessary behavioral supports. In particular, the laws’ requirements for Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans to analyze and address the functions and causes of behavior, and for Manifestation Determination Reviews to prevent removals based on disability, provide safeguards against exclusion.

behavioral incidents when they do occur. Approaches used should take into account students' unique needs and consist of positive, preventative, restorative, and trauma-informed alternatives to exclusionary, punitive discipline, and should be implemented by trained school and mental health professionals.²⁶ Research demonstrates that student behavior and academic achievement tend to improve when students and staff feel safe, connected, fairly treated, and valued.²⁷

Notably, a recent New York City regulation directs schools to establish de-escalation plans and provide training to staff to manage students in emotional crisis without involving law enforcement.²⁸ Chancellor's Regulation A-411 leaves calling 911 as a last resort for schools, limited to situations when the student's behavior poses an imminent and substantial risk of serious injury to the student or others and the situation cannot be addressed by school staff and support services.²⁹ The regulation requires each school to establish a crisis intervention plan that identifies school staff trained to de-escalate students in behavioral crisis. School Safety Agents, police officers, and other members of the NYPD are not members of the de-escalation teams implementing these crisis intervention plans. Despite the regulation, AFC and other education advocates have observed issues with creation and implementation of plans, including key information missing, such as protocols to de-escalate behavioral crises, and insufficiently trained staff.

While not exhaustive, we recommend that New York City undertake the following measures to ensure that students in emotional distress receive the appropriate care they need to succeed in school:

Fund and provide clinically trained mental health professionals to address students in emotional crisis.

New York City should realign its resources to reflect the critical demand for clinically trained and experienced mental health professionals to support students in school.³⁰ As an initial

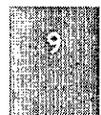
²⁶ "Restraint and Seclusion: Resource Document"; U.S. Dep't of Educ. Office of Special Education Programs Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, "Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Implementation Blueprint: Part I—Foundations and Supporting Information," 2015, <https://www.pbis.org/blueprint/implementation-blueprint>; The Residential Child Care Project, "Therapeutic Crisis Intervention System for Schools" (Cornell University, 2012), http://rccp.cornell.edu/assets/TCIS_SYSTEM_BULLETIN.pdf; "Our Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) Approach | ThinkKids – Collaborative Problem Solving," accessed October 25, 2017, <http://www.thinkkids.org/learn/our-collaborative-problem-solving-approach/>; Emily Morgan et al., "The School Discipline Consensus Report: Strategies from the Field to Keep Students Engaged in School and out of the Juvenile Justice System" (New York, NY: The Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2014), https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/The_School_Discipline_Consensus_Report.pdf.

²⁷ Morgan et al., "The School Discipline Consensus Report: Strategies from the Field to Keep Students Engaged in School and out of the Juvenile Justice System."

²⁸ "Behavioral Crisis De-Escalation/Intervention and Contacting 911," New York City Dep't of Educ. Chancellor's Regulation § A-411 (2015), <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/5DA279FE-5664-4B3D-86CB-659EFFBA3D8D/0/A411Final52.115.pdf>. The New York City Department of Education instituted Chancellor's Regulations A-411 as part of the settlement in T.H. et al. v. Fariña, et al. (13 Civ. 8777) (Dec. 15, 2014), a federal lawsuit filed by Legal Services of New York City filed on behalf of children and their guardians alleging that students were improperly removed by Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to psychiatric emergency rooms for behavior that should have been handled by their schools.

²⁹ Behavioral Crisis De-Escalation/Intervention and Contacting 911.

³⁰ Indeed, a recent report on school-based mental health care issued by the Manhattan Borough President indicates that the current patchwork of services in schools is insufficient to meet the mental health needs of students in New York City. Gale



important step towards increasing mental health supports for all high need schools, the City should implement the recommendation of the Mayor's Leadership Team on School Climate and Discipline to fund a pilot program that would create a network of mental health services to supplement existing hospital and social service supports for students and their families and school staff.³¹ This pilot program would serve 20 schools in the South Bronx and Central Brooklyn that have high rates of emergency medical service calls, arrests, summonses, and suspensions. Further recommendations include school partnerships with hospital-based mental health clinics and call-in centers to assist schools with students in crisis, as well as mobile crisis response teams, school-based behavioral health consultants, whole-school training in the evidence-based model of Collaborative Problem Solving, and program evaluation.

Provide school staff with appropriate crisis de-escalation training and resources and monitor implementation.

In order for schools to appropriately respond to students in emotional distress, school staff must receive appropriate de-escalation training and have effective crisis de-escalation plans in place. All staff should know the components of the school's crisis de-escalation plan, including: which school staff are trained in trauma-informed de-escalation techniques and should be contacted to de-escalate students in emotional distress, what is available in terms of in-school and community mental health resources, and when 911 should be contacted for emergency medical services. It is essential that the City monitor implementation of training and crisis de-escalation plans and hold people in the DOE and NYPD accountable to the plans.

Conduct individual behavioral assessments and provide individualized supports and interventions.

All children whose behavior impedes their learning or the learning of others should receive appropriate educational assessment, including Functional Behavioral Assessments, to understand individualized behavioral needs, followed by Behavior Intervention Plans to identify and implement necessary support. These plans should include instruction in appropriate behavior and strategies to regulate emotions. When necessary, the plans should also include training for relevant school staff on positive behavior support and de-escalation strategies provided by a behavior specialist.

Fund the expansion of school-wide and district-wide evidence-based approaches to address student behaviors and improve school climate.

Research shows that there are positive, evidence-based alternatives to policing students in school—including restorative practices, Collaborative Problem Solving, and trauma-informed

A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President, "Who's Caring: The State of School-Based Mental Health Care in NYC Schools," August 2017, <http://manhattanbp.nyc.gov/downloads/pdf/School%20Mental%20Health%20Report%20-%202017%20-%20Final.pdf>.

³¹ The Mayor's Leadership Team on School Climate and Discipline, "Maintaining the Momentum: A Plan for Safety and Fairness In Schools, Phase Two Recommendations," July 2016, http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/sclt/downloads/pdf/SCLT_Report_7-21-16.pdf.

approaches—that support schools in building the skills and capacities of students and adults to constructively resolve conflict and de-escalate behavior. These approaches can be used in combination with each other, as well as with individualized positive behavioral supports and interventions for students with disabilities. It is critical that the approaches be implemented with fidelity by trained school and mental health professionals, along with regular data tracking, evaluation, and monitoring of effectiveness. The City should invest in a long-term plan with necessary funding to develop and expand such positive, inclusive, and supportive approaches.

Establish and maintain inter-agency information sharing.

The NYPD and DOE should enter an information-sharing agreement that comports with privacy laws in order for the NYPD to publically report data disaggregated by whether the student is receiving special education services. Reporting this disaggregated data will bring the NYPD into compliance with the Student Safety Act. Moreover, it will allow government agencies and the public to come together to make changes where they are desperately needed. Additionally, aligning reporting systems could improve school-level reporting, increasing officials' ability to target remedial measures.³²

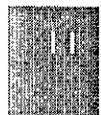
Hold a City Council hearing on policing and mental health in schools.

The City Council should hold a hearing on the use and impact of police interventions with students in emotional distress, including the impact, effectiveness, and outcomes of school-based mental health services such as those provided through ThriveNYC.

Revise the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the NYPD and the DOE.

New York City should revise policies and practices, including the MOU between the City, NYPD, and DOE, to clarify and significantly limit the role of law enforcement when students are in emotional crisis.

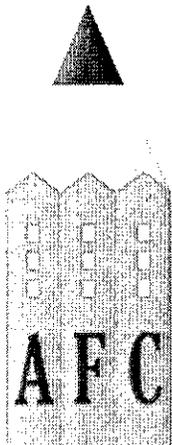
³² Aligning NYPD and DOE reporting systems to disaggregate data on students handcuffed in school would also help bring New York City into compliance with the U.S. Department of Education's mandate that all school districts report the number of times restraints are used on students with and without disabilities. Annie Waldman, "Los Angeles and New York Pin Down School Kids and Then . . .," ProPublica, December 2, 2014, <https://www.propublica.org/article/los-angeles-and-new-york-pin-down-school-kids-and-then-say-it-never-happene>.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Rohini Singh, Sam Streed, and Dawn Yuster as the primary authors of this report. We also thank Sarah Part, AFC Communications and Policy Associate, for her contributions to the paper. We also acknowledge and thank Nelson Mar, Legal Services NYC, and Nancy Ginsburg, The Legal Aid Society, for reviewing this brief and offering valuable feedback. Finally, we are grateful to the Morton K. and Jane Blaustein Foundation, whose generous support helped make this report possible.

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ABOUT ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN

For more than 45 years, Advocates for Children of New York has worked to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds who are at greatest risk for failure or discrimination in school because of their poverty, disability, race, ethnicity, immigrant or English Language Learner status, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, or involvement in the foster care or juvenile justice systems. AFC uses four integrated strategies: free advice and legal representation for families of students; free trainings and workshops for parents, communities, and educators and other professionals, to equip them to advocate on behalf of students; policy advocacy to effect change in the education system and improve education outcomes; and impact litigation to protect the right to quality education and compel needed reform.

151 West 30th Street, 5th Floor | New York, NY 10001 | (212) 947-9779

www.advocatesforchildren.org



Testimony of

Gisele Castro
Executive Director

Oversight – Reentry Program for Formerly Incarcerated Youth

Before the
New York City Council
Committee on Juvenile Justice

November 13, 2018

Testimony before the Committee on Juvenile Justice, New York City Council

Chair Andy King, Chair Deborah Rose, and Council Members, good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak to the Juvenile Justice Committee regarding Reentry Programs for Formerly Incarcerated Youth, particularly the importance of offering safe and meaningful opportunities for youth. My name is Gisele Castro. I am the Executive Director of Exalt Youth (*exalt*), a non-profit organization in New York that engages court-involved youth ages 15-19 on a voluntary basis, rather than compliance, by offering life changing opportunities through our proprietary curriculum, individualized planning, and paid internship placements.

I want to begin by thanking Chair Andy King and Chair Deborah Rose for their advocacy on behalf of our young people and for hosting this hearing today. I would also like to thank the Division of Youth and Family Justice (DYFJ) within New York City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS), New York City's Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), and partnering agencies for investing in comprehensive programming and ensuring that youth who are incarcerated are offered meaningful opportunities that positively impact their life trajectories.

Ensuring the Safety of our Youth and our Communities

History

Designed to address three key factors: criminal justice avoidance, educational attainment and employability, *exalt* was founded in 2006, and it is modeled on an award winning, best-practice designated program developed in 1997 at CASES, New York's oldest alternative-to-incarceration agency. Originally incubated at the Blue Ridge Foundation, *exalt* has made significant strides to fulfill our mission to elevate expectations for New York City's court-involved youth. Over the next 3 years, we intend to scale to triple the number of youth we serve.

As the Executive Director, I have over 20 years of experience working for organizations that serve youth returning home from detention facilities, prison, or facing incarceration. Today, *exalt's* Deputy Director, Brian Lewis accompanies me, with 5 years of experience at *exalt*, he is leading all programming at the organization.

In the last fiscal year, over 65% of youth served by *exalt* faced serious, potentially life-altering charges, including Felonies and A Misdemeanors. Their freedom and lives in limbo, they were suspended at the intersection of justice-involvement and education. Their participation in *exalt* assisted them to overcome significant barriers to their success. Our data, as well as national trends demonstrate that our legal and education systems are deeply intertwined, as less than a quarter of young people who come through our doors are either in school or on track to graduate high school. After participating in our model, less than 5% of our young people are reconvicted

of a crime and more than 95% remain enrolled in high school and on track to graduate. Moreover, our model has resonated over the last decade within the courts, where over 70% of youth with eligible cases are given sentence reductions. Our outcomes show that when young people are given the individual agency to participate in their future and choose their path toward success, our schools and communities become safer. Their success in these systems leads to better outcomes for all of us over the long-term. For young people who are detained, a safe environment throughout the detention experience as well as appropriate methods of transferring individuals out of the system, should also remain a top priority for the Committee.

Addressing Change through Intersectional Interventions

At *exalt*, our work is intersectional – we have over 400 referral partners, including schools, legal service organizations, Judges, and court officers. We have over 90 active internship partners and each month we host workshops to connect our youth with professionals in the public, private, and creative sectors. As a result, our stakeholders are as diverse as the needs of our young people. This approach has garnered much success and city agencies and divisions working on important transitions through this legislation should open more opportunities as well as investments for collaborative responses and engagement strategies. Every young person is different and when we approach complex challenges with an intersectional agenda and investments, we will continue observing strong results for our youth. Together, and through more investments in supportive programs like *exalt*, we can re-engage court-involved youth in their education and long-term future to ensure lasting change.

I want to once again thank Chair Andy King and Chair Deborah Rose and the committee for holding this hearing, and I look forward to continuing to work with our colleagues, the City Council, and city agencies, and the citizens of this great city to ensure that youth impacted by incarceration have the access to comprehensive services to prevent further system-involvement and to keep our communities safe and elevate our young people toward lifelong success.

Respectfully submitted,



Gisele Castro
Executive Director

Police Athletic League, NYC

City Council Testimony

November 13, 2018

The Police Athletic League recently discontinued the RISE program, which offered services to teenagers (16-19) that were involved in the criminal court system. However, based on our experience serving this population of youth, we are submitting this testimony for consideration. The RISE program had a structured, mandated track and a voluntary service track for teenagers. Services included individual counseling, life skills workshops, job-readiness training & placement, identification replacements, and educational & housing referrals. The goal of the RISE program was to ensure that participants secured employment and/or returned to school, thus reducing the likelihood of recidivism.

Program Components

Pre-Release

RISE staff conducted outreach on Rikers Island on a weekly basis through individual counseling and group workshops. Staff formed trusting relationships with youth prior to their release to increase the likelihood that youth continued to work with RISE staff following their release. In cases where housing was an issue, RISE staff helped to make sure proper referrals were secured prior to youth's release.

Post-Release

Teenagers were referred directly from the NYC Department of Probation to participate in a highly structured program as terms of their probation. RISE counselors worked closely with participants to set goals. Weekly individual meetings were held to monitor progress and discuss obstacles youth may be facing in achieving their goals. Weekly group workshops were offered in the areas of anger management, peer pressure, drug & alcohol awareness, gang prevention, job retention, budgeting and parenting skills. RISE staff provided progress reports to probation officers detailing youths' participation in the program. Participants were enrolled for one year prior to placement in after-care supervision.

Although most youth were mandated to RISE by the Department of Probation, teenagers released from Rikers Island that were not under the supervision of probation, were eligible for services as well.

After-Care

After achieving their goals and graduating from the program, youth could continue to reach out for services. Graduates of the program were also monitored for at least a year to document their progress.

Conclusion

The Police Athletic League together with the NYPD and the law enforcement community supports and inspires New York City youth to reach their full potential as productive members of society. While the RISE program was a worthy endeavor, the imbalance between the contract requirements and the funding provided to support the program made its continuation untenable. We discontinued the program, but are hopeful that new opportunities to serve this population arise that are programmatically innovative and the fiscally sound.

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Name: Geoffrey M. Dalia

Address: 75 E. 116th St NY NY 10029

I represent: GETTING OUT AND SIMPLING OUT

Address: _____

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Name: Nancy Ginsburg

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I represent: Legal Aid Society

Address: 49 Thomas St

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Name: Daphne Montanez

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I represent: Assistant Commissioner

Address: Workforce Connect

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Name: Tracy Calderon

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I represent: Assistant Commissioner

Address: COMPASS

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Name: Sara Himmeter, Associate Commissioner

Address: 150 William St, NY, NY

I represent: NYC Administration for Children's Services

Address: _____

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Name: Charles Barrios, Associate Commissioner

Address: 150 William Street, NY, NY

I represent: NYC Administration for Children's Services

Address: _____

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Name: Felipe Franco, Deputy Commissioner

Address: 150 William Street, NY, NY

I represent: NYC Administration for Children's Services

Address: _____

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Name: Gisele Castro, exalt youth

Address: 175 Rensselaer Street, Suite 1000

I represent: Exalt Youth

Address: _____

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Name: Stacy Desamours

Address: 60 Lafayette St. New York 10013

I represent: NYC Dept of Probation

Address: 33 Beaver St. New York 10004

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(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lisa Frost

Address: 33 Beaver Street, NY, NY 10004

I represent: NYC Dept of Probation

Address: _____

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Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gineez Gray

Address: 33 Beverly St

I represent: NYC Dept of Health

Address: _____

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(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Balfour Thompson

Address: 504 3rd Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11209

I represent: Youth Represent

Address: 11 Park Place #1512
New York, New York 10007

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