

Materials

Markers

Tape

Construction Paper

Index cards

Pens

DVD Player

Agenda

1. Icebreaker: Social Barometer
2. Film Screening: Schoolhouse to Jailhouse
3. STPP Map OR STPP Race (Note: Map is best for groups of 5 or less, STPP Race for groups of more than 5)
4. Role Plays
5. Closing

Icebreaker: Social Barometer

The facilitator hangs signs on opposite sides of the room that read “Strongly Agree” and “Strongly Disagree.” When the facilitator reads a statement, participants move to the side of the room with the appropriate sign. If they are neutral, participants will stand in the middle of the room. If they agree but not strongly, they will stand between the middle of the room and the “Strongly Agree” sign. If they disagree but not strongly, they will stand between the middle of the room and the “Strongly Disagree” sign.

After the facilitator reads each statement and the participants have stopped moving, the facilitator will call on one person from the “Agree” side of the room, one from the “Disagree” side, and one from the middle of the room to share their opinions. During the discussion, participants may move from their original position if their opinion changes.

Suggested statements include:

1. Education is the key to success in life.
2. I enjoy school.
3. I feel that I am/was treated unfairly in school.
4. Today’s students are disrespectful and out of control and need to be dealt with harshly.
5. I have had a negative encounter with a school safety agent.
6. New York should spend more money on schools than on prisons.
7. Metal detectors keep students safe.
8. The school system is racist/classist/sexist/heterosexist/xenophobic.
9. The criminal justice system is racist/classist/sexist/heterosexist/xenophobic.
10. Police personnel should be on school grounds only in emergencies.

11. No New York City schools should have metal detectors.
12. Low income students and students of color need harsher discipline in order to succeed.
13. Students should be suspended from school and arrested for violent behavior.
14. Once a student is suspended, she will never succeed in school.
15. School age students who are pushed out of school are more likely to get involved in crime.

Screening: Schoolhouse to Jailhouse

Facilitator plays the Make the Road New York Youth Camera Action Film, *Schoolhouse to Jailhouse*.

After the film, facilitator asks for feedback from the participants: What did you see?

STPP Floor Map

1. Make the Map

The facilitator explains that the group will be making a life size map of the School to Prison Pipeline using construction paper and tape.

The facilitator places a “School” and “Prison” sign on opposite ends of several sheets of newsprint taped together. Facilitator then asks what a first step along the School to Prison Pipeline might be. The group works together to brainstorm and arrange on the newsprint the various steps along the pipeline. These could include: suspension, suspension site, alternative school, summons, dropping out, truancy, arrest, family court, criminal court, juvenile detention, prison, and deportation.

2. Group discussion and brainstorming

Facilitator leads short discussion about the mapping, asking participants: What do you see?

The facilitator singles out the Suspension stop and begins a group brainstorm on what could have led to the suspension, e.g. fight with another student, theft, in the hall without a pass, weapon, talking back, post on MySpace page, refusal to go through scanners, fight with an SSA. The group then brainstorms underlying reasons for the suspension, e.g. harassment, race, LGBTQ, IEP, low test scores, boredom.

Finally, the group creates Get Out Of Jail Free cards that each describe something that could have kept the suspension from happening in the first place, e.g. Gay Straight Alliance, tutoring, conflict resolution.

School to Prison Race

The facilitator explains that the group will line up on one side of the room. This side of the room represents school, while the opposite side represents prison. The facilitator will read a statement paired with a direction to move forward or backwards. If the statement is true for a student, he or she will follow the direction to move forward or backward. If the statement is not true for the student, he or she will remain in the same place. After each statement, the facilitator reads a statistic about the School to Prison Pipeline.

1. If you live in New York City, take one step forward.
 - Superintendent's suspensions per year in New York City increased by more than 76 percent between 2000 and 2005.
2. If you are Latino, take one step forward.
 - In 2005, 20 percent of students suspended in Brooklyn were Latino.
3. If you are Black take three steps forward.
 - In 2005, 72 percent of students suspended in Brooklyn were Black.
4. If you identify as a student with special needs, take two steps forward.
 - 32 percent of youth in juvenile detention nationwide were previously identified as having special learning needs, although only 9 percent of public school students have been.
5. If you have ever been suspended from school, take three steps forward.
 - Students who have been suspended are three times more likely to drop out of school by 10th grade than students who have not been. Dropping out of school triples the likelihood that a person will be incarcerated later in life.
6. If you attend a school with permanent metal detectors, take three steps forward.
 - Police and SSAs get involved in twice as many non-criminal incidents in schools with metal detectors than in schools without them. Schools with permanent metal detectors also receive less funding per student, are more overcrowded, and issue more suspensions than other schools.
7. If you are a youth of color, take one step forward.
 - 93% of arrests in New York City were of youth of color and 98% of New York City youth in OCFS juvenile detention facilities are of color.
8. If you have been arrested OR convicted of a misdemeanor such as trespassing or possession of a small amount of marijuana, take two steps forward.
 - Arrest and conviction records – even for misdemeanors – can affect your job and schooling options. Students become ineligible for federal student loans to attend college after two convictions for possession of a controlled substance.
9. If you live in the United States, take one step forward.
 - The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the entire world.

Role Plays

The facilitator divides the participants into three groups. Each group is assigned a scenario. First, they discuss the scenario and what they think would happen. Second, they act out two versions of the scenario, one that leads to a positive outcome and one that leads to a negative outcome. After practicing their scenarios, each group performs both versions for the rest of the participants.

Scenario 1

On the morning of a big English test, you set off the metal detector. The School Safety Agent asks you to step up to the table and begins scanning you with the wand. She immediately finds the cell phone in your pocket.

Scenario 2

You are walking down the hallway of your school wearing your favorite hat. Before you make it to your next class a teacher stops you and asks you to remove the hat.

Scenario 3

Your school's guidance counselor asks you to come to his office. He tells you that you are behind in credits and may not graduate. He adds that you can leave high school and get your GED, and then offers you a paper to sign.

Closing

Participants go around in the circle and share one thing about schools they would like to see changed and/or one thing they can personally do to change schools.