

Understanding The School To Prison Pipeline

**American Civil Liberties Union
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School To Prison Pipeline

- Children channeled out of public schools into the juvenile and criminal justice systems
- Disproportionately children of color
- Vulnerable children: often with learning disabilities, histories of poverty, abuse or neglect
- Additional educational services needed not isolation and punishment

How Does Public Policy Impact The Pipeline?

- Zero Tolerance public education policies
- Due Process protections for children
- No Child Left Behind Act initiative

Zero Tolerance Policies

- Criminalize minor instances of school misbehavior
- Minor discipline problems not resolved through parents, teachers, and school administrators
- Addressed through suspensions, expulsions and/or arrests
- Children funneled into alternative schools and the juvenile justice system
- Minority students enter the pipeline at a higher rate than white students

Due Process Protections

- Schools often ignore and bypass children's due process protections
- Particularly children with special needs, learning disabilities
- Children often have no or inadequate legal representation to challenge charges
- Many alternative schools provide limited educational services
- Many juvenile justice facilities provide few, if any educational services

No Child Left Behind Initiative

- Emphasis on excessive, high stakes testing
- Not counting, transferring out low performing students increases a schools' overall test scores
- Schools maintain funding and/or get financial incentives for better test scores
- Graduation rates do not include channeled out students
- Many minority children are undereducated and pushed out of public schools

Dismantling The School To Prison Pipeline

- The American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia is challenging these policies and practices through:
 - Public Education
 - Encouraging Parental Advocacy
 - Community Organizing
 - Coalition Building
 - Due Process Violations