AWAY from No Way
Disability and Juvenile Justice

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About Your Hosts…

TransCen, Inc.
- Improving the lives of people with disabilities through meaningful work and community inclusion

Mid-Atlantic ADA Center,
a project of TransCen, Inc.
- Funded by National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

ADA National Network
- Ten regional centers provide guidance, training, and materials on the ADA
- 1-800-949-4232
- ADAta.org
Restrain, Seclusion, Arrest, and Suspension

• Students with disabilities are 12% of student population, but
  • 75% of those physically restrained at school to immobilize them or reduce their ability to move freely
  • 58% of those placed in seclusion or involuntary confinement
  • 25% of students arrested and referred to law enforcement

• Students with disabilities are 2x more likely to receive suspension (13%) than students without disabilities (6%)

Suspension of preschool children, by race/ethnicity and gender

• Black children represent 18% of preschool enrollment, but 48% of preschool children receiving more than one out-of-school suspension;

• White students represent 43% of preschool enrollment but 26% of preschool children receiving more than one out of school suspension.

• Boys are 79% of preschool children suspended once and 82% of preschool children suspended multiple times, although boys represent 54% of preschool enrollment.
Disproportionately high suspension/expulsion rates for students of color

- Black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students
- On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students
- American Indian and Native-Alaskan students are also disproportionately suspended and expelled, representing less than 1% of the student population but 2% of out-of-school suspensions and 3% of expulsions

Suspensions are still among the leading indicators of whether a student will drop out of school; increases a student’s risk for future incarceration

- A 2012 report estimated that annually, 3,000,000 students lose instructional “seat time” due to school removal

Research by the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University showed

- Suspension increased the chance of leaving school prior to graduation from 16 percent to a 32 percent
- Students who were excluded were 29 percent more likely to drop out at some point during their high school career
- The effects of exclusion can be cumulative, with each additional suspension increasing the risk of dropping out by 10 percent
What happens next?

- Study results vary based on population, but the data are clear
Dropouts

- Are 3 1/2x more likely than high school graduates to be arrested
- More than 8x as likely to experience jail or prison
- Between 16 – 24 were 63x more likely to be institutionalized than peers who have a bachelor’s degree or higher

Main Drivers

- Youth of color
- Youth experiencing mental, emotional or physical disability
- Youth experiencing educational failure
- Youth experiencing poverty
- Youth with a history of trauma

Overrepresentation of youth in the juvenile justice system

By the numbers

- An estimated 70% of all justice-involved youth have disabilities, including psychiatric, mental health, sensory, and intellectual disabilities as well as co-occurring disorders.
Most of these youth are in contact with the justice system for minor offenses:

Often related to conduct that is a manifestation of disabilities (identified or not) or traumatic experiences that have not been appropriately addressed

For many, community services either are not available or are not being coordinated effectively to provide the right supports

National Disability Rights Network

Having a disability is a risk factor for contact with the JJ system

Some behaviors related to unknown, untreated, or inappropriately treated disabilities

Identifying disabilities and providing appropriate treatment and services can prevent further contact with the JJ system

System Youth are “disproportionately minority, impoverished, and poorly educated, and many lack social networks,” and the type and scope of mental health services provided to youth

Youth with disabilities can be prone to being bullied, harassed, and falling behind academically. That can lead to running away from home, and other behaviors that can result in arrest

Identifying justice-involved youth with disabilities and connecting them and their families to the services they need is more likely to result in diversion from being adjudicated delinquent and diverted from secure confinement

Studies have shown that meeting the special education needs of justice-involved youth with disabilities improves their academic achievement and reduces future contact with the juvenile and criminal justice systems

Youth who are confined in secure JJ facilities are more likely to engage in future delinquent acts or criminal offenses. Advocacy to divert youth with disabilities from being incarcerated reduces that risk

Secure juvenile justice facilities are not safe places for vulnerable youth

Bottom Line

Generally, most youth get worse, not better, when confined in secure JJ facilities, and would do better in community-based settings that provide appropriate treatment without jeopardizing community safety

When it comes to young people with mental health problems, intellectual disabilities or suffering from trauma:

Some short-term confinements in a secure detention facility pending court proceedings place youth in harm’s way. This includes:

- Potential physical harm;
- Inadequate suicide protocols and precautions;
- Improper use by staff of toxic psychotropic medications to induce compliance rather than for treatment purposes;
- Prolonged, forced physical exercise as punishment; improper use of force (e.g., pepper spray, Tasers, restraint chairs) as unauthorized punishment; denial of medically necessary services; and other violations of youth rights.

Early intervention, prevention, and diversion are the key strategies for addressing these problems.
These dramatic and often traumatic experiences threaten to further challenge our youth as they move along their own development pathways.
Mitigating the Harm

Engaging youth in positive prosocial engagement

Allowing youth opportunities to express themselves with movement (dance sports, theater), words (journaling, poetry, guided imagery) and other nonverbal interpreters (sculpt, painting, drawing)

Encouraging supported engagement with youth and families

Welcome to The Feeling House

The Affective Domain is the creative foundation for the essential skills that support and promote cognitive and intellectual growth and development

Social Emotional Learning

Self and other awareness:
- feelings shift, understanding the difference between thinking, feeling and acting, and understanding that one’s actions have consequences in terms of others’ feelings

Mood management:
- handling and managing difficult feelings; controlling impulses; and handling anger constructively

Self-motivation:
- being able to set goals and persevere towards them with optimism and hope, even in the face of setbacks

Empathy:
- being able to put yourself “in someone else’s shoes” both cognitively and affectively; being able to take someone’s perspective; being able to show that you care

Management of relationships:
- making friends, handling friendships; resolving conflicts; cooperating; collaborative learning and other social skills; understanding and identifying feelings
Connecting to positive, prosocial engagement

Connecting to positive, prosocial engagement

Finding opportunities to express yourself:
- Movement (dance, sports, theater)
- Words (journaling, poetry, guided imagery)
- Other nonverbal interpreters (sculpting, painting, drawing, murals)

Encouraging supported engagement with and for your friends and families:
- Community performances
- Family concerts

Seeking comprehensive interventions that are:
- Community based
- Family focused
- Student centered
- Trauma informed

Hope is a seed planted in rocky soil; with no knowledge, of how deep its roots will sink or how many its fruit will feed. But we must choose to plant and wait and see.
Hasan Davis

We all have a story...
In the beginning mine seemed full of possibility!

The clock was ticking

- It became clear to me, at an early age, that my story was going to be an everyday fight to be seen and heard OR it was simply going to be nothing at all

- Birth
- ADHD
- Dyslexia
- Visual / hearing impairment
- B-3
- Parents divorced
- Welfare
- Inner city
- Family separated
- Reunited in GA
- Grade 4-7
- Arrested at 11/ probated
- Apartment fire age 12
- Family separated
- Attended 5 elementary schools
- More than 13 childhood homes
- Grade 8-12
- Started alternative school
- Expelled from alternative school at 18
- G.E.D. recipient

Everyone watching could see that the odds were against me...
But I still wanted to be greater... no matter the cost

So, I had to make a choice

And those choices cost me...
We all deserve a chance to become the Hero of our own Story

• #HopeDealers

Pages from a Hope Dealer’s Handbook

• Fight The Status Quo
• Act on Your Faith
• Resist shortcuts
• Learn from failures
• Deserving Victory
Insanity Principle

• Fight The Status Quo
  - Act on Your Faith
  - Resist shortcuts
  - Learn from failures
  - Deserving Victory

- If you keep doing what you have always done, you will keep getting what you have always gotten
- If you keep doing what you have always done your competition will get better and you will get worse results
  - John Maxwell

- Raise the Bar don’t lower it!
  - People will rise or ultimately fail to the highest expectation the people have set for them
  - Our students deserve Empathy and Compassion they don’t need more Pity

Stop me if you’ve heard this one

- Fight The Status Quo
  - Act on Your Faith
  - Resist shortcuts
  - Learn from failures
  - Deserving Victory

- “If Proper Noun would just Verb acting Adjective, I would give them a chance to be with the Adjective kids
In The Chat
- Fight The Status Quo
- Act on Your Faith
- Resist shortcuts
- Learn from failures
- Deserving Victory

List all the places where you believe that ability comes before opportunity
a) When learning a new language
b) Cooking a meal
c) Tuning up a car engine
d) Practicing a new behavior
e) All of the above
f) None of the above

Here is a Hint …
The only place you will find that Ability comes before Opportunity is in the Dictionary!

Some Risk Required
- It is time to take what we know (Data) and do what we must (Result!)
- Challenge “Well IF” thinking
  - Well, IF they can demonstrate their knowledge, then…
  - Well, IF they can show they can be trusted, then…
  - Well, IF they can start at part time, then…
Ultimately it is a matter of choice

- Fight The Status Quo
- Act on Your Faith
- Resist shortcuts
- Learn from failures
- Deserving Victory

What if...

We chose to see them all as naturally Creative, Resourceful, and Whole?

We MUST refuse to become places where dreams just go to die.

Hospice is not an acceptable substitute for Hope.
Hope

- Hope [hōp] Something that somebody wants to have or do or wants to happen or be true;
- A reliance on future possibilities

Faith

- Faith [fayth] a belief in, devotion to, or trust in somebody or something, especially without logical proof;
- A willing suspension of disbelief

Action

- Action - the process of doing something, especially when dealing with a problem or difficulty

- Faith PLUS Action
We all have a choice to make
- Fight The Status Quo
- Act on Your Faith
- Resist shortcuts
- Learn from failures
- Deserving Victory

We can be Hope Dealers
or accept our role as
Hope Stealers
A.K.A.
- Agents of reality
- Wake up callers
- Truth tellers
- Reality checkers
- Dream busters...etc.

I keep asking myself
• Who are we protecting,
and from what?

"If you choose this important work, Hope is Mandatory; because you cannot give what you do not possess."
Hasan Davis
And honestly, what does it cost?

- Fight The Status Quo
- Act on Your Faith
- Resist shortcuts
- Learn from failures
- Deserving Victory

“A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle.”
Father James Keeler

But that one candle immediately multiplies the light, that one candle immediately divides the darkness.
Hasan Davis

Hope is an act of Multiplication over Division

But the transformation we are seeking doesn’t happen overnight

Allow Time

- Time [tīm]
- A suitable moment or period chosen as appropriate for something to be done or to take place

Time is what we have so that everything does not happen at once.”
Albert Einstein
Believe me, I know...

Faith
- Offers the encouragement to imagine a world that currently seems too far

Hope
- Nurtures the courage to keep reaching for what others are sure we could never touch

True talk:
Has anyone else ever said this? Either out loud or just to yourself. (Asking for a friend)

“When is it finally OK for me to just give up?”

Being a Hope Dealer is like wrestling an 800 lb gator

- Fight The Status Quo
- Act on Your Faith
- Resist shortcuts
- Learn from failures
- Deserving Victory
When wrestling an 800 lb gator, there are a few rules:

- You don’t give up when you get tired,
- You should only give up when the gator is tired,
- Never, ever believe that a gator is tired

“Sometimes it’s not enough that we do our best; sometimes we have to do what is required.”

Sir Winston Churchill

When we do fall short we need to remember that grace is for all of us

Forgiveness

- for-give-ness [fərgivnəs]
- the act of pardoning somebody for a mistake or wrongdoing

Forgiveness frees us from the awesome duty of worrying about the past so we can actually do something about the future.
- Fight The Status Quo
- Act on Your Faith
- Resist shortcuts
- Learn from failures
- Deserving Victory

“The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The second best time is right now.”
Chinese Proverb

Deserve
- de·serve (di-zurv)
  - to have earned or be worthy of something

Victory
- vic·to·ry (viktəree)
  - success attained over a difficult situation or opponent

“Believe and act as if it were impossible to fail.”
Charles F. Kettering
“Treat a man as he is and he will remain as he is …

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Final Thoughts

- Self-care
  - It is important to develop your own system of emotional and physical self-care to protect yourself from the possible impact of Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) and Compassion Fatigue.
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• Please email the code above to ADAtraining@transcen.org by 5 PM E.T. on July 19, 2021

Thank You for Joining Us!

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