



Pre-K to Prison Pipeline

Overview of the PS2PP

Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Futures: The Trauma-Informed Practices for Preschool (TIPPS) Project aims to increase public awareness of the preschool to prison pipeline. The preschool to prison pipeline refers to the increased likelihood that children who experience exclusionary discipline in school will be involved in the juvenile and criminal justice system. Not being in school can lead a child to getting in trouble with the law or going to jail when they grow up. Even exclusion in school can lead a child to feel shame or self-doubt that can also lead to trouble in school and later in adult life. This document explains the Preschool to Prison Pipeline (PS2PP).

Dangers of the PS2PP

Short-term dangers of the PS2PP

- When students miss class, they get less help and have less time to learn. This can lead to lower test scores, grades, and graduation rates ([Welsh & Little, 2018](#)).
- Exclusion can affect students' emotions by making them feel worse about themselves, more worried, and may cause issues in their relationships with friends, teachers, and family ([Wolf & Kupchik, 2017](#)).

Long-term dangers of the PS2PP

- Suspension and expulsion are linked to job and money problems ([Mowen & Brent, 2016](#)).
- Suspension and expulsion also increase the chances of getting into trouble, being stopped by police, getting arrested, and going to jail ([Fabelo et al. 2011](#); [Hemez et al. 2020](#); [Pettit & Western, 2004](#)).

Awareness of the PS2PP: Our Findings

Our research shows that Early Childhood Education (ECE) workers and caregivers do not know about the PS2PP.

- Only 1 out of 13 people we spoke to knew about the PS2PP.
- Some people had heard of a kindergarten to 12th grade school to prison pipeline but didn't know it starts in preschool.
- Others didn't know about the PS2PP but knew that people of color often experience unfair punishment and are put in prison more often than White people.
- Children who have adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have more intense social, emotional, and behavior needs.
- Experts and researchers suggest that trauma informed education may best support children with ACEs.

Suggestions for Increasing Awareness of the PS2PP

Ways to help more people know about the PS2PP could be:

- Increase efforts to share information for more public awareness of the PS2PP.
 - Teach ECE workers how to support children who have experienced ACEs.
 - Offer ECE workers trainings and strategies to understand child development, culture, and behaviors, as well as implicit bias and structural racism to promote inclusion and equity for children.
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