

School Discipline Disparities and the Role of Implicit Bias

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What is overly punitive discipline?

- **Suspensions**
- **Expulsions**
- **School-based arrests**
- **Use of Tasers and Pepper Spray**
- **Restraint and Seclusion**

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Discipline Disparities

African American children are expelled or suspended from school at 3 times the rate of their white peers, often due to minor misbehavior.

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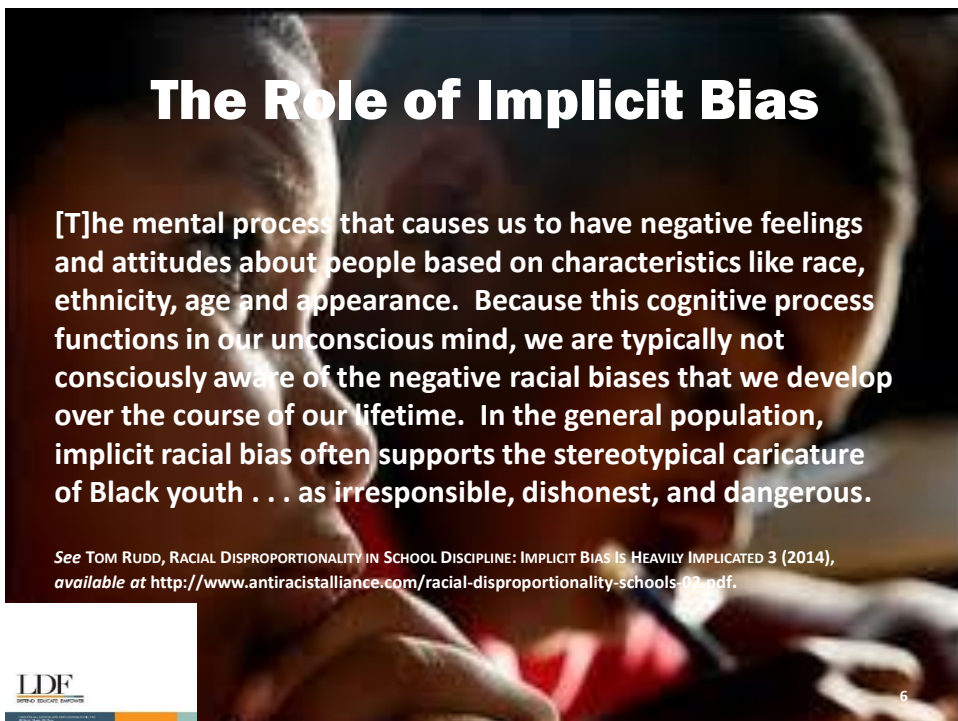
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The Role of Implicit Bias

[T]he mental process that causes us to have negative feelings and attitudes about people based on characteristics like race, ethnicity, age and appearance. Because this cognitive process functions in our unconscious mind, we are typically not consciously aware of the negative racial biases that we develop over the course of our lifetime. In the general population, implicit racial bias often supports the stereotypical caricature of Black youth . . . as irresponsible, dishonest, and dangerous.

See TOM RUDD, RACIAL DISPROPORTIONALITY IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE: IMPLICIT BIAS IS HEAVILY IMPLICATED 3 (2014), available at <http://www.antiracistalliance.com/racial-disproportionality-schools-02.pdf>.

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Discipline Disparities and African American Girls: Race and Gender Stereotypes

In 2011-12, 12% of African American girls were suspended from school—a rate that's 6 times that of white girls & higher than most boys.

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Consequences of Discipline Disparities

- **Increased dropout rates**
- **Early involvement with the Juvenile Justice system**
- **Feelings of stigmatization and disengagement from the learning environment**
- **Lost instruction time**
- **Inability to reintegrate into the learning environment**

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Recommendations

- **Recommendations provided in the Joint Discipline Guidance issued by Departments of Education and Justice**
- **Ongoing professional development training in implicit bias, classroom management, and cultural competency**
- **Track and share effective and inclusive school discipline policies and practices**

