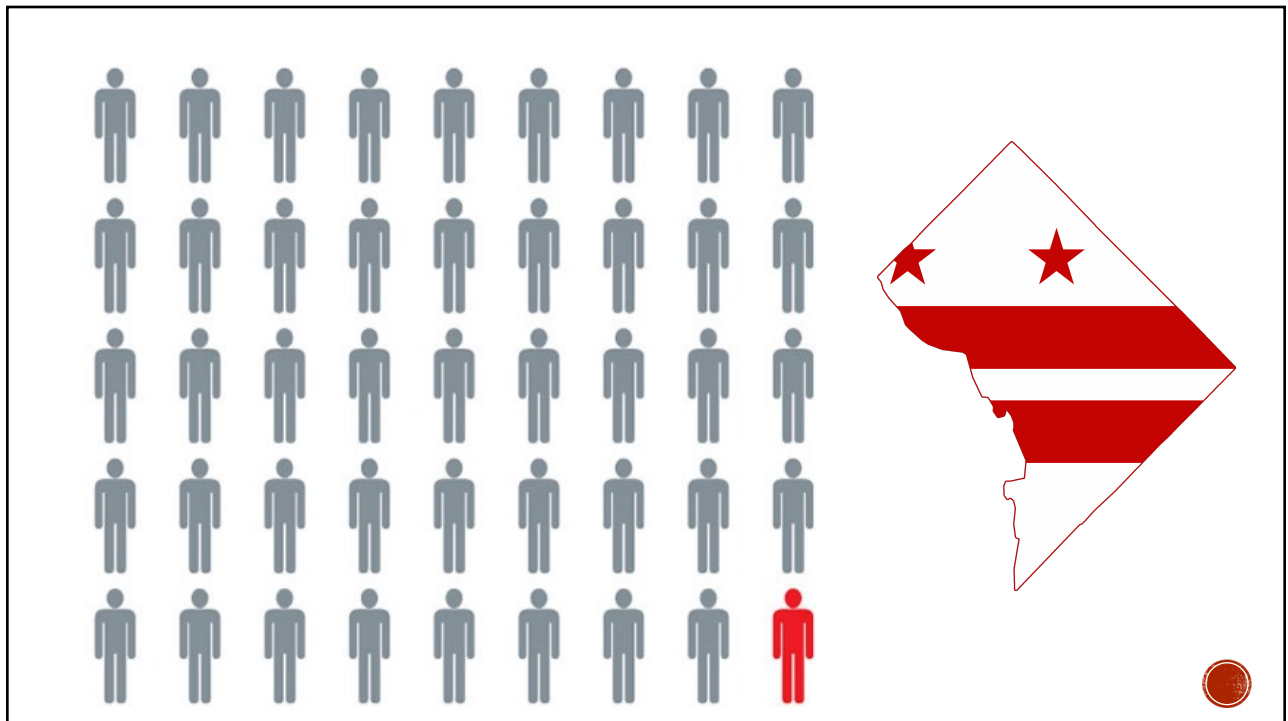


1



2



**CRIMINALIZATION OF
NORMAL ADOLESCENT
BEHAVIORS**

Criminalization of Black Adolescence

3

3

SHERICE



4

4

BLACK YOUTH ARE NOT TREATED LIKE CHILDREN

Black youth don't get the same mitigating benefits of the adolescent development research.

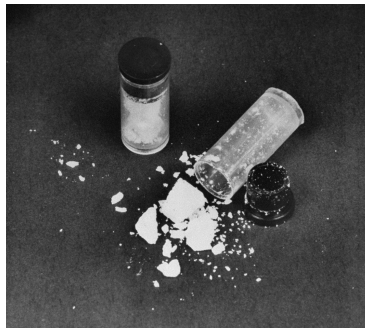
BEYOND REDEMPTION

The Superpredator Myth, 20 Years Later

04.07.14



5



6



POLICE IN SCHOOLS ...



7

Before Columbine

The first officers appeared in schools the Indianapolis in 1939 as concerns about racial desegregation caused unsubstantiated fear about “dangerous” black children.

SROs grew exponentially in the civil rights era as city leaders in the North and South claimed Black children lacked discipline and feared they would bring disorder to their schools.



8



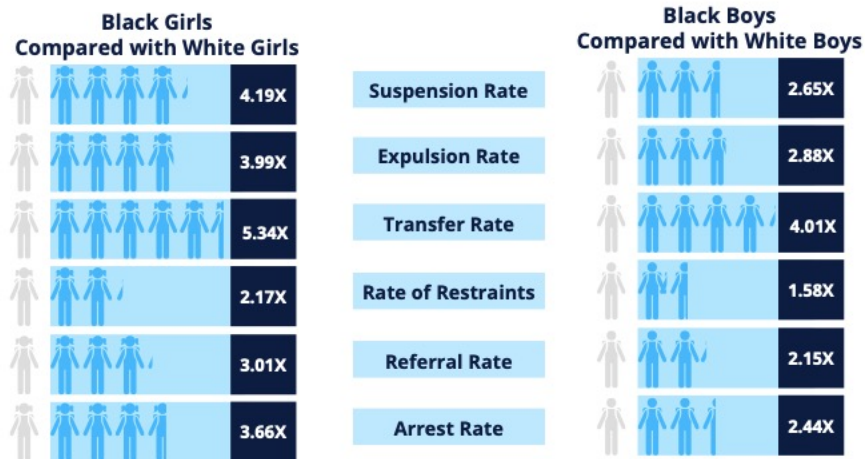
- **Founded in 1991- eight years before columbine**
- **Gun Free School Act and Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement act passed in 1994.**



9

RACIAL DISPARITIES IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Nationally, Black youth are **suspended, expelled, and arrested at school** at higher rates than white youth.



Rebecca Epstein et al., "Data Snapshot: 2017-2018 National Data on School Discipline by Race and Gender" citing data from the U.S. Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection (2020).



10

RACIAL DISPARITIES IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Statewide, Black youth are **5.6xs more likely** to be suspended than white youth.

Pennsylvania Composition



Out-of-School Suspension Composition



Expulsion Composition



ProPublica, "Miseducation: New York" citing data from the U.S. Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection (2018) <https://projects.propublica.org/miseducation/state/PA>

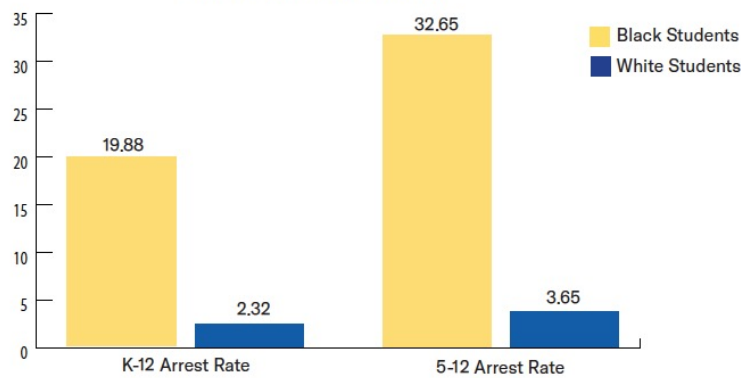


11

RACIAL DISPARITIES IN SCHOOL ARRESTS

Allegheny County's Black students were arrested at **nearly 9xs** the rate of white students during the 2018-19 school year.

Allegheny County Arrests per 1000 Students:
Black vs. White (2018-19)



Sources: Allegheny County Juvenile Offense Trends Dashboard, Pennsylvania Department of Education Enrollment Report

8 ACLU of Pennsylvania

Harold Jordan and Ghadah Makoshi, Student Arrests in Allegheny County Public Schools: The Need for Transparency and Accountability, ACLU Pennsylvania, January 2022.



12

POLICING IN SCHOOLS DOESN'T MAKE US ANY SAFER

- Criminalization of normal adolescent behaviors
- Poor attendance and lost instruction time
- Poor academic achievement
- Increased criminal/juvenile legal system involvement
- **Increased trauma exposure**



13



14

EFFECTS ON MENTAL HEALTH

- **Systematic Review of Studies:** Researchers examined 29 peer-reviewed studies on the link between policing and adverse health outcomes for Black youth. In total, the studies included almost 20,000 youth ages 9 to 26 years old from across the US.
- **Findings:** Quantitative and qualitative research shows that police exposure is linked to higher rates of stress, depression, and substance abuse for Black youth. As supported by previous research, this review found that racism likely contributes to these adverse health outcomes associated with policing.



Monique Jindal et al., *Police Exposures and the Health and Well-being of Black Youth in the US: A Systematic Review*, 176(1) *JAMA Pediatr.* 78 (2022).



15

VICARIOUS POLICE CONTACTS AND STRESS

Watching police violence is almost as traumatizing as experiencing it.

- **Study:** Focused on attitudes toward police by black undergraduate students (66 women, 35 men) ages 16 to 21.
- **Results:**
 - Witnessing the police use excessive force during an arrest, was associated with greater stress levels.
 - **Vicarious contact** produced similar stress levels as direct contact.
 - Male college students reported significantly greater stress across all types of police contact than did their female counterparts.

Amber J. Landers et al., *Police Contacts and Stress Among African American College Students*, 81 *Am. J. Orthopsychiatry* 72 (2011).



16

RACE-RELATED TRAUMATIC EVENTS ONLINE

- **Study:** Assessed whether viewing race-related traumatic events online (TEO) was associated with depressive and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms. The national sample included 302 African American and Latinx adolescents between 11-19 years old.
- **Results:** There is a significant association between TEO and both PTSD symptoms and depressive symptoms. PTSD symptoms included re-experiencing, hyperarousal, and numbing.

Police brutality imagery on social media can cause lasting trauma, especially for black people



Brendesha M. Tynes et al., *Race-Related Traumatic Events Online and Mental Health Among Adolescents of Color*, 65 *J. Adolescent Health* 371 (2019).



17

POLICING AS A FORM OF RACISM

RESEARCHERS IN A 2020 STUDY FOUND THAT BLACK TEENAGERS AGE 13 TO 17 IN WASHINGTON, DC FACED AN AVERAGE OF FIVE RACIALLY DISCRIMINATORY EXPERIENCES PER DAY.

RACISM LEADS TO

- DEPRESSION AND TRAUMA
- HYPER-VIGILANCE
- PANIC
- HEIGHTENED SENSITIVITY TO THREATS
- DISTRUST
- SUBSTANCE ABUSE
- SHAME
- SELF HARM

Devin English et al., *Daily Multidimensional Racial Discrimination Among Black U.S. American Adolescents*, 66 *J. Applied Dev. Psychol.* (2020).



18

POLICE STOPS AND SLEEP BEHAVIORS

- **Study:** Examined the association between exposure to police stops and sleep behaviors of 3,444 U.S. youth.
- In the study, youth reported their:
 - exposure to vicarious and direct police stops,
 - police intrusiveness during police stops, and
 - experiences of social stigma and post-traumatic stress following the stop.
- **Results:** Youth who reported exposure to police stops exhibited significantly greater odds of sleep deprivation and low sleep quality.



Dylan B. Jackson et al., *Police Stops and Sleep Behaviors Among At-Risk Youth*, J. Nat. Sleep Foundation (2020).



19

PERCEPTIONS OF LAW AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

For poor, young black youth who live in high-surveillance neighborhoods, police contact is a routine feature of their adolescent lives and

- **Injures their "sense of self."**
- **Undermines perceptions of the fairness and legitimacy of police**



Nikki Jones, *"The Regular Routine": Proactive Policing an Adolescent Development Among Young, Poor Black Men*, 143 *New Directions Child and Adolescent Dev.* 33 (2014).



20

CRIMINOGENIC EFFECTS OF POLICING ON ADOLESCENTS



- Adolescent Black and Latino boys who were stopped by police reported more frequent engagement in delinquent behavior at 6, 12, & 18 months after the stop than boys who were not stopped by the police (independent of prior delinquency).
- More frequent stops lead to greater concurrent distress and greater concurrent delinquency.

Toro et al., *The Criminogenic and Psychological Effects of Police Stops on Adolescent Black and Latino Boys*, 116 PNAS, 8261 (2019).



21

LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF POLICING ON PHYSICAL HEALTH

- **Findings:** Living in neighborhoods where pedestrian stops are more likely to become invasive is associated with worse health.
- High blood pressure, diabetes, stroke, ulcers, cognitive impairment, autoimmune disorders, accelerated aging, and early death



Abigail A. Sewell & Kevin Jefferson, *Collateral Damage: The Health Effects of Invasive Police Encounters in New York City*, 93 J. Urb. Health 42-67 (2016).



22

LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF RACE-RELATED TRAUMA ON PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

A review of studies confirms the strong association between child and adolescent exposure to racial discrimination and negative health and wellbeing outcomes.



Leah Cave et al., Racial Discrimination and Child and Adolescent Health in Longitudinal Studies: A Systematic Review, 250 Social Science & Medicine (2020).

- **Physical health:** cortisol levels, obesity, injury, asthma, etc.
- **Mental health:** anxiety, body image, conduct disorder, depression, emotional difficulties, resilience, etc.
- **Health-harming behaviors:** diet, exercise, substance use, sleep difficulties, etc.
- **Behavior problems:** anger, delinquent behavior, risk-taking behavior, etc.



23



WHY DID THE OFFICER RESPOND TO SHERICE THE WAY HE DID?



24



25

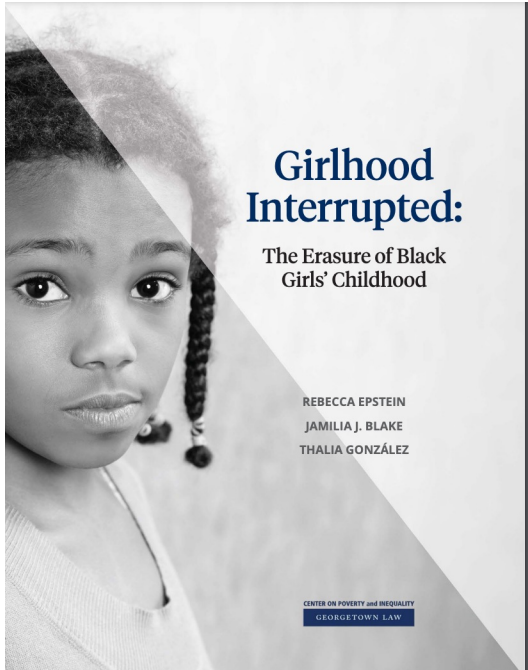
ESSENCE OF INNOCENCE: CONSEQUENCES OF DEHUMANIZING BLACK CHILDREN (2014)

- ❑ Among the general public:
 - ❑ Participants perceived African American youth felony suspects as **4.53 years older** than they actually were
- ❑ Among law enforcement:
 - ❑ Participants also rated African American youth felony suspects as **4.59 years older** than they actually were
- ❑ Among both general public and law enforcement
 - ❑ Participants perceived white youth as **less culpable** when suspected of a felony than when suspected of a misdemeanor
 - ❑ Participants perceived black felony suspects as **significantly more culpable** than either white felony suspect or Latino felony suspects



Goff, P.A., et al. (2014). The essence of innocence: Consequences of dehumanizing Black children, *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 106, 526-545.

26



Girlhood Interrupted:
The Erasure of Black Girls' Childhood

REBECCA EPSTEIN
JAMILIA J. BLAKE
THALIA GONZÁLEZ

CENTER ON POVERTY AND INEQUALITY
GEORGETOWN LAW

Adults view Black girls as:

- Older
- Less innocent
- More like adults
- More knowledgeable about adult topics
- More independent
- And less in need of protection

than White girls

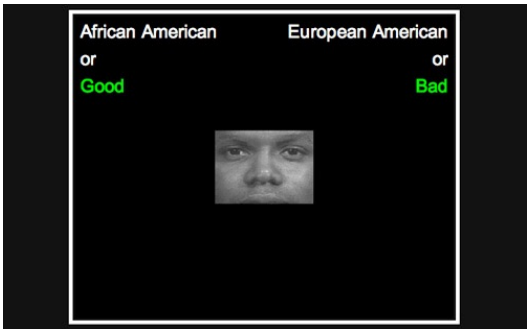
Rebecca Epstein, Jamilia Blake, & Thalia Gonzalez,
Girlhood Interrupted: The Erasure of Black Girls' Childhood,
Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality (2017).

27

IMPLICIT RACIAL BIAS

HOSTILITY, NERVOUSNESS, FURTIVE GESTURES

- Several studies have found that individuals are more likely to interpret ambiguous behavior and ambiguous facial expressions by Black Americans as
 - more aggressive and
 - consistent with violent intentions
- while interpreting the same behavior by whites as harmless.



28

SAD OR ANGRY?



Amy G. Haberstadt et al., *Racialized emotion recognition accuracy and anger bias of children's faces*, *Emotion* (2020).

- Adults are more likely to inaccurately perceive anger on Black children's faces.
- Misperceiving anger helps explain why Black students receive more frequent and harsher disciplinary actions than non-Black students (even when their behavior is the same).



29



People tend to perceive young Black men as bigger (taller, heavier, more muscular) and more physically threatening (stronger, more capable of harm) than young white men.

This racial bias persists even when upper-body strength is controlled

Biased judgments in turn promote participants' justifications of use of force against Black suspects of crime.

WHO CAN BENCH PRESS MORE?

John Paul Wilson, Kurt Hugenberg, Nichols O. Rule, *Racial Bias in Judgments of Physical Size and Formidability: From Size to Threat*, 113(1) *Interpersonal Relations and Group Processes*, 59-80 (2017).

30

TEENAGERS AT THE PARK



31

BLACK AMERICANS MORE LIKELY TO BE STOPPED IN GROUPS

- Being in a group amplified racial disparities in police decisions to frisk, search, arrest, and use force against Black people.
- This is **NOT** explained by effective policing (defined in the study as discovery of illegal contraband). Police were not more likely to find illegal contraband on Black people stopped in groups.



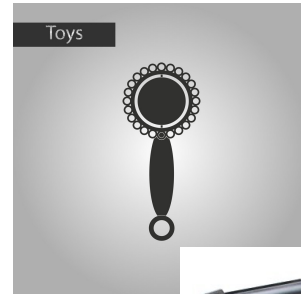
Erin Cooley et al., *Racial Biases in Officers' Decisions to Frisk are Amplified for Black People Stopped Among Groups Leading to Similar Biases in Searches, Arrests, and Use of Force*, 11(6) *Soc. Psych. and Personality Sci.* 761-769 (2020).

32

WEAPONS PERCEPTION AND YOUTH

People are more likely to perceive a toy (e.g., a rattle) as a weapon if they associate it with a Black child.

Andrew R. Todd, Kelsey C. Thiem, and Rebecca Neal, *Does Seeing Faces of Young Black Boys Facilitate the Identification of Threatening Stimuli?*, 27 Psychological Sci. 384 (2016).



33

KYLE RITTENHOUSE EXTRORDINARY PERMISSIVENESS OF WHITE ADOLESCENCE



34

HOW DO WE USE THIS INFORMATION TO DRIVE CHANGE?



35

FOUR THEMES

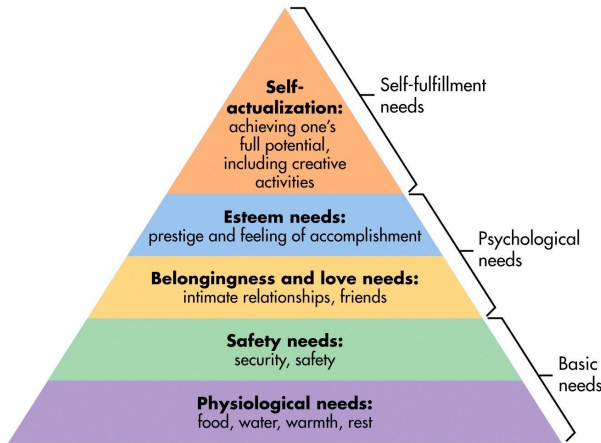
- 1) Radically reduce the footprint of police in the lives of our youth
- 2) Invest in alternatives to public safety
- 3) Ensure developmentally appropriate policing
- 4) Insist on developmentally appropriate responses to adolescent offending



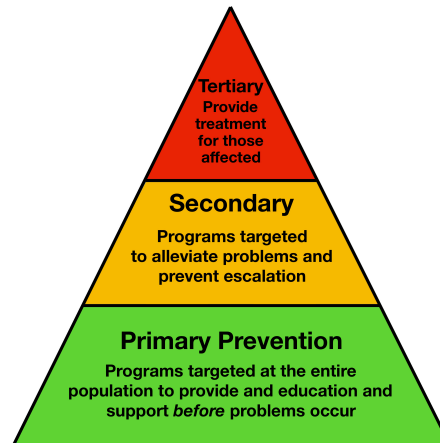
36

INVEST IN YOUTH DIRECTLY

Invest in Youth Using....



A Public Health Approach



37

REIMAGINE SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SAFETY

Adopt a holistic, public health approach to safety that is relational, racially just, restorative, and trauma-responsive

- Counselors
- Social workers
- Mental health professionals
- Peer intervention
- Positive youth interventions
- Social Emotional Learning
- Restorative Justice



38


DEVELOPMENTALLY-APPROPRIATE REGULATIONS FOR POLICE

- Training on adolescent development
- De-escalation
- Use of force
- Handcuffing small children
- No Interrogation or Consent Searches without a lawyer


A LACK OF TRAINING

Policing kids is hard. There's scientific reason for that: kids' brains aren't developed (and won't be until they are in their mid-20s) so they act more impulsively, take risks, and often make bad decisions. But training for encounters with youth amounts to 1% or less of the total training officers receive.


And schools don't teach children how to interact with law enforcement, and even well-meaning advice isn't always the right advice.




ONLY 1%
of basic training in police academies is spent on juvenile justice issues.




ONLY 8 STATES
include information about BMC in their juvenile justice curriculum




ONLY 2 STATES
provide new officers training on teen development and psychology



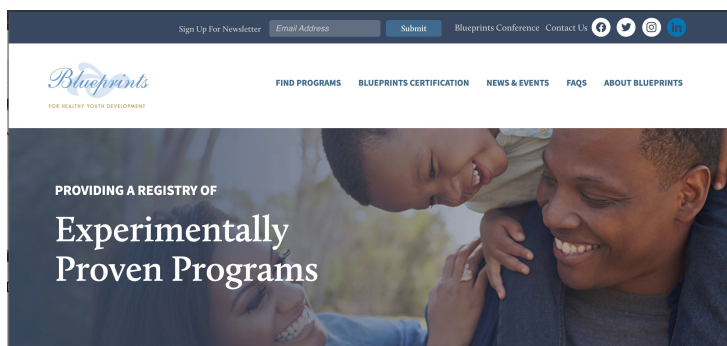
ONLY 9 STATES
provide new officers training on teen mental health issues





39

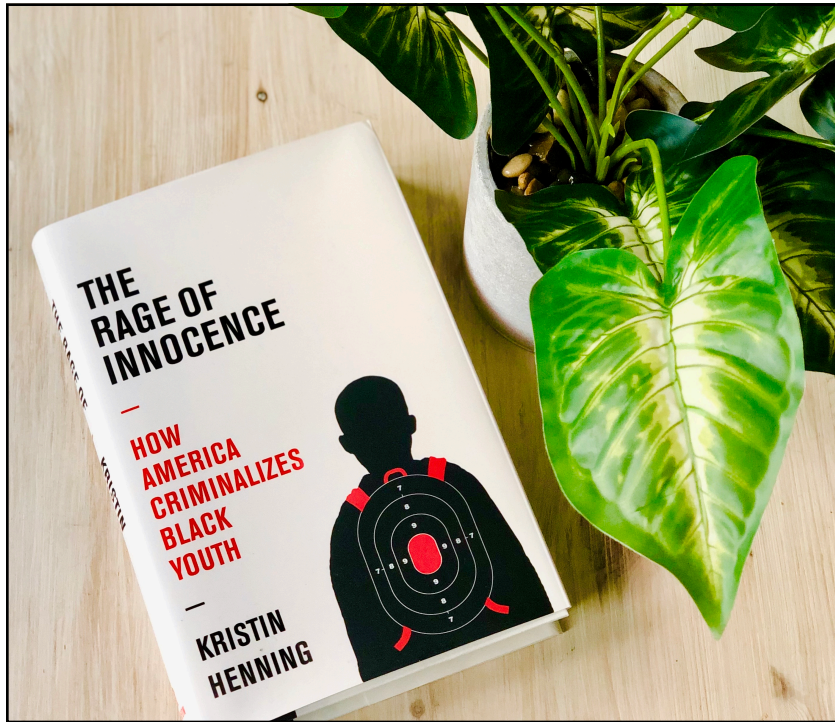
TREAT KIDS LIKE KIDS NO TRANSFER TO ADULT COURT



- MULTISYSTEMIC THERAPY (MST)
- FUNCTIONAL FAMILY THERAPY (FFT)
- AGGRESSION REPLACEMENT THERAPY (ART)
- TRAUMA-FOCUSED COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT)



40



KRISTIN HENNING
Blume Professor of Law
Director, Juvenile Justice
Clinic and Initiative

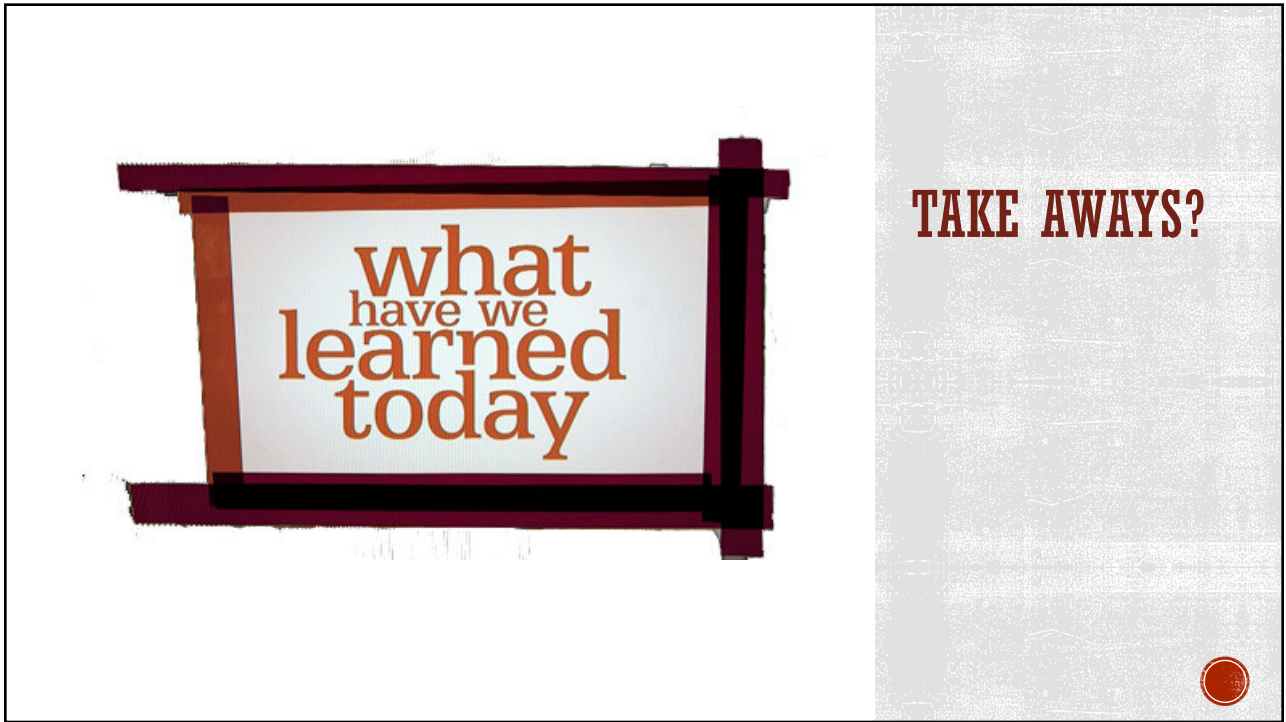
Georgetown law
hennink@georgetown.edu



41



42



43