DISMANTLING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE: TOOLS FOR CHANGE

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Big Picture Solutions

- Improve student academic achievement and increase the likelihood that students will graduate

- Decrease the number of suspensions, expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement

Strategies to Reverse the School to Prison Pipeline

1. Scale back or Eliminate Harsh Disciplinary Measures
   a. School Resource Officers
      - Having regular contact with police increases the odds that schools will refer students to law enforcement for minor offenses. (*See* Jason P. Nance, *Students, Police, and the School-to-Prison Pipeline*, 93 WASH. U. L. REV. ___ (forthcoming))
   b. Zero Tolerance Policies
   c. Other Strict Security Measures
   d. Suspending, Expelling, or Referring Students to Law Enforcement for Lower-Level Offenses

What do we replace those harsh measures with?

1. Improve classroom instruction and management skills of teachers
2. Provide training to school officials
3. Social and emotional learning strategies
4. Improve school climate
   a. Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice

Oakland Unified School District:

- David Yusem, OUSD's restorative justice program manager: "We're really attempting to eliminate the disproportionate race-biased discipline. Punishments just alienate kids, and then teachers have to catch up. It's top-down control that doesn't adjust for root causes. It doesn't allow students to think about what they've done and be accountable or provide healing."

- Not soft! "It's really hard to stand in front of your community and admit what you've done and repair that."

- In Oakland Middle School, within three years, suspensions were reduced by 87% and there were no more expulsions.
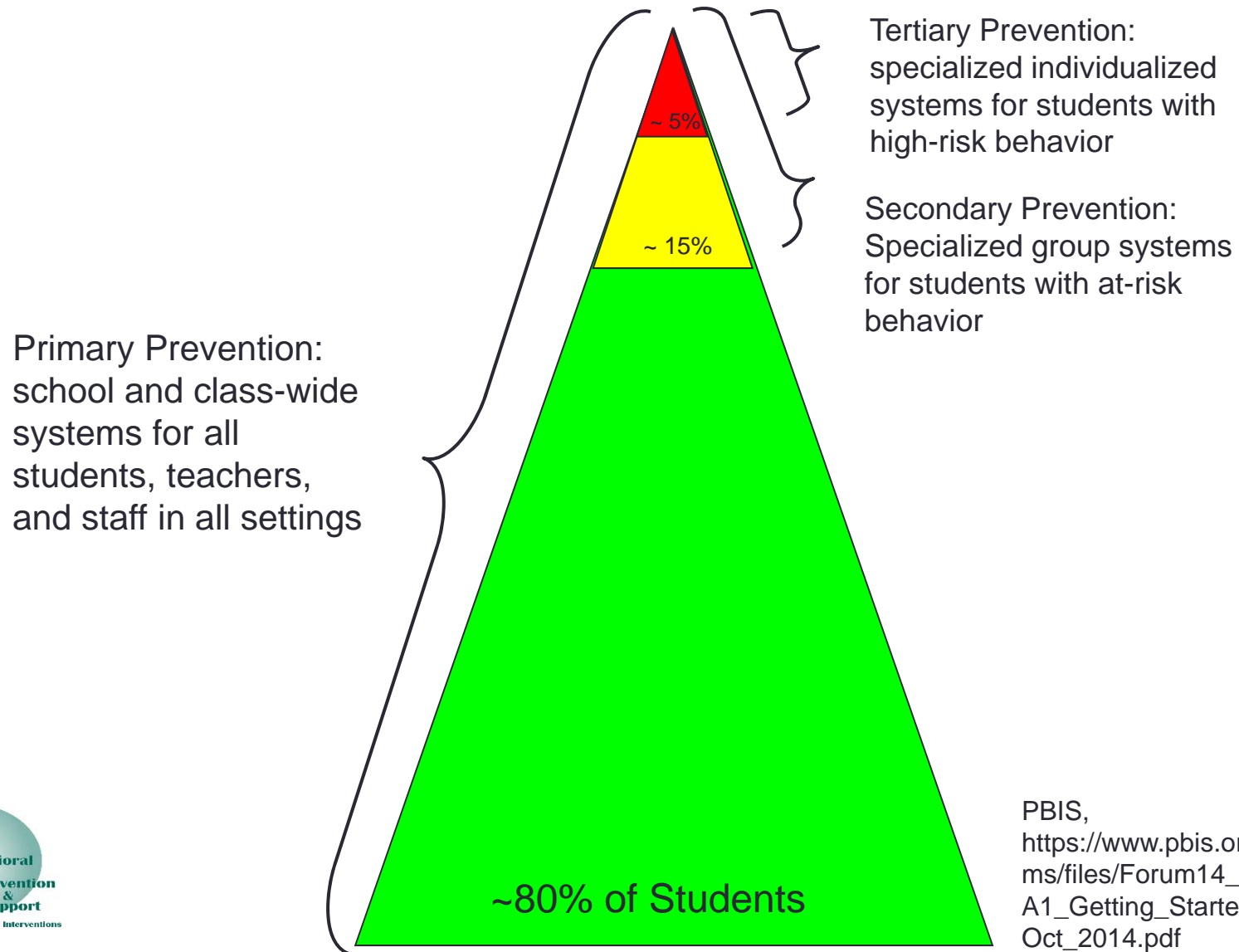
Restorative Justice

- West Philadelphia High School:
  - After one year, violent acts decreased by 52%.
  - After second year, violent acts and serious incidents decreased by an additional 45%.
- Ed White Middle School, San Antonio, TX
  - 84% drop in off campus suspension
  - 30% drop in use of in-school suspensions lasting 1-3 days
  - School climate survey shows a stronger sense of procedural fairness.
  - Test scores improved

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   a. Restorative Justice
   b. School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS)

School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS)

Tertiary Prevention: specialized individualized systems for students with high-risk behavior

~ 5%

Secondary Prevention: Specialized group systems for students with at-risk behavior

~ 15%

Primary Prevention: school and class-wide systems for all students, teachers, and staff in all settings

~80% of Students

PBIS, https://www.pbis.org/Common/Cms/files/Forum14_Presentations/A1_Getting_Started_Sugai_29_Oct_2014.pdf

OSEP Center on
Positive
Behavioral
Intervention
&
Support
Effective School-Wide Interventions

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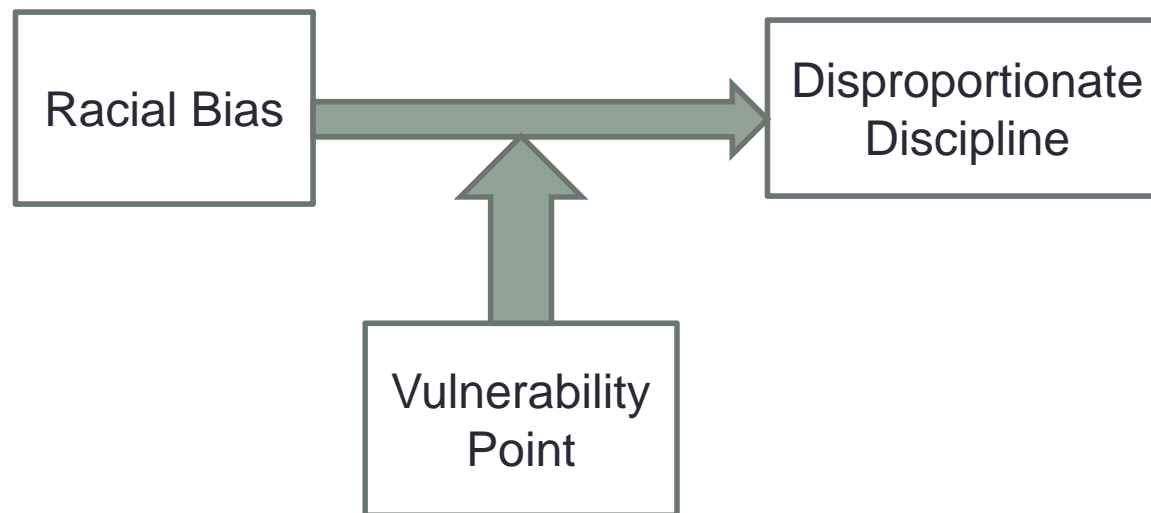5. Require schools to report disciplinary data

Strategies to Reduce Racial Disparities

Kent McIntosh, Erik Girvan, Robert Horner, Keith Smolkowski, & George Sugai, *Recommendations for Addressing Discipline Disproportionality in Education*

Strategies to Reduce Racial Disparities

1. Provide de-biasing training
2. Reduce ambiguities in school discipline codes
3. Report (and make accessible) disciplinary data disaggregated by race