

SCHOOL JUSTICE REFORM

THE CHALLENGE: DISRUPTING SCHOOL TO JUVENILE JUSTICE PATHWAYS

The growth of zero tolerance policies, coupled with the increased use of law enforcement to respond to school misbehavior, has led to an unprecedented expansion of the use of exclusionary school discipline and school-based arrest. These practices have disparate impacts on youth of color and youth with mental health disorders. Research shows:



SCHOOL-JUSTICE REFORM CAN REDUCE REFERRALS TO THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Success story: Schools that participated in Connecticut's School-Based Diversion Initiative reduced court referrals by an average of 45 percent in their first year of participation and increased behavioral health referrals by 94 percent.

HOW WE CAN SUPPORT YOUR SCHOOL-JUSTICE REFORM EFFORTS

The NCMHJJ, in partnership with the **Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI)**, offers technical assistance to support planning and implementation of school-based diversion initiatives that address the underlying behavioral health needs of youth.

- Build a strong collaborative team
- Develop policies and procedures to identify youth for diversion, including selection of a screening instrument
- Map and develop formal connections to behavioral health services
- Facilitate school discipline policy development
- Train school resource officers and other law enforcement who respond to calls from schools on appropriate responses to mental health crises
- Develop relevant professional development structures for all school personnel
- Collect and evaluate data

NCMHJJ and CHDI can offer several levels of support, including:

