



# Disproportionate Minority Contact: What's Happening With School Suspensions?

Guilford County

## Defining minority:

- Minority populations are defined as non-white and grouped as: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Hispanic or Latino; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.<sup>1</sup>
- Based on the disproportionate rates, Guilford County chose to focus on the Black/African American minority subgroup because they are most affected by disproportionality in this area.

## What is disproportion?

- Any ratio above 1:1 is disproportion.

**Definition of Short Term Suspension:** Out-of-school suspension for any designated period of less than 10 days.

**Definition of Long Term Suspension:** Out-of-school suspension for any designated period of more than 10 days, but not in excess of the maximum time allowed by law.

## What is Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)?

Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) refers to the overrepresentation of minority youth in the juvenile justice system.

## How Do Suspensions Affect DMC?

Research shows that school suspensions are often the starting point of contact with the juvenile justice system for minority youth. This trend is often referred to as the "school-to-prison pipeline". Therefore, attempting to lessen the disproportionality in long and short term suspensions could result in lessening the disproportionate rates in the juvenile justice system.

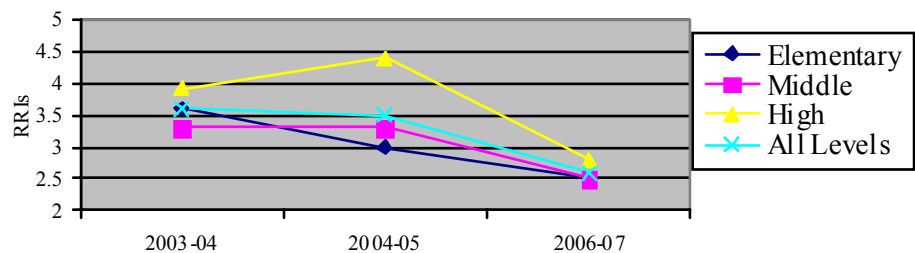
## What is the Relative Rate Index (RRI)?

Relative Rate Index (RRI) is what the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) uses to assess DMC. It is calculated by dividing black student suspensions by white suspensions. It tells the rate at which black students get suspended as compared to white students. For example, in 2006-07, the average short term RRI was 2.6, meaning that for every 1 white student that was suspended, there were 2.6 black students that were suspended.

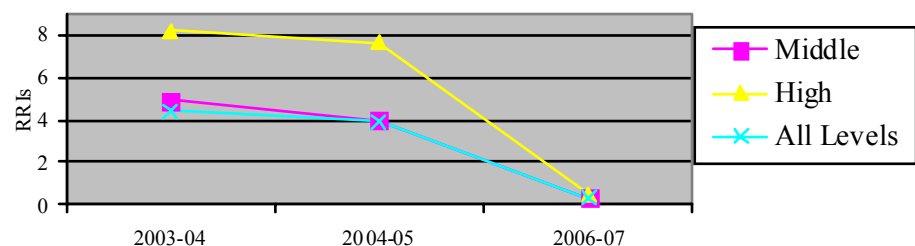
## How Do We Know DMC Exists?

*Note.* During 2006-07, Guilford County School system changed the way they reported suspensions. Contact us for a full explanation. Elementary schools did not report long term suspensions.

**Average Short Term RRIs by School Level, 2003-04, 2004-05, 2006-07**



**Average Long Term RRIs by School Level, 2003-04, 2004-05, 2006-07**



<sup>1</sup> NC DMC (2008). Disproportionate Minority Contact. Retrieved on April 14, 2008, from <http://www.nccrimecontrol.org/index2.cfm?a=000003,000011,000601,001289,001305>.

## School-Related Reports

For more school-related reports, please visit the Guilford Education Alliance website:

[www.guilfordeducationalliance.org](http://www.guilfordeducationalliance.org)



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## WE NEED YOU!!!

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR  
OUR MONTHLY DMC  
MEETINGS!!!**

## For more information Contact Us:

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This project was supported by funding from the North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission, Juvenile Justice Planning Committee (grant number 180-1-07-010-AJ965).

## DMC Website:

<http://www.uncg.edu/csr/pubreducingcontact.htm>

## What types of initiatives are addressing disproportionate suspensions in Guilford County?

There have been many DMC partners and related initiatives throughout the past several years. Here are a few examples:

### **Parent and Youth Involvement**

- DMC Youth Ambassadors: The DMC Youth Ambassadors are a group of six Guilford County high school students challenged to provide a youth perspective on contributing factors to disproportionate suspension and juvenile justice involvement of minority youth. The youth ambassadors have made presentations to various youth groups in Greensboro and High Point regarding the issue of disproportionate suspensions. They will also be holding a Study Circle forum for youth to discuss issues surrounding DMC.
- Parent Advocates: Parent Advocacy Training – “Not Grown Yet” curriculum developed by Diane Bellamy-Small was delivered to parents to increase parental advocacy. Furthermore, in collaboration with the Human Relations Departments in High Point and Greensboro and the Guilford County Schools, parent advocates were trained to provide support for parents in their efforts to ensure fair treatment for their children.

### **Guilford County School Involvement**

- Guilford County Schools: The school system has made a commitment to review suspension data internally.
- School Climate Task Force: Presentations of DMC to the Guilford County School Board prompted a meeting of the school board and SRO's, and contributed to the development of the School Climate Task Force which made recommendations to the Board of Education on ways to address student behavior with the aim of reducing school suspensions.
- Anti-Racism/Undoing Racism Training: Communities, youth, agencies, court counselors, district court judges, school principals and administrators, teachers, and student resource officers (SRO's) received this training.
- Diversity Officer Placement: Diversity officer position created by the Guilford County School System.

### **Faith and Community Involvement**

- 22 Churches – 22 Meetings: Active participation from 22 churches at 22 consecutive Guilford County School Board meetings to continually bring DMC to the forefront.
- Parent advocates: Were trained to work collaboratively with parents within a subset of churches to support parents and families.
- 100 Black Men: Sponsored and supported two of the Youth Ambassadors.