

Addressing Inappropriate Discipline Practices: State Policies on Suspension and Expulsion

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Concerns: Impact, Incidence, Disparities

- ▶ Children who are suspended or expelled
 - are at increased risk of experiencing academic failure, continued behavioral difficulties, grade retention, and dropping out of high school
 - lose opportunities to develop and practice the skills they most need for school success
 - do not receive effective behavior interventions that are focused on teaching social, emotional, or communication skills
- ▶ Families whose children are suspended or expelled experience stress, financial challenges, and negative impacts on employment
- ▶ The 2016 National Survey of Children's Health indicated 50,000 preschoolers were suspended at least once and 17,000 were expelled from programs (public and private)(Malik, 2017)
- ▶ Black children are 2.2 times more likely to be suspended or expelled than other children (National Survey of Children's Health)
- ▶ Boys represent 51% of the preschool population, but 82% of the suspensions and expulsions (National Survey of Children's Health)
- ▶ Black preschoolers 3.6 times more likely to receive an out of school suspension in comparison to white preschoolers indicating disproportionate use of harsh disciplinary practices (US DOE, 2016)

References

Malik, R. (2017). New data reveal 250 preschoolers are suspended or expelled every day. Center for American Progress. Retrieved from <https://www.americanprogress.org>

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights. (October 2016). 2013-2014 Civil Rights Data Collection. A First Look. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/2013-14-first-look.pdf>

States Policies that Prohibit Expulsion and Suspension

State	Prohibit Expulsion	Prohibit Suspension	Exceptions	Following Interventions	Facilitate Transition
AR	X	X	Temporary removal for imminent danger		
CA	X		Safety threats	X	
CO	X	X	Weapon, drugs, safety threat	X	
CT	X	X	Expulsion – Firearm only, Suspension - Conduct that is violent or sexual nature		
DC	X	X	Suspension-Willful injury		
GA	X		Weapon, drugs, safety threat	X	
IL	X		Temporary removal for safety threat	X	X
MD	X	X	Weapon, safety threat	X	
NJ	X	X	Weapon		
VA	X		Physical harm or threat of harm		
WA	X	X			X
TX	X	X	Suspension - Weapon, violent offense, drugs, alcohol Expulsion - Firearms		

Federal Policy and Recommendations

- ▶ **2016 Joint Policy Statement from US DOE and US DHHS** issue recommendations for states to prevent, limit, and eliminate suspension and expulsion in early childhood programs.
- ▶ **Child Care** – States receiving Child Care Block Grant Funds require that states include a description of policies to prevent suspension, expulsion, and the denial of services to children due to challenging behavior
- ▶ **Head Start** – A program cannot expel or unenroll a child from the program because of a child's behavior. Programs must prohibit or severely limit the use of suspension due to a child's behavior.
- ▶ **IDEA** – Free appropriate education must be provided to children 3 to 21 with disabilities. School personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates code of student conduct for no more than 10 consecutive school days.

State Policy Analysis

- ▶ Searched for state policies providing guidance related to restricting or prohibiting suspension or expulsion of young children (five and younger) in response to challenging behavior
- ▶ Identified **28 states and DC** that have disseminated guidance to programs or established policies that encourage programs to reduce or eliminate the use of suspension or expulsion
- ▶ Identified **11 states and DC, of the 28**, that **restrict or prohibit** suspension or expulsion in early childhood settings