

2018 Charter for Racial Justice Program Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Women

- Who: For all units/local organizations/circles in Wisconsin Conference.
- What: A program geared to Wisconsin about issues of race. Duration 30-45 minutes.
- Where: At any place that United Methodist Women meet.
- When: Any time in 2018 and after.
- Why:
 - *To become aware of what is happening in our own communities.
 - *To become more aware of people hurting around us.
 - *To be able to live peacefully in our neighborhoods, both local and extended.
 - *To get credit for Mission Tasks.
- How: By using this prepared program in your local unit/organization/circle. Feel free to adapt this program in order to make it useful for your particular situation and time constraints.

“Interrupting the School to Prison Pipeline”

Directions for Leader: Either make copies of the “Are Our Children Being Pushed Into Prison?” resource sheet (at end) for each person or have copies available to share for the education discussion time.

Focus statement from the Charter for Racial Justice: (read together as directed)

Left side: BECAUSE WE BELIEVE (#8) That our struggle for justice must be based upon new attitudes, new understandings and new relationships and must be reflected in the law, policies, structures and practices of both church and state.

Right side: WE WILL (#5) Increase local churches’ awareness of the continuing needs for equal education, housing, employment and medical care for all members of the community and create opportunities to work for these things across racial lines.

Worship

OPENING HYMN (choose one)

UMH #64 Behold a Broken World

UMH #428 For the Healing of the Nations

FWS #2048 God Weeps

SCRIPTURE

Read: Luke 18: 15-17

Have a short popcorn discussion on the following:

How is Jesus’ focus on children countercultural? What is the role of children in Jesus’ time and our time? What “hinders” children today?

Prayer (Unison)

Blessed God,
the creator of a just and sustainable world.
We come offering thanks for your love and mercy.
With contrite hearts we beseech your Spirit,
Make plain Your vision,
that we will blossom into your ambassadors for justice,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WHAT IS THE SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE?

Instructions: Enter a time of learning and discussion.

Leader: The fact that people of color are being incarcerated at rates significantly disproportionate to Whites has long been acknowledged. According to the 2010 United States Census, whereas Blacks comprise 13% of the population, they account for 40% of those imprisoned. In Wisconsin, 12.8% (1 in 8) of African American men of working age were in state prisons and local jails, the highest rate in the nation, and was nearly double the national average of 6.7% (1 in 15). By way of contrast, Wisconsin's incarceration rate of White men is only 1.2% and is comparable to the national average of 1.3% (as stated in "Wisconsin's Mass Incarceration of African American Males: Workforce Challenges for 2013").

But only recently has it been recognized that policies established in secondary schools have actually contributed to this inequity. These policies have helped to create what is known as the "school to prison pipeline." Evidence shows that 40% of students expelled from U. S. schools each year are Black. In addition, perhaps more alarmingly, 70% of students involved in "in-school" arrests, that is, those who are referred to law enforcement agencies, are Black or Latino. At least in part, the reasons for this disturbing development can be traced to efforts within the wider society to crack down on smaller offences in the hope of discouraging more serious crimes and making neighborhoods safer. When this concept was applied to schools, zero-tolerance policies were implemented that resulted in students being arrested for offences that had previously been addressed internally. Most of these offences are non-violent and include things like classroom disruption, talking back to teachers, skipping class, or disobedience. Increasingly, these kinds of offences have resulted in suspensions, expulsions, and even arrests. According to the U.S. Department of Education, during the 2011-2012 school year, about 92,000 students were arrested.

Reader 1:

The racial overtones of these policies cannot be ignored, nor the consequences underestimated, for the lives of young persons of color, especially Black men. Arresting a student means they have been turned over to the juvenile justice system, making it that much easier to get a juvenile record. Once stigmatized with a record, students are all the more likely to fall behind in their school work and

then drop out. Not surprisingly, Black and Latino students are twice as likely not to graduate from high school. According to data provided by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction, only 67% of Black students in the 2016-2017 cohort (those who began high school together) graduated from high school in four years, as compared to 92.7% of Whites. Even those Black children raised in the first economic quintile are not immune to these realities. As reported recently in the New York Times, a study that followed the lives of 10,000 boys who grew up in wealthy families, 39% of White men ended up wealthy; whereas only 17% of Blacks did so. Or, to state it somewhat differently, only 10% of wealthy White boys became poor adults in comparison to 21% Black boys. The authors of the study conclude, “that there is something unique about the obstacles Black males face.”

It must be recognized that the effects of these social realities in general, and the school to prison policies in particular, are extremely dire. Without the requisite high school diploma, not to mention a college degree, employment opportunities and the possibility of rising above the economic quintile into which one was born, are extremely limited. Those without a meaningful job are more likely to commit more serious crimes and, thus, to end up in prisons. It is clear that the obstacles Black boys face are substantial, and that policies that have created the school to prison pipeline have contributed to these difficulties. Therefore, much greater attention needs to be given to improving social and educational conditions that will provide more equitable chances for Black children – indeed, all children – to succeed.

EXPERIENCES IN WISCONSIN

(Find some readers to share various facts with the group).

Leader: Facts for racial groups within Wisconsin. (Source: www.childrensdefense.org/cits)

2014 ; 1,300,189 children lived in Wisconsin.

72% were White	4% were 2 or more races
11% were Hispanic	1% were American Indian/Alaska Native
9% were Black	<1% were Pacific Islander
3% were Asian	

Nearly 1 in 5 (18.4%) were poor.

Wisconsin ranked 21st in child poverty among the states.

Children of color are disproportionately poor:

- 1 in 2 Black Children
- 1 in 3 American Indian/Native Alaskan Children
- 1 in 3 Hispanic Children
- 1 in 9 White Children

2012-2013 school year found 18,000 Wisconsin Public School students homeless

2013 65% of Wisconsin’s 4th graders not reading at grade level 53% not computing math at grade level

89% of Black students not reading at 4th grade level 89% not at 4th Grade Math level.

83% Hispanic 4th grade students not reading at grade level – 77% not at 4th grade math level
2012 Wisconsin was 3rd among states with 92% of high school students graduating on time
63% of Black students
85% of Hispanic students
96% White students

Reader 1: School suspension/expulsion most likely leads to student's school drop out.
2011-2012 7% Wisconsin public secondary students had at least 1 out-of-school suspension 34% for Black students 11% for Hispanic students

Too many Wisconsin children are involved in the juvenile justice system.
2012 Total of 68,681 arrested in Wisconsin – rate of 11,434 out of 100,000 - aged 10-17
2011 915 children/youth in residential placement: 55% were Black; 8% were Hispanic, and 31% were White.
2013 27 Wisconsin Children were in adult jails
2012 Wisconsin spent 3.1 times as much per prisoner as per public school student.

Reader 2: In the book, Pushout, Monique W. Morris tells that in 2011-2012 school year, Wisconsin had the highest school suspension rate for Black girls then any other state. None of the girls were referred directly to Law Enforcement at that time. But the truancy rate in the Milwaukee Public Schools was 81%. Fifty-three per cent of the Black female students were in that group. Milwaukee was the metropolitan area with the highest incidence of African-American poverty in the U.S.

In the Madison, WI area 74% of Black children live in poverty and are 9+ more times likely to be truant than White students. The arrest rate for Black children is 6 times more likely than White children.

Ms. Morris states on page 69, “The preventative ‘tough love/ zero tolerance’ rules/laws passed in the 1990s have produced a climate and culture of harsh punishment in communities that are already struggling with economic and social exclusions.”

(Ask the group to reflect on these Questions)

What do these statistics tell us about the state of schools in Wisconsin? What inequities exist? Share your experiences in school (as a student or perhaps as a teacher/administrator, etc.) How might these experiences have been different if you had been of a different race/class/opportunity?

Hispanic Experience – (Optional)

Reader 1: Many of us take for granted that our teens can get their driver's license and earn the freedom to drive themselves to work, to school, to sports activities or other events. But what if your child is undocumented? How does a “right of passage” many of us remember fondly – learning to drive – look like through the lens of the experience of Hispanic families?

Reader 2: The MultiCultural Outreach Program based here in Dodgeville, provides ESL tutoring on a one on one basis to the dairy workers and spouses. We are able to connect them with legal and social services available to them and their US born children.

Because Wisconsin does not issue drivers licenses to individuals without a social security number, many of the dairy works are at a higher risk of being ticketed late at night. In order to help them prove they are residents of the community and gainfully employed, with the support of the local sheriffs and police chiefs, MCOP is issuing ID cards to our Hispanic neighbors which establishes their ties to the local community. The ID cards include the name, address, phone number and photo of the card holder as well as the name of their employer or another local person or pastor.

It is important to understand that **these are not government issued drivers licenses** and the card holder can still expect to be stopped and ticketed for minor infractions and driving without a license and required to pay the corresponding fine. The police officer, however, will not be required to take them to jail if they show this ID card, which proves they live and work in the community. This service has been very well received by the workers as well as the employers.

The MultiCultural Outreach program has a web page with this information as well as community forums on Immigration Law and the ESL programs.

(Ask the group to reflect on these Questions)

How is the Hispanic community impacted by the difficulties of undocumented status?
How does this impact students and their families in relation to the school to prison pipeline? What role do local choices have in impacting the lives of Hispanic people within the community?

ACTIONS

WHAT DO WE DO NOW? (Below are suggestions on action items. Write down any items which could be done by yourself, your UMW unit or your community.)

Here are ways that individuals, families, communities, organizations and elected officials can help end the *Cradle to Prison Pipeline*.

Individuals

- Mentor a child.
- Volunteer at an after-school program for youth.
- Vote in every election and advocate for children.
- Educate elected officials about the Pipeline.
- Host a house party to educate others about the Pipeline and what they can do to dismantle it.
- Volunteer with children who are homeless or in foster care.
- Organize a forum on incarcerated youth and the funding disparities between prisons and education in our nation.

- Volunteer your talents or professional services to help a single-parent, kinship care or foster care family by babysitting, inviting them to events with their children, or providing transportation.
- Invite youth to events at the next educational level (i.e., taking a high school student to a college basketball game).

Families

- Spend quality time with your family (i.e., family game night, eating meals together).
- Join the PTA, a parent support group, or other school group.
- Attend school activities and/or volunteer in the classroom.
- Consistently praise your child's achievements in school and extracurricular activities.
- Establish and maintain a supportive home learning environment.
- Create daily homework routines and limit television viewing.
- Offer tutoring and homework help to your children or younger siblings.
- Offer to run errands or help around the house.
- Communicate with and listen to your child.
- Talk and actively listen to children within your extended family.
- Show affection, love and respect to your child every day.
- Do something fun with your child or sibling.
- Adopt a foster child or become a foster parent.

Communities

- Institute a "Cradle Roll" within your faithbased institution or community, linking every child to a permanent, caring family member or adult mentor who can keep them on track and get them back on track if and when they stray.
- Promote learning by starting an after-school program for children.
- Ensure that at least one caring community member attends every public school student suspension meeting or court hearing.
- Encourage families to spend quality time together by hosting a movie or game night at your church.
- Start a support group for single-parent or kinship care families.
- Provide job opportunities and guidance for families and youth in need.
- Create college scholarships for children from disadvantaged, foster care and kinship care families.
- Work with school officials to develop and adopt more child-appropriate discipline policies and procedures.
- Reach out to youth who are homeless or in foster care.
- Prepare care packages of new clothes, personal toiletries and/or a welcome gift for children placed into foster care homes.

- Hold events to celebrate the strengths of our children and provide college scholarships and leadership opportunities to youth.
- Start a halfway house and counseling program for youth who have run away.
- Create a summer job opportunity for a youth.
- Create and distribute a community resource manual so that parents know where to turn for help for their families.

Organizations

- Invest in prevention and early intervention.
- Host a health fair to ensure all children who are eligible for Medicaid or your State Children's Health Insurance Program are enrolled.
- Provide free tax filing assistance to low-income working families.
- Educate families about how they can apply for Food Stamps, Head Start, federal nutrition programs and other similar benefits.
- Create and distribute a calendar of free family-friendly community events.
- Start a parent education program to familiarize parents about conflict resolution in the home and how to advocate for their children.
- Encourage alternatives to incarceration such as restitution, community service, electronic monitoring, drug rehabilitation treatment or placement in a "staff secure" (but not locked) community corrections facility.
- Work to ensure that counseling, social services, education, and health and mental health services are provided to at-risk youth.
- Fund reinvestment in urban communities, such as parks, schools and roads.
- Write annual child and gun violence reports to track the killing of children and call for effective gun control measures and nonviolent conflict resolution training.
- Host a *Cradle to Prison Pipeline* Summit to connect and educate others about the Pipeline and ways to dismantle it.

Government Agencies

- Bring other elected officials and leaders together to gain first-hand awareness of the status of your local children; demonstrate what is working and what is not.
- Ensure children in foster care and detention receive quality treatment to address their mental, behavioral and emotional needs.
- Promote high quality children's television programming and access to other quality electronic media.
- Provide high quality early childhood development programs for all.
- Ensure all children and pregnant women access to affordable, seamless, comprehensive health coverage and services.
- Establish policies that emphasize prevention and rehabilitation to keep children out of or rescue them from the Pipeline.
- Expand "second chance" programs for high school dropouts, ex-offenders and at-risk youth to secure GEDs, job training and employment.

- Reduce repeat offender rates by focusing on treatment- and family-oriented approaches.
- Make sure every child can read at grade level by 4th grade and graduate from high school able to succeed in post-secondary education and/or work.
- Organize state and local leadership councils or committees to create strategic plans to address the learning and developmental needs of children.
- Invest money in community-based rehabilitation centers and treatment programs to serve as an alternative to juvenile detention and prison.
- Stop the criminalization of children at increasingly younger ages.
- Create partnerships with local businesses, schools and/or churches to create quality exit programs for those leaving the juvenile justice system as a way to start them on the "Pipeline to Success."

Closing:

CLOSING HYMN (choose one)

UMH #433 All Who Love and Serve You

FWS #2095 Star-Child

FWS #2051 I Was There to Hear Your Boring-Cry

PRAYER (UNISON)

Almighty God,
 from you come all wisdom and truth.
 Once again we've had the opportunity to learn, discern,
 and to know you and your will more clearly.
 Let your truths be indelible imprinted in our hearts.

Go, knowing that you are loved and protected by God's love and mercy.
 Go, assured that you can make a difference.
 Go, creating sacred spaces for all - free to live, enjoy and
 experience God's Kingdom here on earth,
 in the name of Jesus, the Christ, Amen.

Resources

“America’s Cradle to Prison Pipeline” - Children’s Defense Fund Report

“The State of America’s Children” – 2017 Report - Children’s Defense Fund

“School Suspensions: Are they helping children?” - Children’s Defense Fund Report

Pushout – Morris, Monique (2018 UMW Reading Program)

“Racial Justice, Mass Incarceration and the Criminalization of Communities of Color” –
www.unitedmethodistwomen.org

Girl Time: Literacy, Justice, and School-to-Prison Pipeline - Winn, Maisha T.

The School-to-Prison Pipeline: Structuring Legal Reform – Kim, Catherine Y. and Daniel J. Losen

The School-to-Prison Pipeline: Education, Discipline, and Racialized Double Standards – Heitzeg, Nancy A.

The School-to-Prison Pipeline: A Comprehensive Assessment – Mallet, Christopher A.

Restorative Justice in Urban School: Disrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline – Wadhwa, Anita

Five Steps to Avoid the School-to-Prison Pipeline: Excellent usage for Restorative Practice Circle discussions - Brown, Quisha and Omar Brown

Disrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline – Bahena, Sofia and North Cooc

The Learning Curve: Creating a Cultural Framework to Dismantle the School-to-Prison Pipeline - Baker, Erica

From School to Prison and Down the River - Fekete, Michael

“The State of America’s Children in Wisconsin -2017 Factsheet” - Children’s Defense Fund

www.childrensdefensefund.org

www.unitedmethodistwomen.org

Contact; ejones@unitedmethodistwomen.org or at 1-212-870-3773 to learn how to get involved as a school-to-prison pipeline interrupter.

Thanks to all of the contributors and Charter for Racial Justice Members: Deb Pattee, Conference Mission Coordinator for Sprititual Growth for the education section, Muriel Smith-Gross, Conference Mission Coordinator for Social Action for the resource list, Jeanette Retzalff, Conference Chair of Nominations for the Wisconsin statistics and stories, Kemi Baiyewu, South East District Mission Coordinator for Membership Nurture and Outreach selected hymns, Cathryn Luse, team member contributed prayers and Laura Pfeffer, South West District President for layout and final edit.

ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING PUSHED INTO PRISON?

THE PIPELINE TO PRISON: THE U.S. HAS THE HIGHEST INCARCERATION RATE IN THE WORLD, AND ITS PRISONS AND JAILS ARE OVERWHELMINGLY FILLED WITH AFRICAN AMERICANS AND LATINOS. THE PATHS TO PRISON FOR YOUNG AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND LATINO MEN ARE MANY, BUT THE STARTING POINTS ARE OFTEN THE SCHOOL AND FOSTER CARE SYSTEMS.

FROM SCHOOL TO PRISON

STUDENTS OF COLOR FACE HARSHER DISCIPLINE AND ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE PUSHED OUT OF SCHOOL THAN WHITES.

40%  OF STUDENTS **EXPELLED** FROM U.S. SCHOOLS EACH YEAR ARE BLACK.

70%  OF STUDENTS INVOLVED IN "IN-SCHOOL" **ARRESTS** OR REFERRED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT ARE BLACK OR LATINO.

3.5 X  BLACK STUDENTS ARE THREE AND A HALF TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE **SUSPENDED** THAN WHITES.

2 X  BLACK AND LATINO STUDENTS ARE TWICE AS LIKELY TO **NOT GRADUATE** HIGH SCHOOL AS WHITES.

68% OF ALL MALES IN STATE AND FEDERAL **PRISON** DO NOT HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL **DIPLOMA.**

FROM FOSTER CARE TO PRISON

YOUTH OF COLOR ARE MORE LIKELY THAN WHITES TO BE PLACED IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM, A BREEDING GROUND FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.

50%  OF CHILDREN IN THE **FOSTER CARE SYSTEM** ARE BLACK OR LATINO.

30%  OF FOSTER CARE YOUTH ENTERING THE **JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM** ARE PLACEMENT-RELATED BEHAVIORAL CASES (e.g., RUNNING AWAY FROM A GROUP HOME).

25%  OF YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING FOSTER CARE WILL BE **INCARCERATED** WITHIN A FEW YEARS AFTER TURNING 18.

50%  OF YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING FOSTER CARE WILL BE **UNEMPLOYED** WITHIN A FEW YEARS AFTER TURNING 18.

70% OF INMATES IN CALIFORNIA **STATE PRISON** ARE FORMER **FOSTER CARE** YOUTH.

THE COLOR OF MASS INCARCERATION

