

What is the SSDI?

The **Supportive School Discipline Initiative (SSDI)** is an unprecedented cross-sector effort to promote use of school discipline practices that foster safe, supportive, and productive learning environments. Attorney General Holder & Education Secretary Duncan announced this bold interagency collaboration in July, 2011.

Through the SSDI, the U.S. Departments of Education (ED) and Justice (DOJ), in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), other federal partners, philanthropy & experts from the field, are promoting awareness, and supporting development of policies and practices that keep students engaged in school while holding them appropriately accountable for their actions.

Why is the SSDI necessary?

The SSDI was launched two days after the release of the Council of State Government's groundbreaking study of nearly one million Texas students, *Breaking Schools' Rules*, which revealed in a state with the second largest public school system in the country:

- ⇒ **Overuse of punitive discipline:** the majority of public school students were suspended or expelled at least once between 7th-12th grade. Disciplined students averaged eight suspensions and/or expulsions and 15 per-cent were disciplined 11 or more separate times.
- ⇒ **Discipline disparities:** Black students had a 31 percent higher likelihood of being disciplined for the same discretionary violation as did white students, and nearly three-quarters of students who qualified for special education services were suspended or expelled at least once.
- ⇒ **Justice system involvement:** Students suspended or expelled for a discretionary incident were nearly three times as likely to be in contact with the juvenile justice system in the next year.
- ⇒ **Girls and the juvenile justice system:** Girls—particularly girls of color—are affected by school-based policies and practices that marginalize them and/or render them vulnerable to contact with the juvenile justice system. During the 2011-12 school year, 12 percent of black girls experienced an out-of-school suspension, compared with 7 percent of American Indian and Native Alaskan girls, 4 percent of Latinas, and 2 percent of white girls. Among black girls with a disability, the rate of out-of-school suspension is 19 percent. And LGBTQI youth are at a greater risk for expulsion than their heterosexual peers.

The 2011-2012 ED Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) further confirmed that students of certain racial or ethnic groups & students with disabilities are disciplined at far higher rates than their peers, beginning in preschool, and, a growing number of students are losing crucial instructional time due to exclusionary discipline.



Supportive School Discipline Initiative
Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court

Where can I find SSDI resources?

Below are a sample of SSDI resources. We encourage you to sign up for both the DOJ OJJDP JuvJust e-newsletter (ojjdp.gov) & ED's Supportive School Discipline E-Digest (see *SSDCOP link below*) for updates and information.



School Justice Partnership: National Resource Center

www.schooljusticepartnership.org

In October 2014, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) was awarded funding by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to support the School-Justice Partnership Project. The purpose of this project is to enhance collaboration and coordination among schools, mental and behavioral health specialists, law enforcement and juvenile justice officials to help students succeed in school and prevent negative outcomes for youth and communities.

Federal School Discipline Guidance package

www.ed.gov/school-discipline

This package includes a Dear Colleague letter that outlines school districts' legal obligations to equitably administer student discipline, a guiding principles document with links to research & best practices for improving school climate and discipline, & a searchable compendium of school discipline laws & regulations.

Correctional Education Guidance package

www.ojjdp.gov/correctionaled or www.ed.gov/correctionaled

This package clarifies public agencies' obligations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, facilities' obligations to comply with civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination, and Pell Grant eligibility for youth in juvenile justice facilities. The package also includes guiding principles for quality correctional education.

Civil Rights Data Collection

www.ocrdata.ed.gov

The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) is a biennial survey required by ED's Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

School Discipline Consensus Report

csgjusticecenter.org/youth/school-discipline-consensus-report/

In June 2014, the Council of State Governments released this comprehensive roadmap to reforming school discipline.

National Leadership Summit on School Discipline & Climate

safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/2014-summit

In October 2014, 22 state and district teams came together to develop concrete steps to advance school discipline and juvenile justice reform in their communities.

Breaking Schools' Rules: A Statewide Study on How School Discipline Relates to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement

www.csgjusticecenter.org/youth/breaking-schools-rules-report/

The CSG Justice Center, in partnership with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University, has released a groundbreaking statewide study of nearly 1 million Texas public secondary school students, followed for at least six years.

Supportive School Discipline Communities of Practice (SSDCOP)

ssdcop.neglected-delinquent.org/about

The SSDCoP bring together education & justice leaders to share & learn from each

What are SSDI partners doing?

Building consensus among education & justice stakeholders

Developing guidance for the field

Collaborating on research & data collection

Building awareness of evidence-based practices

Integrating SSDI work into federal grant-making