

Why We Can't Wait: Lessons from Listening to Girls of Color

**Monday, December 15th, 2014
3-5pm**



Featured Speakers



MODERATOR:
Alvin Starks

**Kimberle
Crenshaw**

**Joanne
Smith**

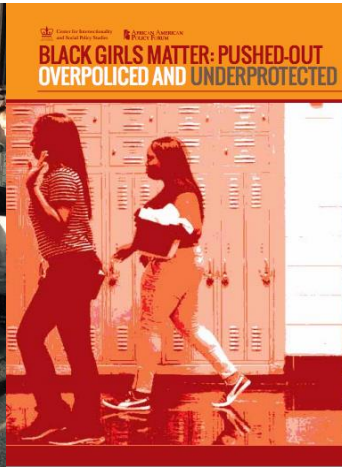
**Pamela
Shifman**

**Andrea
Lynch**

**LaShawn
Jefferson**



The African American Policy Forum (AAPF) provides information and organizes activities to raise awareness about the state of women and girls of color across the nation



African American Policy Forum and Critical Race Studies at UCLA School of Law present

Breaking the Silence: A Hearing on Girls of Color



Help Confront the Crisis of Poverty and Imprisonment
Affecting Girls of Color & Build New Pathways Forward

Tuesday, July 29, 2014 6:00-9:00PM

Loyola Law School 919 Albany St. Los Angeles 90015

questions? blackgirlshearingjuly29@gmail.com

Featuring **COMMISSIONERS**: Assemblymember Shirley Weber •
Judge Michael Leahy • Judge Donna Bromen • Aisa Ridley-Thomas •
Professor Jyoti Nanda (UCLA) • Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw (UCLA) •
Meislie Chin (CAORE) • Marquee Harris-Jawson (Community Coalition)

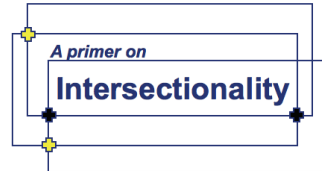


Table of Contents

- Intersectionality:
Why a New Prism is Needed ... 2
- Capturing the New Mood in America ... 2
- Re-envisioning Group-Based Interventions ... 3
- 1. Intersectional Analysis ... 3
- 2. Intersectional Interventions ... 4
- 3. Intersectional Advocacy ... 5
- "What Kind of Ally are You?" ... 7



Today's Conversation:

- Why are girls and women of color “hidden in plain sight” and what are the consequences to the community as a whole?
- Why an intersectional lens is critical to advance a vision of race and gender justice that centers the concerns of the entire community, women as well as men, girls as well as boys

Despite popular belief, women and girls of color are facing significant life challenges in...

Wealth

School



State Violence



Intersectional Erasures



President Barack Obama State of the Union 2014

Let's all come together – Congress, the White House, and businesses from Wall Street to Main Street – to give every woman the opportunity she deserves. Because I firmly believe ***when women succeed, America succeeds.***

And I'm reaching out to some of America's leading foundations and corporations on a new initiative to ***help more young men of color facing tough odds stay on track and reach their full potential.***

When it comes to working Families, “women’s” issues are central to the wellbeing of their families...the future turns on our daughters



When women succeed, America succeeds, so there's no such thing as a women's issue. This is a family issue and an American issue -- these are commonsense issues.

Remarks by President Obama at the White House Summit on Working Families, June 23, 2014

*Yet when it
comes to the
success of some
of our
daughters...*



*Their dreams for
themselves, their
futures, their families
seem to matter
less..*



*In fact, when it comes to “women” on one hand,
and “people of color”*

*Girls and young women of color
Seem to disappear...*

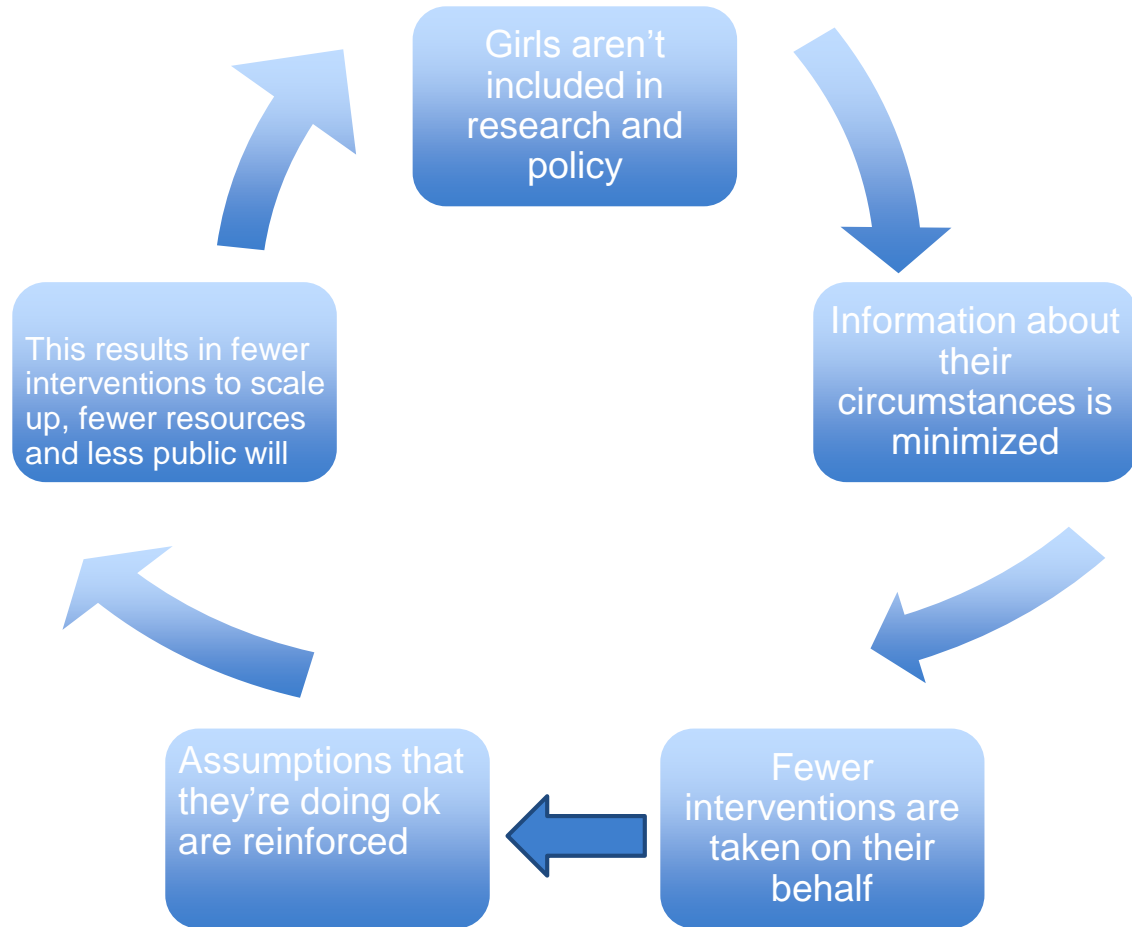
Reciting facts is not enough...



**We need an
intersectional lens
to address
intersectional
problems**

3 Reasons *Why We Must Have an
Intersectional Frame When Talking
about Girls of Color*

1) Because reversing the cycle of invisibility is critical

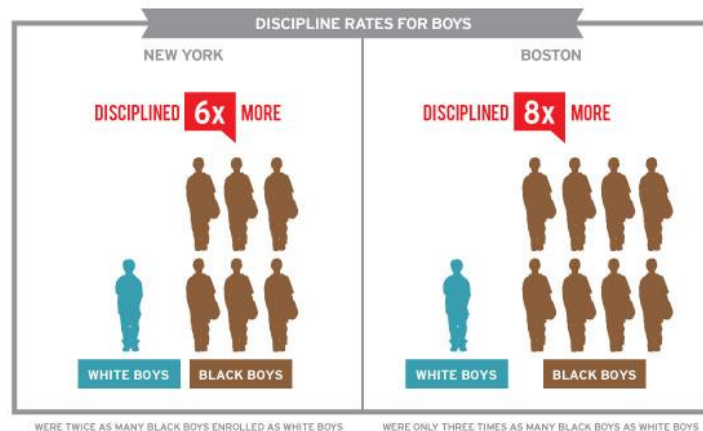
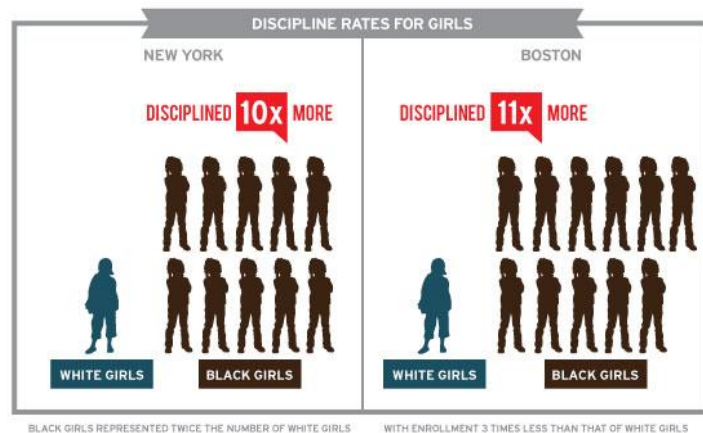


2) Because one size fits all strategies don't always work



Girls of color experience risks that are the same as their peers and risks that are different

3) Because the hidden racial burdens that Black girls face are often obscured



Intra-gender comparison of the racial/ethnic distribution of school discipline— Boston and New York, school year 2011-2012

Listening to What Girls of Color Have to Tell us About Their Lives

AAPF held focus groups with Black girls in NY and Boston in order to hear directly from them about their needs and experiences. These conversations:

- **Revealed factors that contribute to under-achievement and dropout rates**
- **Gave us a nuanced understanding of their lives**



Increased levels of law enforcement and security personnel within schools often make Black and Latina girls feel less safe and therefore less likely to attend school

“It’s like sexual harassment. Ok, it’s not really sexual harassment. But you are very uncomfortable. You have to strip down to the T. . . . You basically got to come to school naked It’s like uncomfortable. . . . They got to search you. It feels like you’re in jail. It’s like they treat you like animals, because they think that’s where you’re going to end up.”



**Girls' attachment and sense of
belonging in school can be
undermined if their
achievements are overlooked or
undervalued**

“What I have seen is that when girls do well in school it is kind of overlooked. Because despite everything [more is] still expected of them than the boys. So if the attention is always placed on the boys who do well, and that’s what people in the building tend to highlight, girls who do well just kind of get overlooked. [T]here is rarely anything done to celebrate them or to encourage them to keep going”

A young girl with dark hair is shown from the chest up, looking down with a sad expression. Her face is partially obscured by the text overlay. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

The failure of schools to intervene in situations involving the physical and sexual harassment of girls contributes to their feelings of insecurity in school

“...a girl got a lot of attention from a boy, and he kept pressuring her for sex, and her father was trying to get teachers to help his daughter. He was saying that she can’t go to school anymore if you don’t do something, and the teachers were like “good, take her out, she attracts too much attention from our boys.” I was waiting for another group of teachers to chime in, and they all kind of agreed. This isn’t just an isolated incident. Teachers aren’t the role models of gender equity. . .”

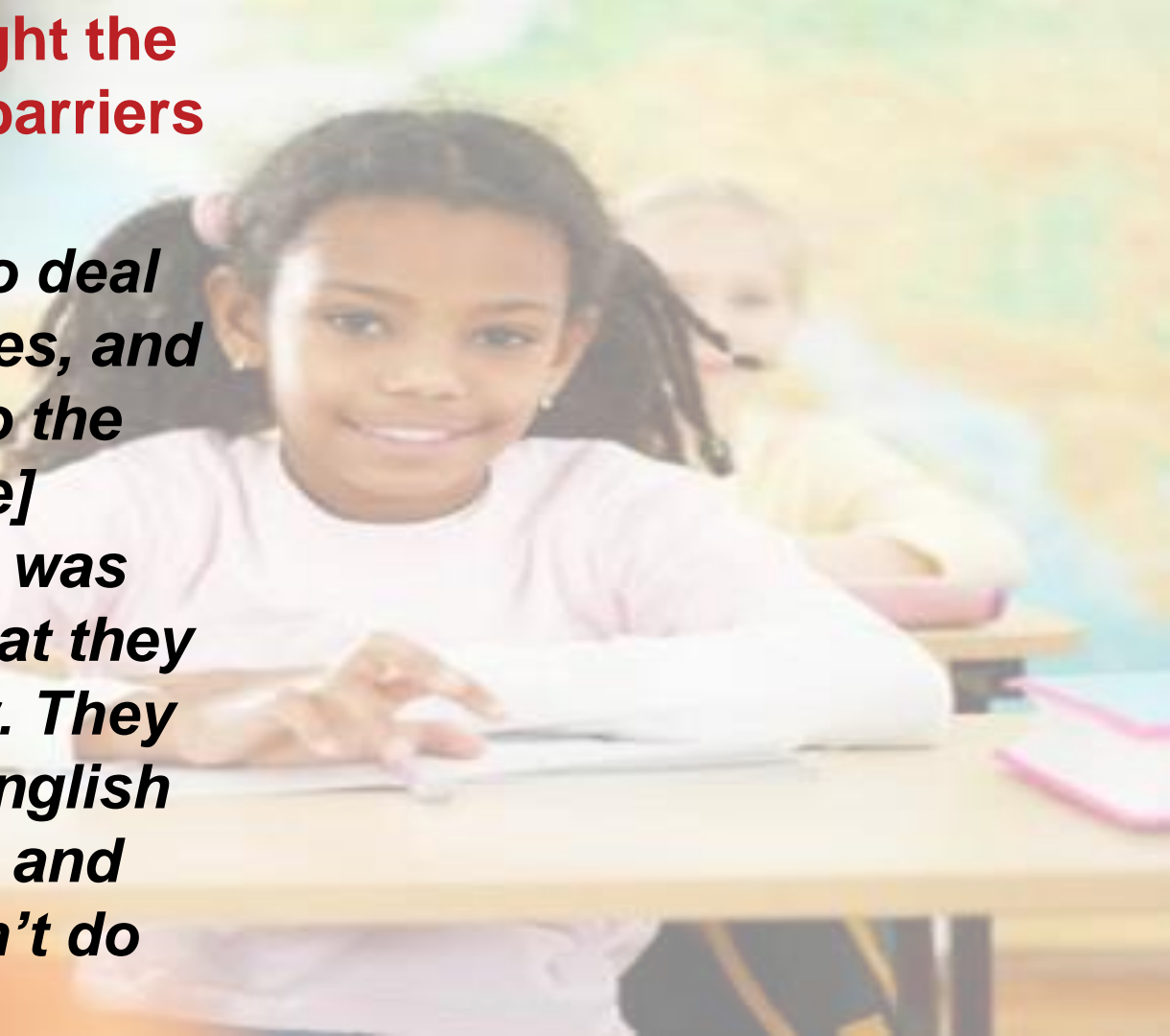
Girls sometimes resort to acting out when their counseling needs are overlooked or disregarded.

“The only way they’re going to know there’s something wrong with you is if you show your face. If you try . . . to go in there, try to sit there, one on one, they can automatically think you’re there to waste time and not to go to class. It’s like they shutting down on us.”



Stakeholders highlight the need to address the barriers facing girls.

“It is not in vogue to deal with gender disparities, and even when I talk to the director [for the] achievement gap I was surprised [to find] that they don’t look at gender. They look at race, ELL [English language learner], and disability...they can’t do gender”



Develop the Public Will

-Support opportunities for women and girls of color to speak about their lived experiences

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Breaking the Silence: A Hearing on Girls of Color



Why are girls of color...

DISCONNECTED from family & community?

CRIMINALIZED in the classroom?

INCARCERATED and **IMPACTED** with a criminal record?

OVERLY-DISCIPLINED through suspensions, citations and arrests at school?

HARMED by abuse, trauma, malnutrition and ineffective education?

What can we do about it?

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GIRLS FOR GENDER EQUITY (GGE) & THE AFRICAN AMERICAN POLICY FORUM

PRESENT

Breaking Silence

A HEARING ON GIRLS OF COLOR



WHY ARE GIRLS OF COLOR...

OVERLY-DISCIPLINED THROUGH SUSPENSIONS, ZERO TOLERANCE AND ARRESTS IN SCHOOL?

INCARCERATED AT THE HIGHEST RATES IN HISTORY?

DISCONNECTED FROM FAMILY & COMMUNITY?

OVER-SEXUALIZED IN THE MEDIA?

HARMED BY ABUSE, TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE?

Join us for a Town Hall Forum at:

OCTOBER 11, 2014

12:00 - 4:00 PM
Columbia Law School
435 West 116 St,
New York, NY 10027

Moderated by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw (Columbia University) and Hosted by Joanne N. Smith (founder of Girls for Gender Equity)

RSVP girlsmatterGGE@gmail.com
*required for lunch & childcare

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL,
CIS AND TRANSGENDER GIRLS WILL TELL YOU.

AFRICAN AMERICAN
POLICY FORUM

GGE
GIRLS FOR GENDER EQUITY

#WHYWE CANT WAIT

#SCHOOL PUSHOUT



Do you know these women?

Are their stories hidden... #WHYWE CANT WAIT

INPLAIN SIGHT

Towards Engendering the Fight for Racial Justice in the 21st Century

NOVEMBER 1 | 9AM-6PM
Columbia Law School, 435 W 116th, New York

WHY ARE WOMEN OF COLOR...

- KILLED BY STATE VIOLENCE**, but their names, faces and stories unknown?
- EXPERIENCING PRIVATE VIOLENCE**, but silenced by community politics?
- OVER-REPRESENTED IN THE PRISON SYSTEM**, but considered outside the fight against the New Jim Crow?
- MORE DEEPLY IMPACTED BY THE RECESSION**, but not represented in economic justice agendas?
- TARGETED BY RACISM**, but excluded from racial justice initiatives?

JOIN US as we build a holistic agenda that addresses gendered needs and systemic conditions.

RSVP / tinyurl.com/aapf-inplain-sight
Questions / rachel.gilmer@aapf.org

AFRICAN AMERICAN
POLICY FORUM

CENTER FOR INTERSECTIONALITY
AND SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Expand existing funding opportunities to ensure the inclusion of girls and women of color**
- **Reverse the invisibility of women and girls of color in research, public discourse, advocacy, the provision of services and policy interventions**
- **Develop ways to help girls feel safe without an over-reliance on suspension and expulsion policies**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop culturally competent programs to identify and address girls who have been traumatized by violence and abuse, including sexual violence**
- **Develop and expand programs that support girls who are pregnant, parenting or otherwise assuming significant familial responsibilities**
- **Develop workable knowledge about girls of color by replicating proved strategies including field development, data disaggregation and wide dissemination**



**Eleanor
Bumpers
(1984)**



**Tyisha
Miller
(1998)**



**Kendra
James
(2003)**



**Kathryn
Johnson
(2006)**



**Tarika
Wilson
(2008)**



**Aiyana
Stanley
Jones
(2010)**

**Comprehensive List available in Malcolm X Grassroots Movement Report
"Operation Ghetto Storm"**



**Rekia
Boyd
(2012)**



**Shantel
Davis
(2012)**



**Alesia
Thomas
(2013)**



**Yvette
Smith
(2014)**



**Aura
Rosser
(2014)**



**Tanisha
Anderson
(2014)**