

# Student Voice as the Agent of Change: Empowering our Young People to Stand Up for Respect

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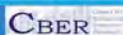


## Maximizing Your Session Participation

### When Working In Your Team

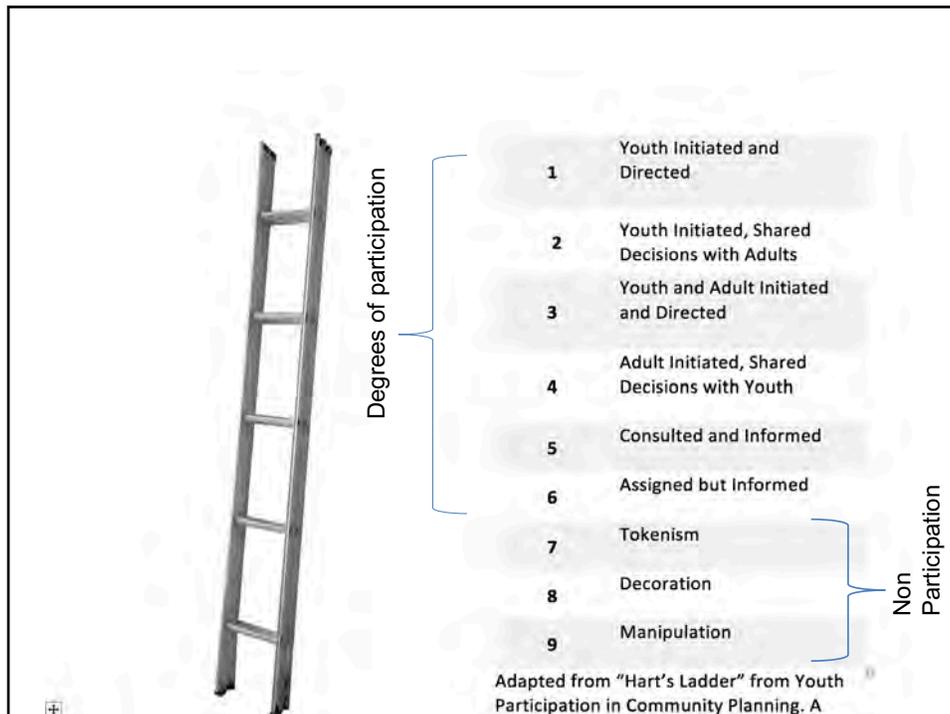
Consider 4 questions:

- Where are we in our implementation?
- What do I hope to learn?
- What did I learn?
- What will I do with what I learned?



# Outline

- ‘Hart’s Ladder’: A Conceptual Model for Youth Participation
- Youth Voice and Equity
- Exemplars
  - **MDS3**: Using Climate Surveys to Hear Youth Voice and Implement Evidence-Based Practices
  - **CPI Coping Power in the City**: Student Voices in the Development of an Evidenced-Based Intervention in Baltimore City High Schools
  - **MCPS**: Student Voice Project



Degrees of Participation		
1	Youth Initiated and Directed	Designed and run by youth and decisions made by youth.
2	Youth Initiated, Shared Decisions with Adults	Designed and run by youth who share decisions with adults.
3	Youth and Adult Initiated and Directed	Designed and run by youth and adult with shared decision making.
4	Adult Initiated, Shared Decisions with Youth	Designed and run by adults who share decisions with youth.
5	Consulted and Informed	Designed and run by adults who consult with youth. Youth make recommendations that are considered by adults.
6	Assigned but Informed	Youth do not initiate, but understand and have some sense of ownership.
7	Tokenism	Symbolic representation by few. May not have genuine voice. May be asked to speak for the group they represent.
8	Decoration	Adults use youth to promote or support a cause without informing the young people. Youth are not involved in design or decisions.
9	Manipulation	Youth involvement is used by adults to communicate adults' messages.



## United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children

- Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child):** When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have **the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account.** This Convention encourages adults to listen to the opinions of children and involve them in decision-making -- not give children authority over adults.



## United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children

- **Article 13 (Freedom of expression): Children have the right to get and share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or others.**

In exercising the right to freedom of expression, children have the responsibility to also respect the rights, freedoms and reputations of others. The freedom of expression includes the **right to share information in any way they choose, including by talking, drawing or writing.**



## Myths and Truths About Youth Voice

- **Youth Voice sounds good on paper, but my school....is different.**
- **Youth Voice is all about youth**
- **Start small with manageable tasks (for adults and youth)**
- **Youth Voice is about communities and democracy, and other people.**
- **Encourages civic engagement early**
- **Community sees young people differently**

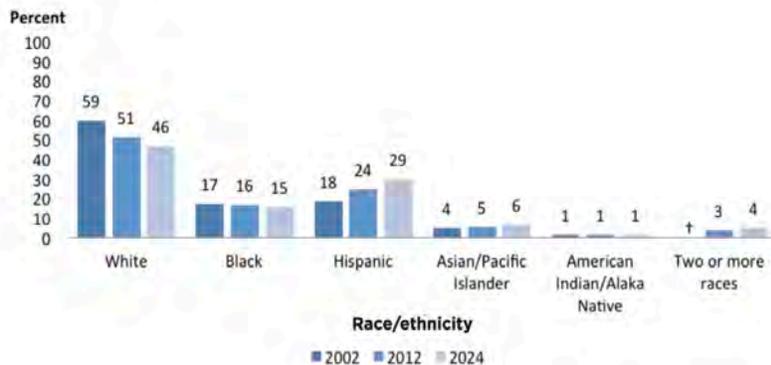


## Making the Connection to Equity

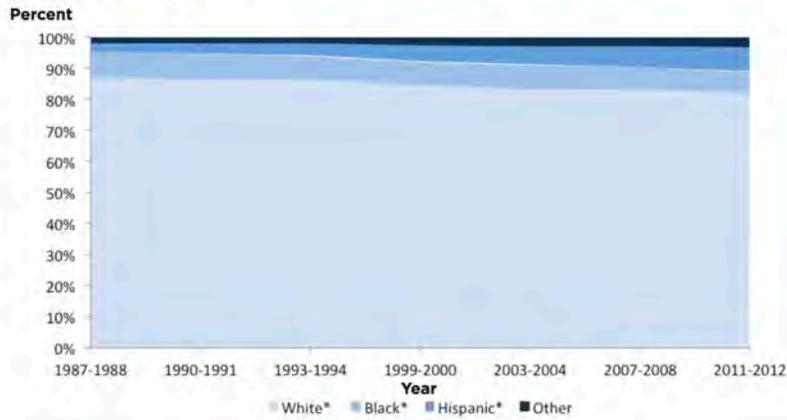
- Implicit Bias
- Student and family engagement provides essential understanding
  - Remember SW means SW
- Diversity of the workforce is misaligned with the diversity of students



**Figure 1. Percentage distribution of students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity: Fall 2002, 2012, and 2024**



**Figure 2. Percentage distribution of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1987-88 through 2011-12**



## *MDS3: Using Climate Surveys to Hear Youth Voice and Implement Evidence-Based Practices*

Kristine E. Larson

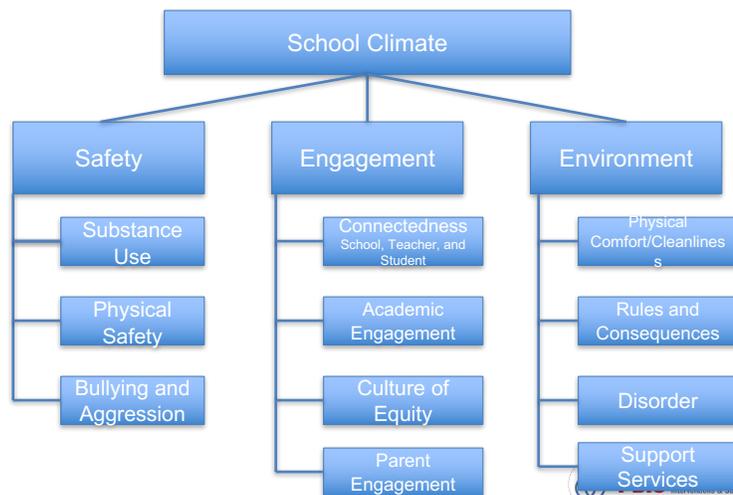


## What is MDS3?

- An initiative aimed to support positive climates in schools.
- Funded through a grant awarded through National Institute of Justice (NIJ).
- Schools receive training, resources, support, and coaching in the implementation of evidence-based programs (EBPs) to meet the needs of their students and school community.



## Student Voice & MDS3 School Climate Model



# Menu of Evidence-Based Practices

- PBIS
- Restorative Practices (Tiers 1-3)
- Check-In/Check-Out (Tier 2/3)
- Check & Connect (Tier 2/3)
- Coping Power (Tier 3)
- Classroom Check-Up (for teachers)
- \**Botvin’s Life Skills*
- \**Threat Assessment*



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2	Youth Initiated, Shared Decisions with Adults	Designed and run by youth who share decisions with adults.
3	Youth and Adult Initiated and Directed	Designed and run by youth and adults in full partnership.
4	Adult Initiated, Shared Decisions with Youth	Designed and run by adults who share decisions with youth.
5	Consulted and Informed	Designed and run by adults who consult with youth. Youth make recommendations that are considered by adults.
6	Assigned but Informed	Youth do not initiate, but understand and have some sense of ownership.
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## Lessons Learned

While we have a better understanding about youth's perceptions of school climate, we do not necessarily involve them in the design or the implementation of the EBPs.



## Recommendations

### •Involve Youth More!

#### –Design

- Have students review and make recommendations for the survey questions.
- Helping to gain buy-in (e.g., on announcements) for student completion of the survey.
- Inform students of evidence-based practices available

#### –Implementation

- More student voice in implementation of EBPs
- Include more student-led interventions that address climate



*Coping Power in the City:*  
Student Voices in the Development of  
an Evidenced-Based Intervention in  
Baltimore City High Schools

Duane Thomas



## Coping Power in the City (CPIC)

- An initiative aimed to promote safety and coping skills among 9<sup>th</sup> graders in Baltimore City Schools (BCS).
- Funded through National Institute of Justice.
- 10 high schools receive a multi-component, tier-3 intervention called *Coping Power (CP)*; (Lochman & Wells, 2002).
- Baltimore City School Police Force (BCSPF) receive a 3-part training series that utilizes data collected through upgraded video surveillance technology.



## CPIC Phase I: Jan – July 2016

- **Development and Piloting**

- *Cultural Adaptations and Pilot Testing.* Test CP model in pilot high schools over the first 6 months of the project to determine its feasibility and acceptability.

- *Focus Groups and Interviews.* Focus groups and interviews with multiple stakeholders (i.e. students, teachers, school police) in pilot high schools.

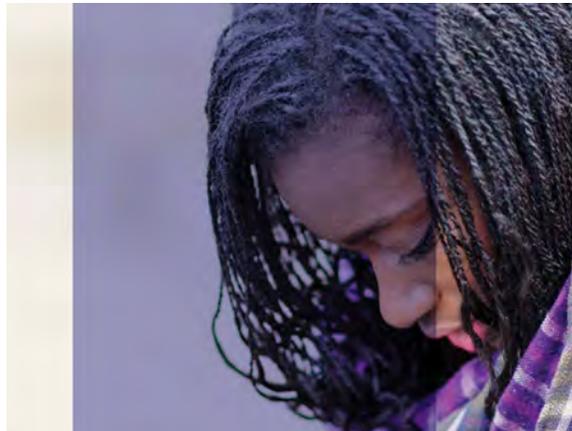
- **Police**

- *City Schools Police Training.* Pre-post data collection for all 160 officers



## JuvenileJustice

INFORMATION EXCHANGE



### Untrained Police Officers in Schools Focus on Girls of Color, Report Says

By Bill Myers | September 13, 2017



## Why Students As Agents of Change?



- Students are directly impacted
- Many live and attend schools in under-resourced neighborhoods.
- BCS is the only school district in Maryland that retains its own school police- BCSPF.
- Tensions have been heightened due to the death of Freddie Gray and related incidents.
- 80% of Baltimore youth had little trust in the police.



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## Pilot Samples

### Augusta Fells Savage Institute

- N = 11
- F = 8, M = 3
- African American
- Grades 9, 12
- School psychologist
- School police officer
- 8 modules (ID of feelings, coping skills, perspective-taking, PICC model)
- Follow-up interviews



### REACH! Partnership Academy

- N= 14
- F = 3, M = 11
- African American
- Grades 9 -11
- Dean and Asst. Dean of Discipline
- 5 modules (coping skills, perspective-taking)
- Follow-up interviews



## Focal Areas of Student Input

- Content of Sessions
  - Language and general terms
  - Scenarios
  - Simulated sequence of events (i.e., role plays)
  - Images
  - Videos
- Structure of Sessions and Activities
  - Opening and closing activities
  - Youth-led group activity for high school
  - Frequency and nature of school police involvement



## Student Feedback

“This gave me a chance to talk about things in a real way. I liked the way we were mostly in charge of conversations. The videos were real. Everybody got a chance to say what was on their minds... including about the police situation at our school.”

(student, RPA, age 15)



## Student Feedback

“The biggest problem is going to be people trusting the [school] police with this [group activities, check-ins] and finding teachers they like. I don't trust either one of them... but I do trust Ms. R.”

(student, AFSIVA, age 16)



## Lessons Learned

- It is a worthy investment to seek consultation from youth with cultural adaptation activities for EBPs:
  - Provides students with a sense of empowerment, confidence, leadership and belongingness.
  - May enhance the credibility and cultural relevance of the intervention (e.g., “real” people making “real” change).
  - May promote interest, trust and buy-in from targeted student populations.



## Recommendations

- Consider direct student involvement in the development of interventions intended for them.
- Ensure strategies are applicable to the cultural and contextual experiences of your targeted student populations.
- Attending to your own cultural self-awareness is just as, if not, more important than your knowledge of and technical skills working with diverse student populations.



## MCPS: *Student Voice Project*

Mike Muempfer



## Montgomery County Public Schools

- Located north of Washington DC
- Largest school system in Maryland
- 17<sup>th</sup> largest school system in the United States
- Students from 157 countries speaking 138 languages
- 202 Schools (133 elementary schools, 38 middle schools, 25 high schools, 1 career and technology center, 5 special schools)
- 13,698 Teachers
- Student Demographics (over 155,000 students):
  - 31.0% White
  - 21.5% Black or African American
  - 28.4% Hispanic/Latino
  - 14.2% Asian
  - ≤5% each: two or more races, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander



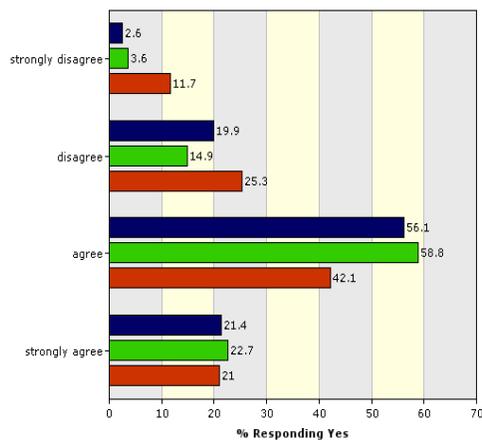
## MCPS Student Voice Surveys

- MDS3 Middle School Project
  - School Climate Survey
  - 18 Middle Schools Participating
  
- Google Form Student Surveys
  - Faculty and student co-authored
  - Individual School Based



## Baseline MCPS Data

The school provides instructional materials that reflect my culture, ethnicity, and identity



## MCPS Student Voice Project

- Pilot in 10 High Schools
  - Students and Teachers trained (Spring) to lead Study Circles
  - Study Circle Topics:
    - Student Experience
    - Equity
    - Instruction
    - Bullying
    - Other School-Based Issues



 <p><b>CHANGING</b> <b>Maryland</b> <i>for the Better</i></p>	<p><b>Michael Muempfer, M.Ed.</b></p> <p><b>Lead Specialist Student Behavior and School Climate</b> Maryland State Department of Education Division of Student, Family, and School Support Division of Special Education &amp; Early Intervention Services</p> <p>200 West Baltimore, Street Baltimore, MD 21201-2595 <a href="mailto:michael.muempfer@maryland.gov">michael.muempfer@maryland.gov</a> <b>410-767-4420</b> (office) <b>410-333-0880</b> (Fax)</p>
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## Other examples

- Focus groups with students & families representing multiple race/cultures. Showed favorable impact on reducing disproportionate discipline data (FL)
- Vetting of expectations/teaching matrix through multiple student 'groups' (MD)
- Students serve on interview panel for new staff (FL)
- Student generated data share (bullying) (MD, IA)



## Considerations

- Are 'all' students represented?
- Are youth truly represented in decision making?
  - Identify parameters of decision in advance (resources, limitations)
- Involve them early, before it's too late to make significant change
- Prepare and train them (and the adults ..)
- Be willing to learn from them –are we genuinely committed to that?



## Guiding Questions

- Considering the work you are doing. Does it capture youth voice? where would you say it falls on Hart's ladder (degree of participation)?
- Is it possible to increase the level of engagement and decision making influence for youth? What steps can you take to move up the ladder?
- What worries you/adults/staff? Will the climate allow it?



## References

Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF: London (1995)

Fletcher, A., (2016), The Free Child Project

Hart, R.A. (1997) *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. In Giving Children a Voice Citizens in Community Development (ed.). Camden Social Services

Shier, H. (2001), *Pathways to Participation: Openings, Opportunities, Obligations*. Children and Society Vol 15 pg. 107-117



## Resources (cont)

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School Teacher Data File," 1987–88 through 2011–12. See Digest of Education Statistics 2013, Table 209.10, Number and percentage distribution of teachers in public and private elementary and secondary schools, by selected teacher characteristics: Selected years, 1987 – 88 through 2011 – 12, available at*

[https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13\\_209.10.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_209.10.asp)

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Non scale Survey of Public Elementary and Secondary Education," 2002–03 and 2012–13; and National Elementary and Secondary Enrollment Projection Model, 1972 through 2024. See Digest of Education Statistics 2014, Table 203.50. available at

[http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_cge.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cge.asp)

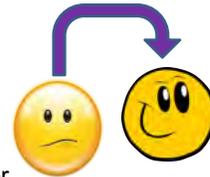


## Research Opportunity

### Understanding School Practitioner Commitment to Equity in School Discipline

#### Eligibility:

- Seeking individuals previously ambivalent or only somewhat committed to equity in school discipline and now very committed.
- Educational personnel currently working in a school or district level position (e.g., teacher, principal, coach, or specialist)



#### Participation:

- 60-90 minute phone/in person interview
- Respond to one brief survey and follow up email related to interview
- Compensation \$50 gift card



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