



School to Prison Pipeline

How Educational Inequalities Leads to Justice-Involvement

Presented by:

Telesa Jones (LINC Justice Services Coordinator) &
Cooper Mertens (LINC Data & Impact Coordinator)



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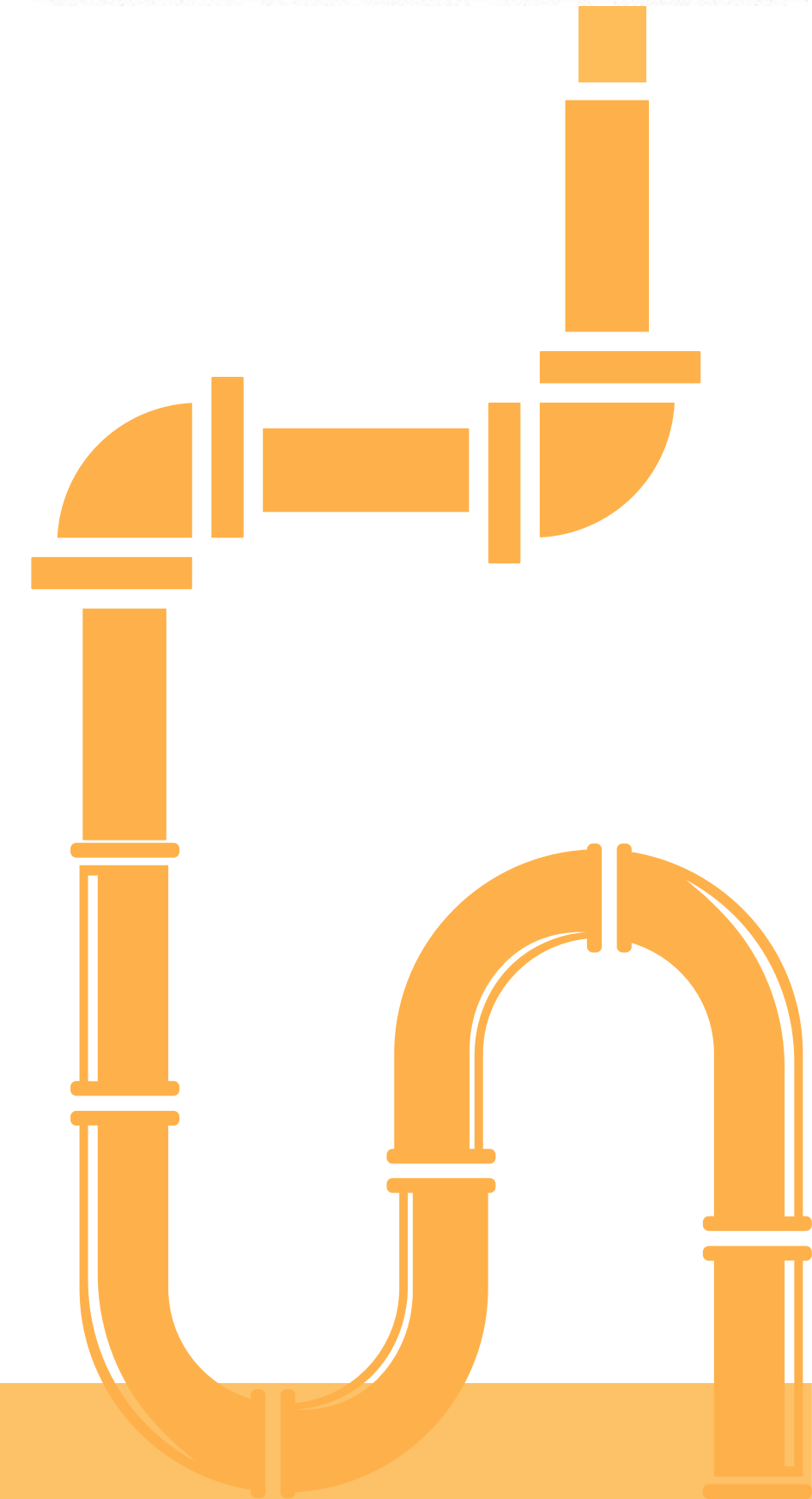
LINC'S Eyes on the Law



LINC

LINC, Inc.'s mission is to educate and motivate youth to make positive life choices and to empower men and women returning from incarceration to be productive members of our community.

LINC believes positive, supportive re-entry is in the best interest of the community with respect to public safety, a more fully employed population, a decrease in substance abuse activities, and decrease in crime rates. Sustainable resources and intensive support assist justice-involved individuals and significantly reduces recidivism.





Eyes on the Law

Our Mission: LINC's Eyes on the Law provides data-driven insights to inform and empower the community by publicizing knowledge for justice.

The Eyes on the Law initiative originally began as a desire to contribute to LINC as an organization, but also the community and population that we serve in an innovative, unique and impactful way. Due to the interdisciplinary interests of both Telesa & Cooper and a shared interest and passion for justice, knowledge and human rights, Eyes on the Law was born.

Eyes on the law has released trauma-informed publications focusing on topics such as the incarceration of pregnant women, the impacts of the criminal justice system on our youth and on families, as well as most recently an analysis of trauma-informed courts.

What is the School to Prison Pipeline?

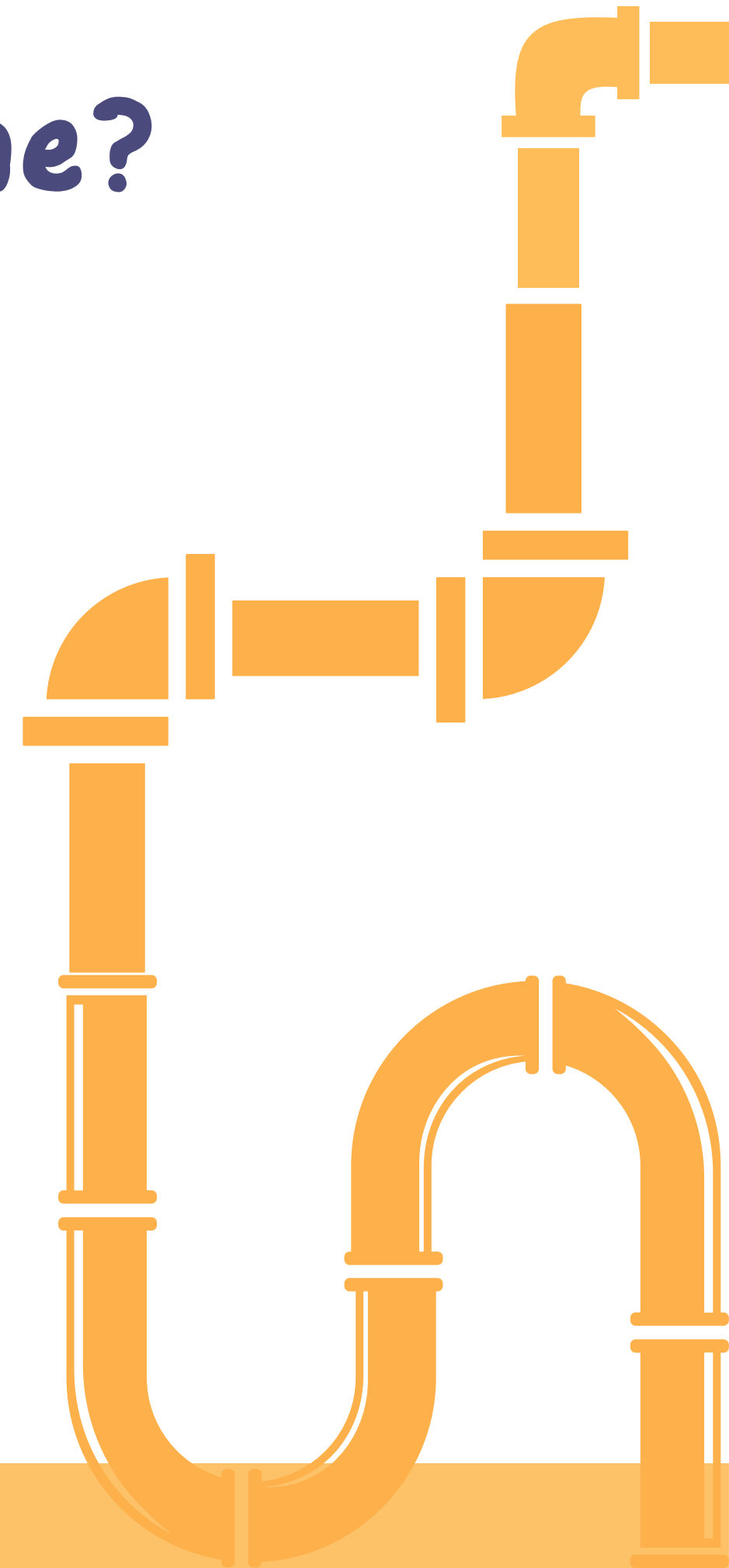


What is the School to Prison Pipeline?

The School to Prison Pipeline is the trend of pushing students out of school and into the legal systems.

Policies that encourage automatic suspension & punishment, police in schools, and out-of-classroom time contribute greatly to the school to prison pipeline. However, the issue is made up of complex contributory factors.

The School to Prison Pipeline is in essence the transformation of educational spaces into detention-like centers.



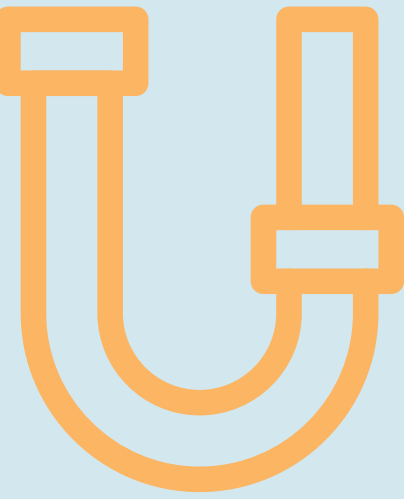


It Starts in the Classroom...

The school to prison pipeline begins in the classroom. Teachers are often overworked, undersupported, experiencing large classroom numbers, and are incentivized to dispel children from classrooms.

Teachers lack proper training to recognize and respond to students in crises. Lack of support for teachers, encourages them to resort to automatic punishment. Pushing students out of classrooms without recognizing core issues and working to address them with the students, often pushes students into the arms of the Criminal Legal System.

School Counselors



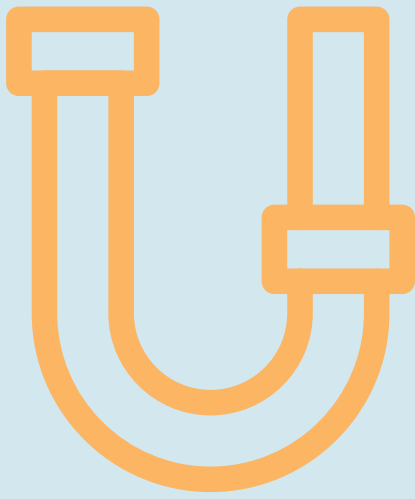
While the aim of school counselors is to support students with problems at home that may impact their performance at school, counselors also face some of the same barriers of support and funding as teachers. This leaves schools without:

- Trained professionals with adequate knowledge on mental and emotional support
- Overburdened caseloads

Students being pushed into the pipeline have histories of disabilities, abuse, neglect, poverty, mental illness and trauma. Having trained professionals in the schools are essential to recognizing children in crises and working to educate teachers on how to support students who are experiencing difficulties both inside and outside of school.



Policing Schools



The increased presence of police officers in schools is a major contributor to the school to prison pipeline.

Oftentimes, officers in schools are there to promote a sense of safety, but this may be causing the opposite effect. Inadequate training, policies and monitoring, has led to instances of police brutality being inflicted on students, particularly students of color.

Police officers assigned to patrol schools can legally use physical force on students, arrest and handcuff them, and bring the full weight of the criminal justice system to bear on kids who are simply misbehaving. These early interactions with law enforcement is a root cause of justice-involvement outside of schools.



Contributing Factors



Factors the Contribute to the School to Prison Pipeline



- Suspension
- Over-policing of schools
- Zero-tolerance policies
- Underfunded schools
- Alternative education placements
- Inadequate Resources
- Lack of qualified educational professionals
- Overcriminalization of Black Youth
- Incentivations caused by the No Child Left Behind Act
- Lack of student support
- Lack of addressing the root causes of behavioral issues
- Lack of adequate intervention programs

Which Students are Impacted?

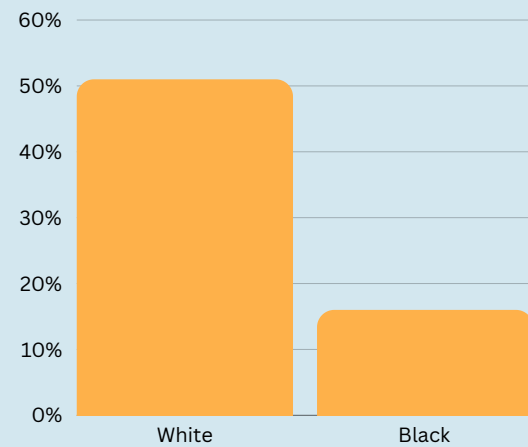


- 1 Certainly, all students can be impacted by or victims of the School to Prison Pipeline. However, some students are more at risk than others.
- 2 Black and Brown students are disproportionately impacted by the School to Prison Pipeline
- 3 Students experiencing/have a history of/are being treated for mental health conditions
- 4 Students experiencing a toxic or disassembled home lives including: domestic violence, abuse and neglect
- 5 Students experiencing poverty, food insecurity, unstable housing, trauma etc

Disproportionate numbers



The Statistics



Black Students account for only 15% of public school enrollment. Yet 42% of Black Students have experienced multiple suspensions.



Black students are 3x more likely to be expelled or suspended than white students.



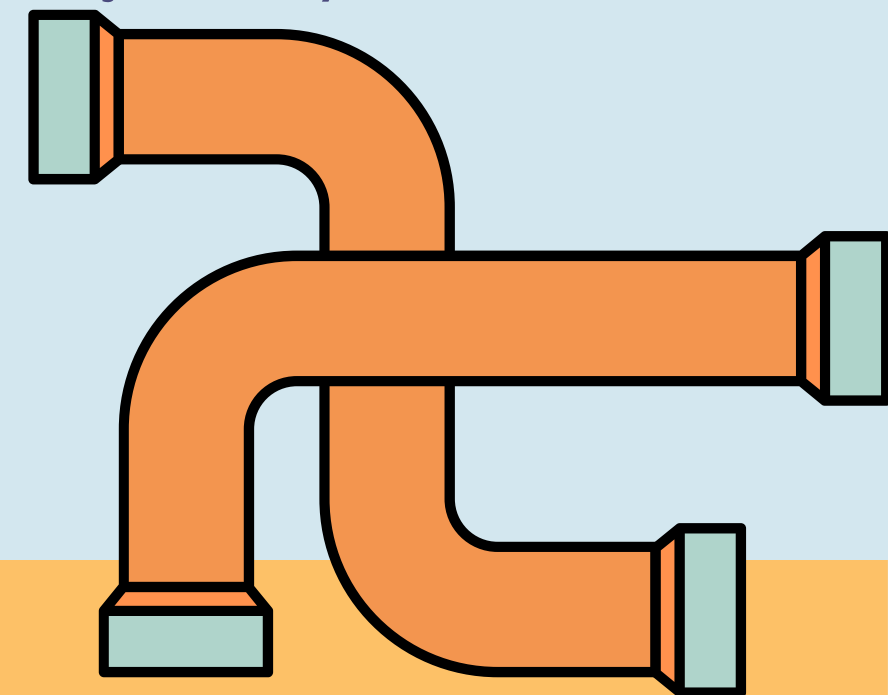
Black students make up 31% of school related arrests.

40%

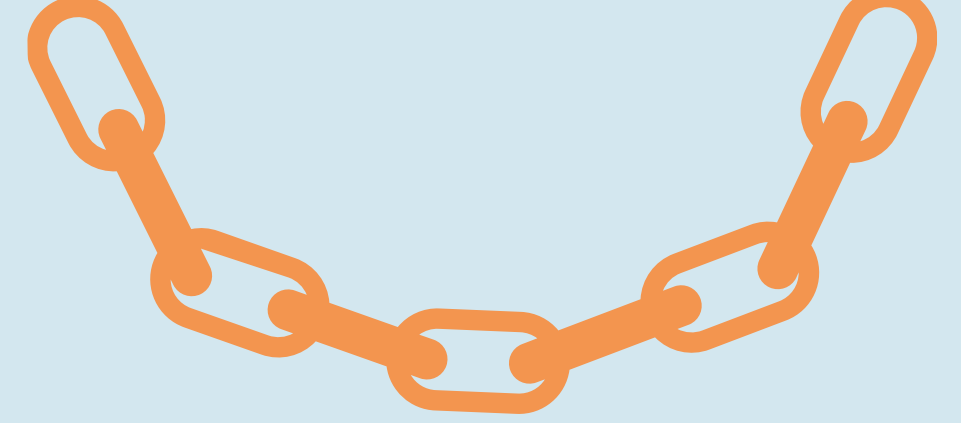
in NC, school-based cases make up 40% of referrals to the juvenile justice system.



Across the country 43% of schools have some form of law enforcement presence on campus at least once a week.



Disparities



Youth of Color are **2.5x** more likely to be referred to juvenile court and **1.5** times more likely to be placed in secure confinement

147/1,000 Black Students were suspended from school compared to 44/1000 White Students (2015-2016)

The incarceration of Black Youth is 5x higher than the incarceration rate for White Youth (2019).

41% of Black Youth are in various forms of incarceration or detainment, although Black Youth only makes up 15% of the overall U.S. population

Black Youth are more likely to be arrested. However, there is no data that supports the idea that Black Youth commit more "crime"

26% of all Youth referred to the juvenile justice system experiences physical or learning disabilities.

Disparities Cont'd.



Only an estimated **9.5%** of the total youth population is LGBTQ+, yet **20%** of youth in juvenile justice facilities are LGBTQ+. (That's 1 in 5 youth)

85% of LGBTQ+ youth within juvenile justice facilities are youth of color.

39.4% of all youth within female juvenile justice facilities are LGBTQ+.

Nonheterosexuality has been known to predict higher risk of sanctions at school and for being stopped by the police. LGBTQ+ girls in particular are at higher risk.

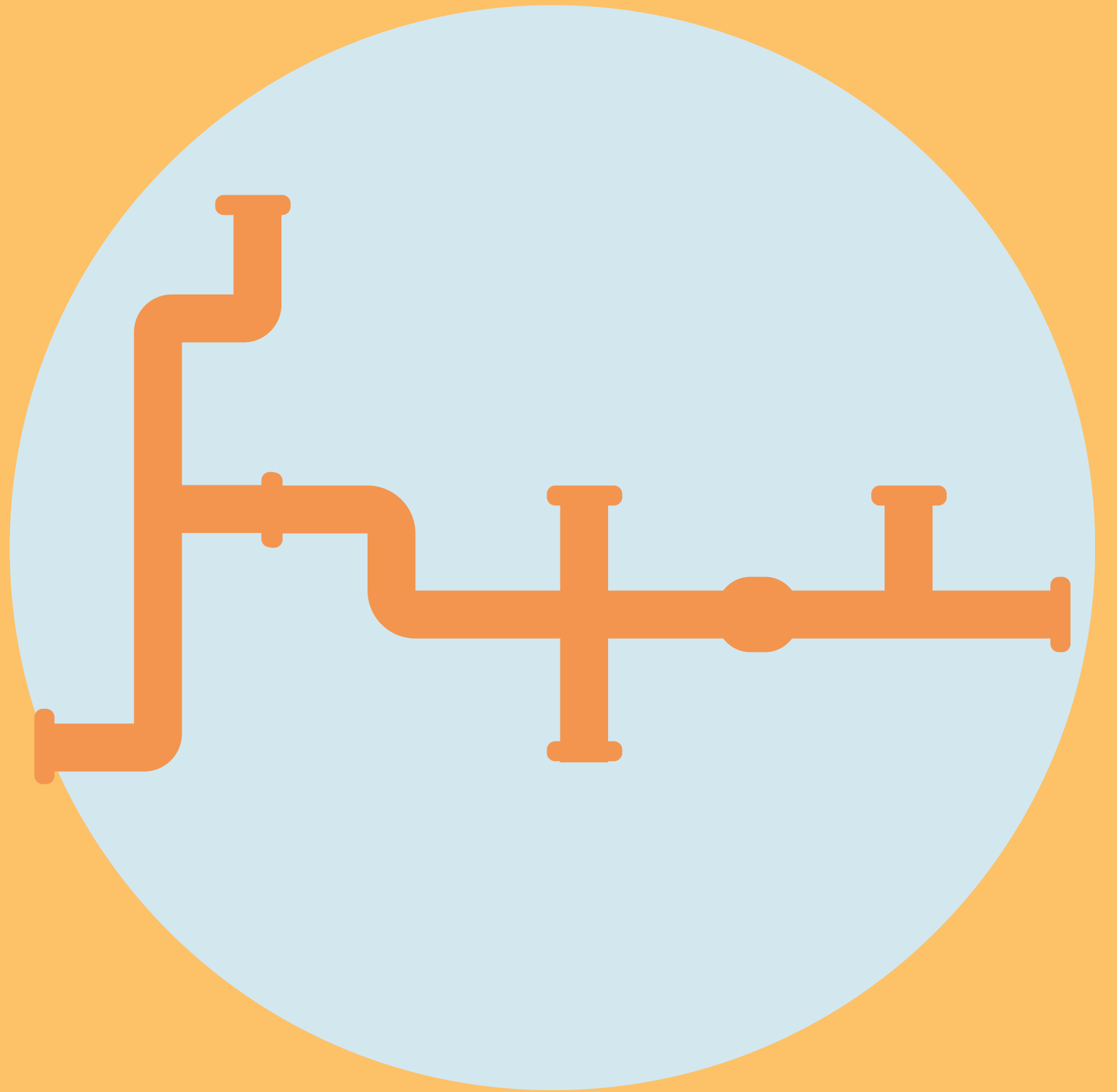
LGBTQ+ youth have higher risks of feeling unsafe both at home and at school. LGBTQ+ youth are **2-3x more likely** to be detained for running away for this reason.

LGBTQ+ youth are disproportionately impacted by "zero-tolerance" policies and gendered dress code policies

LGBTQ+ students who experience discrimination at school were more likely to become involved in the justice system (**3.1% vs 1.1%**)

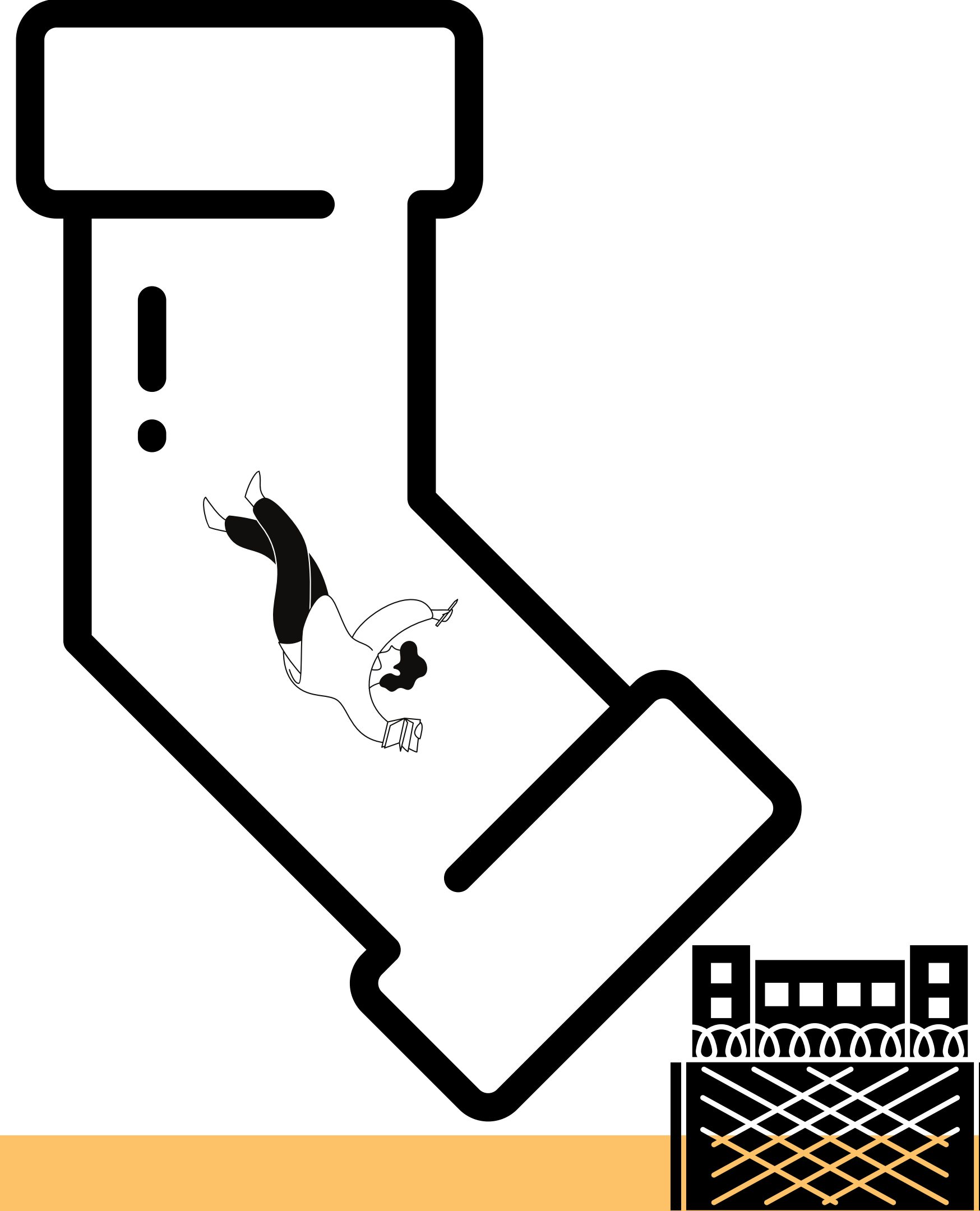
Current bills being passed in NC are leading to more exclusionary practices that can lead to feelings of isolation for LGBTQ+ youth, which can lead to isolation and a higher risk to being targeted for school sanctions.

The Pipeline to Justice Involvement



Down the Pipe...

Students suspended or expelled for a discretionary violation are nearly 3x more likely to be in contact with the juvenile justice system the following years



What Can We Do?



- 1 Recognize, address and educate our communities about the existence of the School to Prison Pipeline and its disproportionate impact on our Youth
- 2 Understand the history of overcriminalization of Black Youth and the oppressive and racist structures that our systems are based on
- 3 Mandate training for school professionals to properly respond to students in crises
- 4 Depolicing our schools and implementing trauma-informed, supportive practices that uplift students including repealing zero-tolerance policies
- 5 Funding schools with counselors, teachers, supportive staff and support programs that prevent students from becoming victims of the school to prison pipeline

Improving Cross Cultural Communication

Communicating across cultures is incredibly important, especially giving the diverse and multicultural society that we live in. Having teachers that not only look like our students, but have the ability to communicate effectively across cultures is critical to building bridges and connections with students. Teachers can improve cultural communication by:

- Being aware
- Keeping an open-mind and educate themselves on different cultures
- Reflecting and addressing personal biases
- Facilitate meaningful conversations with students and colleagues



Current Community Efforts



Current Efforts



Establishing community partners, and creating spaces in the community to support and uplift ALL our youth is an essential element to offer alternatives to suspension, expulsion, or detention-like programs.

- LINC, Inc., for example, partners with other community agencies like Port City United to be able to provide youth with support through programs like:
 - LITE Manhood program
 - CRC's in Schools*
 - LITE Summer Experience





Contact Us at:
eyesonthelaw@lincnc.org



[@eyesonthelaw](https://twitter.com/eyesonthelaw)

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