

**COUNTERING
PUSHOUT**
SKILLS TO SUPPORT BLACK GIRLS

KAYLA & AMBER

INTRODUCTION

Black girls experience school discipline for a host of reasons—many of them associated with the increasingly punitive responses to student behavior and the absence of alternatives to exclusionary discipline in schools. Using social-behavioral research, as well as before- and after-interactive animated video scenarios, this guide will help teachers increase their capacity to create a positive environment where students feel safe and cared for. These self-paced learning videos will assist teachers as they master skills and concepts.

FOR TEACHER REFERENCE

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING	ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
<p>Perception of self and perception of others influence relationships and interaction amongst people in communities.</p> <hr/> <p>Inclusive curriculum(s) addresses the social, emotional, and academic needs of students.</p>	<p>How can understanding Black girlhood change the structure of traditional education?</p> <hr/> <p>What is the difference between acknowledging vs. addressing the influence of racial bias in education?</p>

WEBINAR RUN TIME	NOTE
<p>28:33</p>	<p>Though the questions can be answered while watching the video, it is recommended that time is taken to digest what is being discussed prior to answering the questions to allow for reflection. This can be accomplished by pausing the module after each section, or watching it through and then going back to specific parts of the module for review.</p>

Background

Drawing from the documentary film PUSHOUT: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools, this webinar features interactive animated video scenarios along with guidance from Dr. Monique W. Morris, Dr. Venus Evans-Winters, and Stephanie L. Patton, experts in the fields of social justice, gender equality, and educational equity. These experts give context to the crisis and provide you a roadmap for how to provide a positive, rather than punitive, response to behaviors that are often misunderstood and misrepresented. The self-paced learning videos and these guidebooks are designed for teachers of all subjects in grades 6 through 12.

WWW.PUSHOUTFILM.COM

RELEVANT PUSHOUT DOCUMENTARY CHAPTERS	RELEVANT PUSHOUT EDUCATOR VIDEOS
<p>Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Chapter 4, Chapter 5, Chapter 6, Chapter 9</p>	<p>Learning Module 3, Adverse Childhood Experiences; Learning Module 5, The Adolescent Brain; Learning Module 6, Adultification Bias</p>

GLOSSARY

ACEs	The Adverse Childhood Experience questionnaire is used to measure childhood trauma. The evaluation consists of 10 questions that fall under the three types of ACEs: abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction.
Adultification	The assignment of adult norms toward a child.
Racialized gender bias	Bias or discriminatory treatment on the basis of race and gender.
School-to-confinement pathways/PUSHOUT	The policies, practices, conditions, and prevailing conscience that facilitate student contact with the juvenile court or criminal legal system.
Microaggression	The policies, practices, conditions, and prevailing conscience that facilitate student contact with the juvenile court or criminal legal system.
Implicit bias	Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION

TO BEGIN

The questions below should be answered prior to starting the teacher module. They can be incorporated into group discussion or answered independently.

1

Black girls are more likely to get into physical fights than white girls.

- a. True
- b. False

2

What do you consider are the most effective ways a teacher can de-escalate a fight? There could be more than one answer.

- a. Separate students who are engaged in a fight
- b. Adopt coping mechanisms to calm students, such as deep breathing exercises
- c. Discuss alternative ways to express anger other than fighting
- d. Bring in a School Resource Officer (SRO) to deal with it

3

How important is it for you to have SROs at your school?

- a. Very important
- b. Somewhat important
- c. Not important at all
- d. We don't have SROs at my school/in my district

4

If SROs are used in your school district, what are your feelings about their presence and their relationship with the student population?

- a. Positive
- b. Negative
- c. Neutral

5

What attribute(s) do you believe to be most important for a teacher to bring to her/his students? (Select all that apply)

- a. Empathy
- b. An understanding of the community
- c. The ability to control the classroom
- d. An understanding of the curriculum
- e. An emphasis on critical thinking
- f. Establish mutual respect

6

How do you think teachers can build respect with their students?

- a. Share personal stories from their own lives
- b. Start each class with a conversation about the students' experiences over the last 24 hours
- c. Allow dissenting opinions
- d. Encourage students to ask questions

7

What are the unique challenges faced by Black girls in schools?

- a. Black girls experience hyper-punitive discipline
- b. Black girls are assumed to be older than they are (adultification)
- c. Black girls are more often seen as disrespectful in the ways they express themselves
- d. All of the above

COUNTERING PUSHOUT LESSON: “KAYLA & AMBER”

THEMES

Classroom management, teacher-student relationships, de-escalating conflict, recognizing teacher burnout, understanding underlying issues, assessing friendship, adolescent development, adultification.

INTERVIEW(S)

Monique W. Morris, Ed.D., Stephanie L. Patton, M.Ed., Venus Evans-Winters, Ph.D.

THE FIGHT

TIME	START TIME	00:00	END TIME	01:05
SUMMARY	A fight between two former friends is broken up and addressed by the girls' teacher.			

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- 1) When watching the fight between Kayla and Amber, what words or phrases immediately came to your mind? How would that then influence your management of this conflict?
- 2) How would you describe Ms. Reynolds's tone when addressing Kayla and Amber? Choose a word or phrase Ms. Reynolds used when speaking to the girls. Do you think this helped or hurt her effort to de-escalate the conflict between the two students?
- 3) The School Resource Officer (SRO) is present while Ms. Reynolds is addressing the girls and then takes them to the office. How might this have influenced Kayla and Amber's interaction with each other and Ms. Reynolds? Is there an SRO present at your school? If so, how is the SRO incorporated into your school community?
- 4) The SRO states that the girls are "asking for a suspension." Do you agree or disagree with this, and how would this be handled in your school?

DE-ESCALATING CONFLICT

time	start time	01:06	end time	06:08
summary	Featured experts discuss adolescent development and the need for adults to model de-escalation techniques.			

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

“Conflict is normal, and our young people are watching (you know) violence and conflict, not only in their homes, but now on TV...”

VENUS EVANS-WINTERS, PH.D.

- 1) Dr. Evans-Winters speaks about the influence of media, print media, and social media on our students and the need for teachers to “re-model” behaviors such as debate and resolving differences between people. How do you see this influence from the media manifesting itself in your school/classroom, and when are there opportunities for you to “re-model” how to handle conflict as Dr. Evans-Winters described?

“...you start with the parents with your expectations with girls...and not judge the way they have their boundaries set at home, but definitely differentiating the type of behavior that is expected at school...some of it's generational on how we handle issues and challenges within our homes and communities. So, I think we have to be inclusive of parents of what our expectations are, provide the same training for parents, and differentiate for students between community, home life, or school life.”

STEPHANIE L. PATTON, M.ED.

- 2) Is there a relationship between the teaching staff and parents at your school that allows for conversations and training to take place as Stephanie Patton has addressed? What does it look like and how could it improve? Do you receive any support from your building or district administration?

A COUNSELOR STEPS IN

time	start time 05:44	end time 09:57
summary	A counselor steps in and puts the girls and the teacher through a calming exercise. Expert commentary included.	

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- 1) How did the counselor interact with Kayla and Amber in contrast to Ms. Reynolds in the first animation?
- 2) The counselor replaced the SRO, who was involved in the first scene. How does this contribute to changing the tone between the adults and the students?
- 3) When the counselor steps in and states that the girls need a moment, she also includes Ms. Reynolds. Have you ever taken this time before further addressing a student? What difference does/can that time-out make when addressing students after a conflict arises?



We have to demonstrate how to hold a self-regulation, really, when there has been disruption, in order for young people to understand that is possible in that moment and also recognize that it is something that they should be doing as well."



MONIQUE W. MORRIS, ED.D.

- 4) As a classroom teacher, do you practice any techniques to help you to "self-regulate"? Do you use any of the techniques that Monique Morris named for your students? What is the benefit of practicing self-regulation?
- 5) In a clip from the documentary PUSHOUT, educators from Columbus City Preparatory School for Girls meet to discuss student progress. There was also a meeting in the animation about Kayla and Amber in the conference room. How was the focus maintained on the teachers' problem-solving without the meeting becoming a "vent session"?

BUILDING SUPPORT

time	start time 09:58	end time 12:27
summary	The importance of providing support systems for both students and teachers/support staff is discussed.	

- 1) What is "compassion fatigue"? Have you ever felt this, and what can be done to help treat this for educators?

“...for Black girls, they want to be seen and they want to be heard. And so when you see girls escalate and screaming, you have to understand that they feel powerless in that situation...”

STEPHANIE L. PATTON, M.ED.

- 2) What do you do to empower your students, and how does that contribute to de-escalation?

ADULTIFICATION: MISREADING BLACK GIRLHOOD

time	start time 12:28 end time 15:48
summary	Flashback to Ms. Reynolds and the School Resource Officer (SRO) speaking to Kayla and Amber after the fight. Understanding how and why the exchange between the teacher and her students went wrong.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

“...it’s really important for educators to understand where they may be holding some adultification bias. Their interpretation of behaviors might be informed by an understanding that these are not, in fact, young people who need guidance, but young people who should know better.”

”

MONIQUE W. MORRIS, ED.D.

- 1) All three experts, Monique Morris, Stephanie Patterson, and Venus Evans-Winters, describe what the adultification of Black girls looks like. Choose a quote that most closely resembles the adultification bias that you have either witnessed or internalized. How would you describe its effect on student-teacher relationships and how Black girls are approached when there is conflict?
- 2) How did adultification bias influence Ms. Reynolds when she interacted with Kayla and Amber after the fight? What language does she use when addressing the two girls that reflect adultification? How did this influence the girls’ response to Ms. Reynolds?

SHIFTING FRIENDSHIPS

time	start time 15:49	end time 19:22
summary	How adolescent girls process friendship and its changes.	

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- 1) Explain how teaching girls about the “boundaries of friendship and what friendship means” can help with conflict resolution. What are some of the boundaries of friendship that adolescent girls need to learn about?

“ So if they’re having a good time and they’re laughing and they may be a little loud or they may be talking during class...I think sometimes we crush their spirit and say this isn’t appropriate. This isn’t the time. And so it’s kind of a confusing message.

”

STEPHANIE L. PATTON, M.ED.

- 2) How can you maintain classroom management and still allow your students time to “have joy in their friendships”?

“ ...you’re supposed to be sugar and spice and everything nice. So it’s a pressure cooker. We have all of these bottled-up emotions. And then when we’re ready to express ourselves, it doesn’t always come out in the most positive ways.

”

VENUS EVANS-WINTERS, PH.D.

- 3) In addition to adultification, gender bias also contributes to the challenges Black adolescent girls have with expressing themselves to their peers constructively during conflict. Why is that? Refer to comments made by the three experts when answering the question.

BUILDING TRUST GOING FORWARD

time	start time	19:24	end time	21:49
summary	Addresses the importance of educators' need to be taken care of themselves, as well as the importance of their building relationships with their students.			

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- 1) How is the mental health and well-being of educators connected to the students that they work with? Is there anything that you do to take care of yourself, and if so, what?

“ For educators to be able to show up that authentically in schools and to be able to show up in ways that young people recognize as authentic enough for them to trust that educator...we have to build relationships. We have to recognize the part of us that keeps us from building a connection with those that are trusting us and begin to address that. ”

MONIQUE W. MORRIS, ED.D.

- 2) What do you do to build the kind of relationships with your students that would create the level of trust between student and teacher that Monique Morris is discussing in the clip? Do you see yourself as being authentic in your interactions with your students?

RESPECTING DIFFERENCES

time	start time 21:50 end time 25:13
summary	Teachers need to understand the community they are working in.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- 1) In a clip from the documentary PUSHOUT, educators from Columbus City Preparatory School for Girls discuss strategies they use to address a student's behavior. How did they respond to what is traditionally perceived as "disruptive" behavior from a student? What effect did the strategies shared have on the student? Would they have had the same outcome if they had responded in a more traditional and punitive manner to the students' actions?
- 2) The teachers featured in the clip from PUSHOUT are white and teach at a predominately Black school. How did their discussion reflect what Stephanie Patton discussed regarding the importance of authenticity and learning more about your student population?

REFLECTING DIVERSITY

time	start time	25:14	end time	28:13
summary	Closing remarks.			

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

“ We’re now in a racially multicultural democracy in our classrooms, and our pedagogy, our instruction, needs to reflect that diversity. ”

VENUS EVANS-WINTERS, PH.D.

- 1) Reflect on the comments made by Venus Evans-Winters. How much emphasis have you placed on getting to know the “other”? Do you approach your relationship with your students and your instruction with an acknowledgement of their diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds?

“ I think it’s so important for teachers to enter a classroom with a fundamental commitment to lead with love. There are so many ways that we are conditioned to lead with fear. Our disciplinary policies are rooted in fear... But, I think it’s really important for educators to walk into a space and engage with a deep commitment to lead with love.” ”

VENUS EVANS-WINTERS, PH.D.

- 2) What words or phrases would you associate with how you lead your class? Given the conversation that has taken place via this teaching module, how effective do you think it is, and what do you use to measure its effectiveness?
- 3) What practices in education are based on fear as opposed to love, and how can it be changed?

COUNTERING PUSHOUT INACTION

- 1) Review your answers from the introductory discussion questions. Have any of them changed after looking at this module? How?
- 2) What are you going to take from this teaching model back into your classroom and your school community? Think of realistic and actionable steps.
- 3) Pull a quote from one of the featured experts in the closing remarks. Explain why you chose this particular quote. How might you apply it to your teaching practices moving forward?

STUDY GUIDE BY

REBECCA C. GROSS, EDUCATOR

FOR MORE INFORMATION

GO TO WWW.PUSHOUTFILM.COM