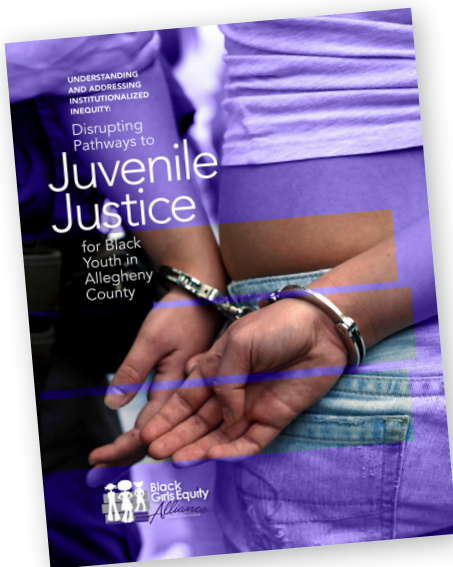


Update on referrals to Juvenile Justice in Allegheny County

In our 2020 report, *Understanding and Addressing Institutionalized Inequity: Disrupting Pathways to Juvenile Justice for Black Youth in Allegheny County*, the BGEA Juvenile Justice Workgroup identified **two primary causes** of the high and disproportionate rates of referral of Black youth to juvenile justice in Allegheny County:

- 1 School-based arrests and referrals for discretionary offenses like "disorderly conduct"
- 2 Referrals for failure to pay fines associated with summary citations, most of which are issued at schools for minor, discretionary "offenses"

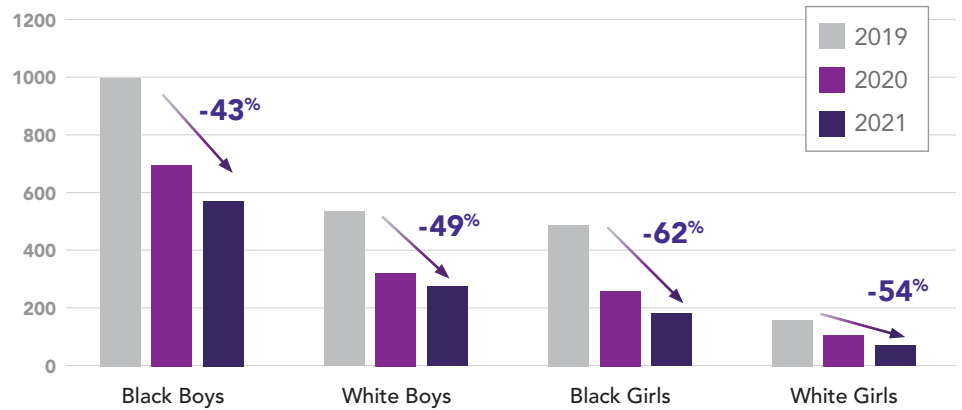


gwensgirls.org/bgea
 711 West Commons, Third Floor
 Pittsburgh, PA 15212
 412-904-4239

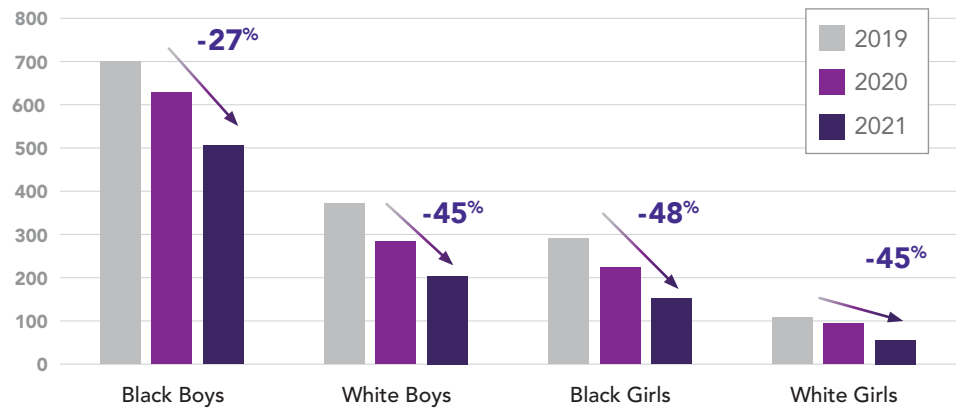
What happened when many students were not attending school in-person during the pandemic? **We compared 2021 and 2020 data with 2019 data to assess the impact:**

Juvenile justice referrals in Allegheny County dropped from 2019-2021

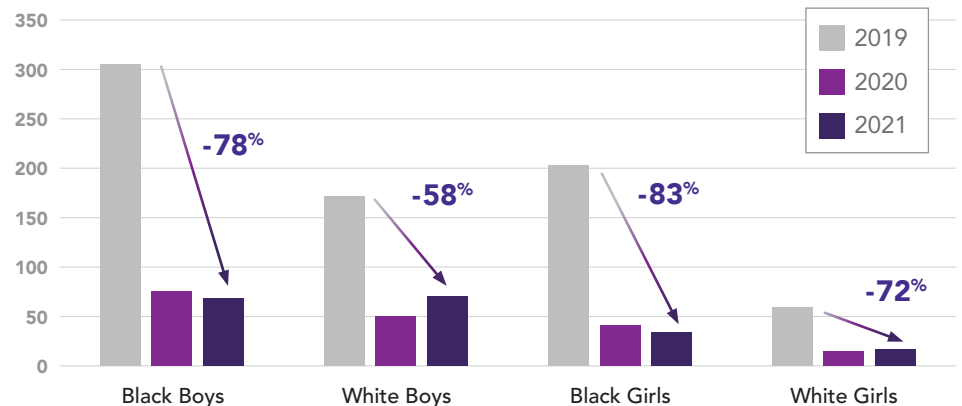
Referrals of Black girls decreased by over 60%



Non school-related referrals to juvenile justice dropped from 2019-2021 for all groups



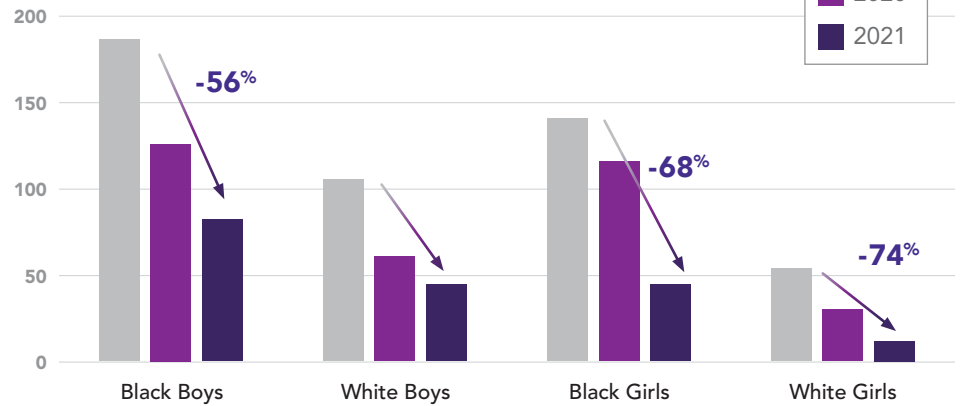
School-related juvenile justice referrals dropped substantially for all groups, particularly for Black students



What does this mean?

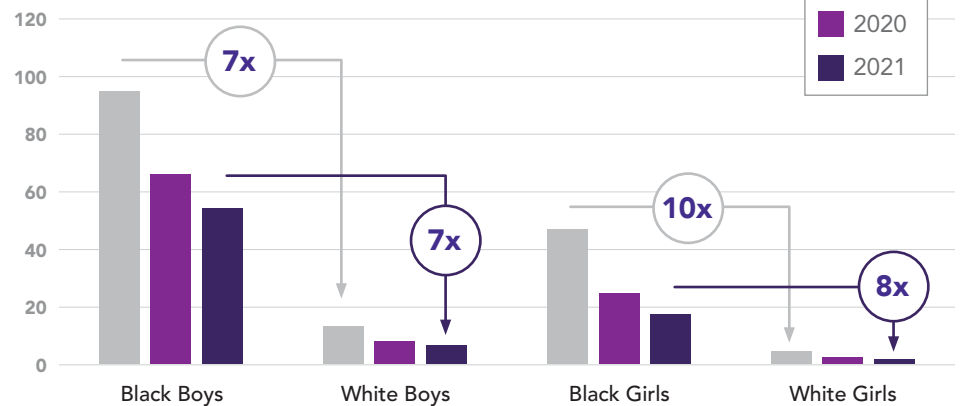
- Juvenile justice referrals of Black girls in Allegheny County decreased by almost two-thirds from 2019 to 2021.
- Juvenile justice referrals of all groups of youth decreased significantly during this period, locally and nationally.
- This is excellent news but likely a result of the fact that most students were not physically in schools during the pandemic. We all need to work collaboratively to ensure that juvenile justice referrals do not go back up now that students are back in schools.
- This can be accomplished by implementing restorative practices in schools, increasing availability of and access to mental health supports, and instituting pre-arrest diversion initiatives, among other measures.
- Data from 2022, when available, will begin to tell us whether schools have made progress or whether referral rates, particularly for Black youth in Allegheny County, return to similarly high levels as they were prior to the pandemic.

Referrals to juvenile justice for failure to pay fines for summary citations decreased from 2019 to 2021

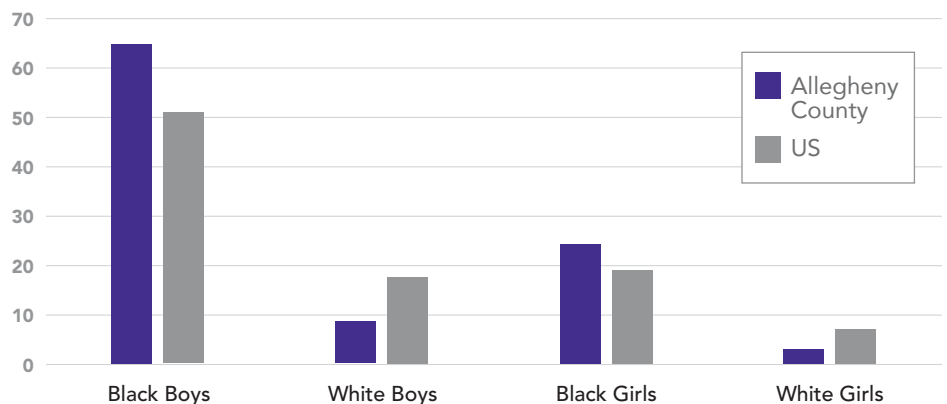


Juvenile justice referral rates decreased for all groups, and racial disproportionality decreased for girls

Rates per 1000 youth, aged 10-17



During the pandemic, juvenile justice referral rates decreased locally and nationally. In 2020, local rates for Black youth remained higher than national rates, and for White youth lower than national rates.



For help and more information:

Gwen's Girls is coordinating a pre-arrest diversion program for young people in Allegheny County.

Its goals are:

- To reduce racial disparities in juvenile justice referrals
- To advance a culture of restorative justice within schools and communities

Gwen's Girls is working collaborative with Allegheny County Department of Human Services and others involved with the Black Girls Equity Alliance to research, plan, and design the approach and launch of the pre-arrest diversion initiative. The program will involve a countywide, centralized intake entity for diversion referrals from school staff, community law enforcement, and others.

For representation for a summary citation, contact:
CHRISTINE PORTER, ESQ.

Education Attorney, Juvenile Division
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Public Defender
(412) 350-3007