

Suspended students more likely to get caught up in juvenile justice system, and vice versa

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Students who are suspended from school even once are much more likely to have contact with the juvenile justice system, according to new research from Rice University's Houston Education Research Consortium (HERC), which also shows that students who come in contact with the juvenile justice system are more likely to face

suspension.

The studies, led by former HERC researcher Horace Duffy, examined the relationship between suspensions and interaction with the [juvenile justice system](#) among students in the Houston Independent School District (HISD). (Juvenile justice system contact is defined as any interaction with the system, regardless of whether a student is found guilty or not guilty.)

Duffy found that for every suspension a [student](#) faced, they were 7% more likely to have contact with the juvenile justice system. Once those students returned to school, they were 20% more likely to be suspended.

Duffy also found students were at greatest risk of suspension and interaction with the juvenile justice system in ninth grade, right after the move from middle to high school. Males were 1.8 times more likely to become caught up in the juvenile system than females, and English language learners and gifted and talented students were less likely than other groups.

Black, Latino, economically disadvantaged and special education students were more likely to be suspended from school following juvenile justice interaction than their white and/or more economically advantaged peers.

To reduce school suspensions, Duffy recommends training to make staff aware of the [racial differences](#) in school discipline, implementing [support systems](#) and interventions for at-risk students; coordinating school counselors to better support students during the transition from middle to [high school](#); and diversion programs to address the social and economic factors that contribute to juvenile crime.

HERC hopes the research provides insights into when students are at risk

of punishment, while also giving the district suggestions on how they can intervene and respond to school suspensions and juvenile justice interaction.

Data for the studies came from HISD—specifically grades 6-12—and the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department.

More information: School suspensions associated with future juvenile justice contact: [rice.app.box.com/s/vv4yqr47et7 ... u6bimua6u96i0nb88vcp](https://rice.app.box.com/s/vv4yqr47et7...u6bimua6u96i0nb88vcp)

The timing of first school suspension and juvenile justice contact in the Houston independent school district: [rice.app.box.com/s/zf57cpoqh36 ... sf1yykziazo1gry3jvqc](https://rice.app.box.com/s/zf57cpoqh36...sf1yykziazo1gry3jvqc)

Provided by Rice University

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