



IF NOT HEAD START, WHERE ELSE?

Lessons from the Field on Eliminating Suspension and Expulsion

Today's Discussion

- Overview
- National Research Findings
- Arizona in National Research
- Arizona Findings
- Next Steps

Arizona Early Education Expulsion Study

- Supported by the Arizona Head Start State Collaboration Office and Arizona Head Start Association.
- Compile research findings on expulsion; suspension; implicit bias; gender, race and socio-economic correlates to expulsion.
- Determine if suspension and expulsion exist in Arizona early childhood and Head Start.
- Gather Lessons from the field on strategies to minimize or eliminate suspension and expulsion.

National Context

- Aging Data.
 - Expulsion is utilized about three times as often in state-funded preschool as in kindergarten through 12th grade education.
 - Rates of expulsion in private, for-profit, and faith-based childcare are between 10 and 28 children expelled per 1,000, in states that have been studied.
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- Water S. Gillam. (May 2005). Prekindergarteners Left Behind; Expulsion Rates in State Prekindergarten Systems.

2016 National Survey of Children's Health

Current Search Criteria

Survey: 2016 National Survey of Children's Health

Starting Point: Child and Family Health Measures

State/Region: Nationwide

Topic: Community and School Activities

Question: Child was kept home from child care or preschool because of their behavior, age 3-5 years ([details](#))

Edit Search Criteria

Compare Subgroups:

Subgroup data not available

[Change question, topic or survey](#)

In that past 12 months, were you ever asked to keep your child home from any child care or preschool because of their behavior (things like hitting, kicking, biting, tantrums or disobeying), age 3-5 years? ([details](#))

	Did not attend child care or preschool	No	Yes, I was told to pick up my child early on 1 or more days	Yes, I had to keep my child home for 1 full day or more	Yes permanently, I was told my child could no longer attend this child care center or preschool	Total %
%	21.6	76.7	1.1	0.4	0.1	100.0
C.I.	(19.5 - 23.8)	(74.5 - 78.9)	(0.7 - 1.6)	(0.2 - 0.9)	(0.1 - 0.3)	
Sample Count	1,245	5,967	84	24	25	
Pop. Est.	2,487,859	8,839,142	124,075	50,234	17,248	

C.I. = 95% Confidence Interval.

Percentages and population estimates (Pop.Est.) are weighted to represent child population in US.

Please interpret with caution: estimate has a 95% confidence interval width exceeding 20 percentage points or 1.2 times the estimate and may not be reliable.

DATA ALERT: The majority of measures have missing values less than 2% (unweighted). This measure has >=2% of missing cases. To learn about the impact of the missing values on the population count estimates [click here](#).

Disproportionality

- In the National Prekindergarten Study, boys were expelled at a rate over 4.5 times that of girls; 10.5 boys expelled per 1,000 compared to 2.3 girls per 1,000.
 - Boys received more than three out of four preschool suspensions.
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- Water S. Gillam. (May 2005). Prekindergarteners Left Behind; Expulsion Rates in State Prekindergarten Systems.

Disproportionality and Civil Rights Data Collection

- Males make up 79% of preschoolers suspended once and 82% of preschoolers suspended multiple times.
- African American children make up 18 percent of preschool enrollment but 48 percent of preschool children suspended more than once.
- African American students are about twice as likely to be expelled as European Americans and over five times as likely as Asian American preschoolers.
- Hispanic and African American males combined represent 46 percent of all boys in preschool but 66 percent of their same-age peers who are suspended.
- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. (March, 2014).

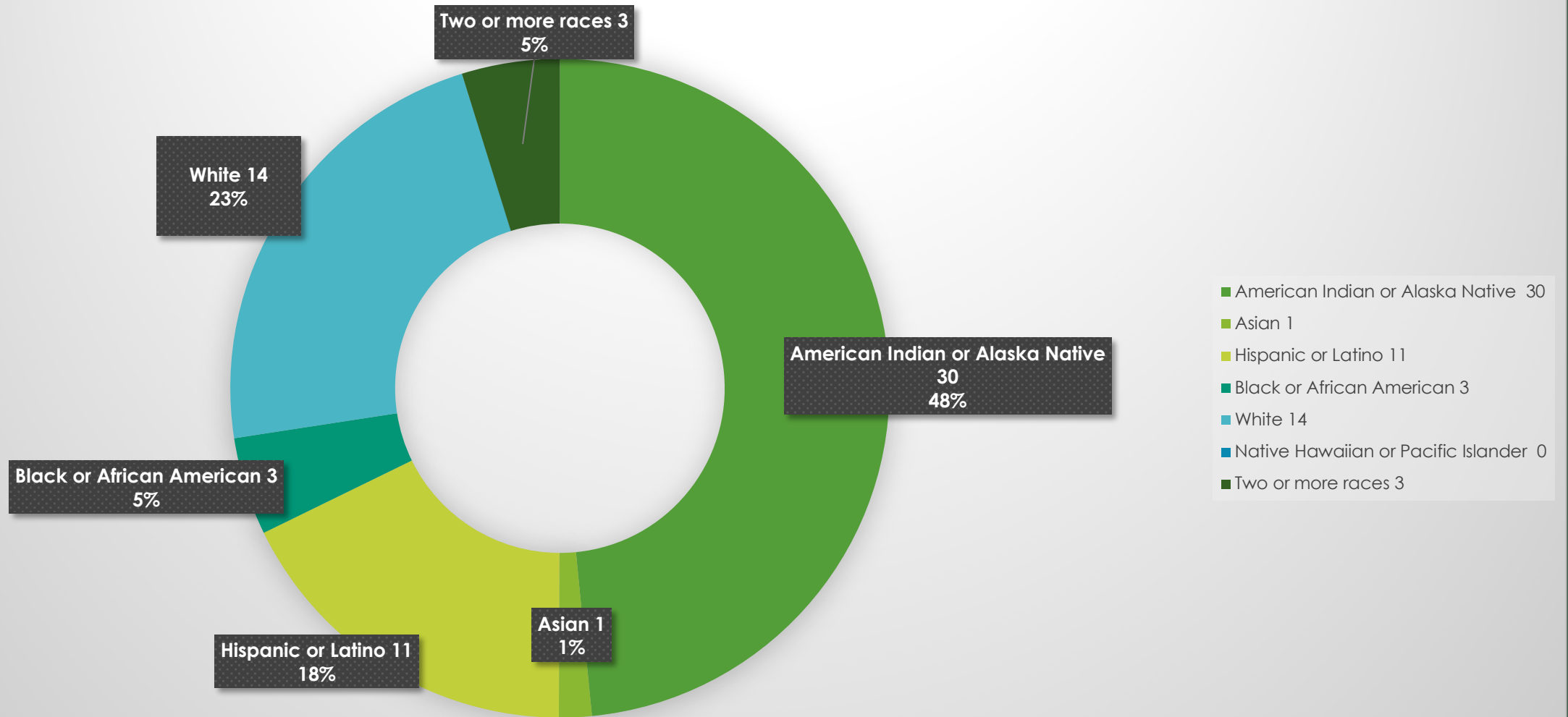
Civil Rights Data Collection

- The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) is a biennial (*i.e.*, every other school year) survey required by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights since 1968.
- Public local educational agencies and schools:
 - long-term secure juvenile justice facilities,
 - charter schools,
 - alternative schools,
 - and schools serving students with disabilities.
- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. (June, 2016).

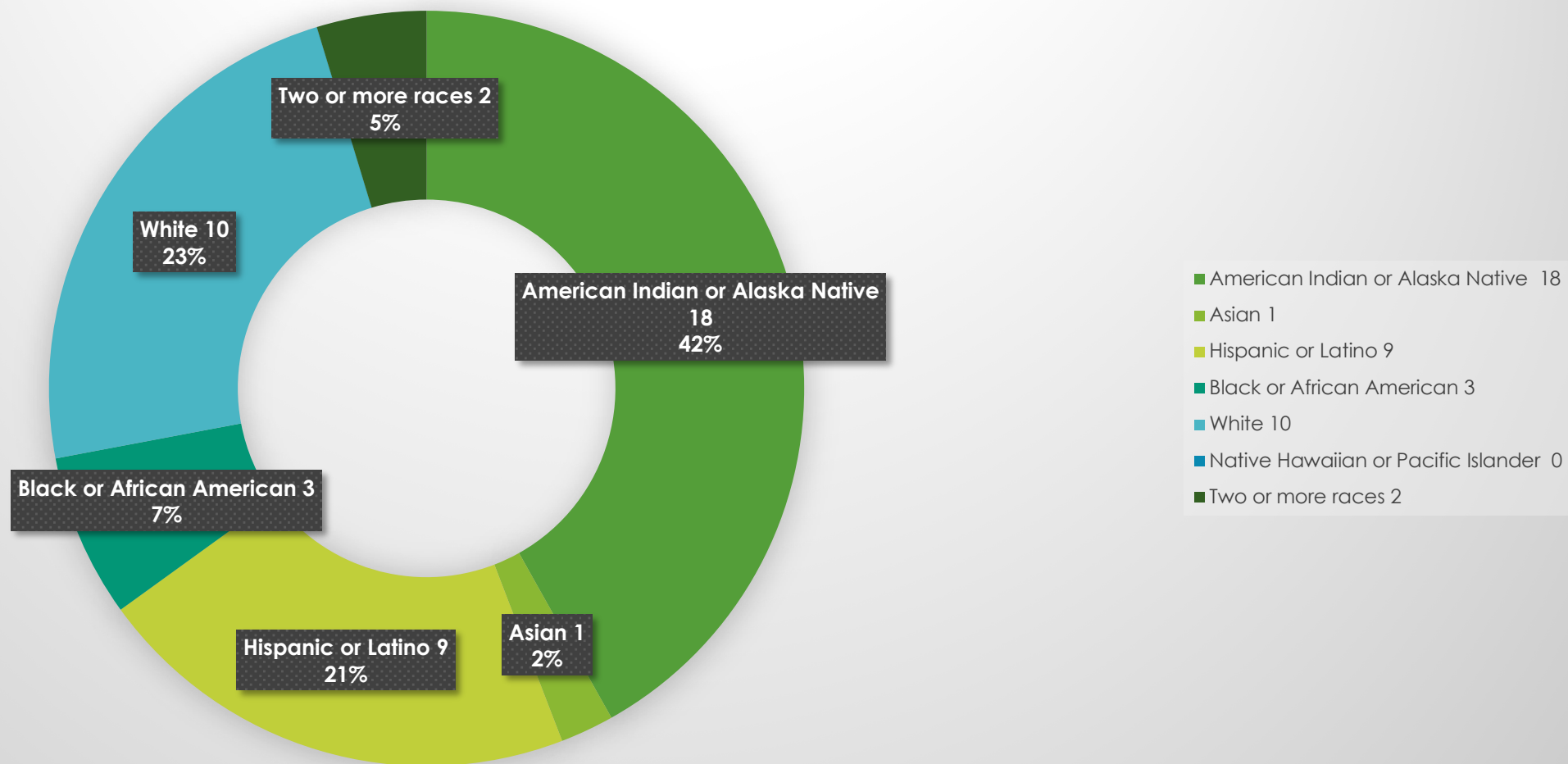
2013-2014 Civil Rights Data Collection

- In more recent data, black children, especially boys, continue to be more likely to be suspended from preschool.
- Black preschool children are 3.6 as likely to receive suspensions as compared to white children.
- Black boys represent 19 percent of male preschool enrollment and 47 percent of suspensions.
- Black girls represent 20 percent of preschool enrollment and 54 percent of female suspension.
- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. (June, 2016). Civil Rights Data Collection. A First Look: Key Data Highlights on Equity and Opportunity Gaps in our Nation's Public Schools.

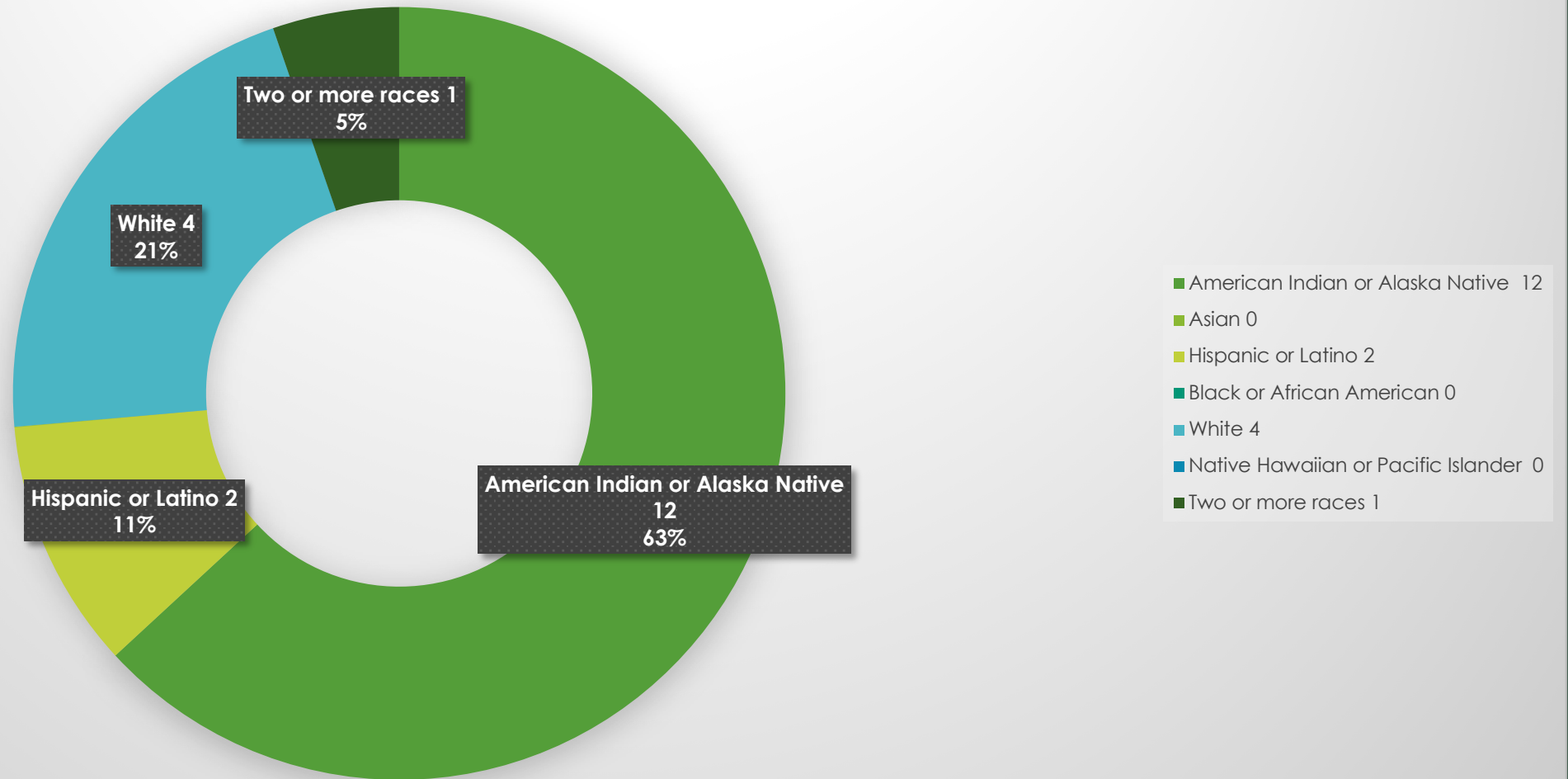
Arizona One or More out-of-school Suspension SY 2013-14



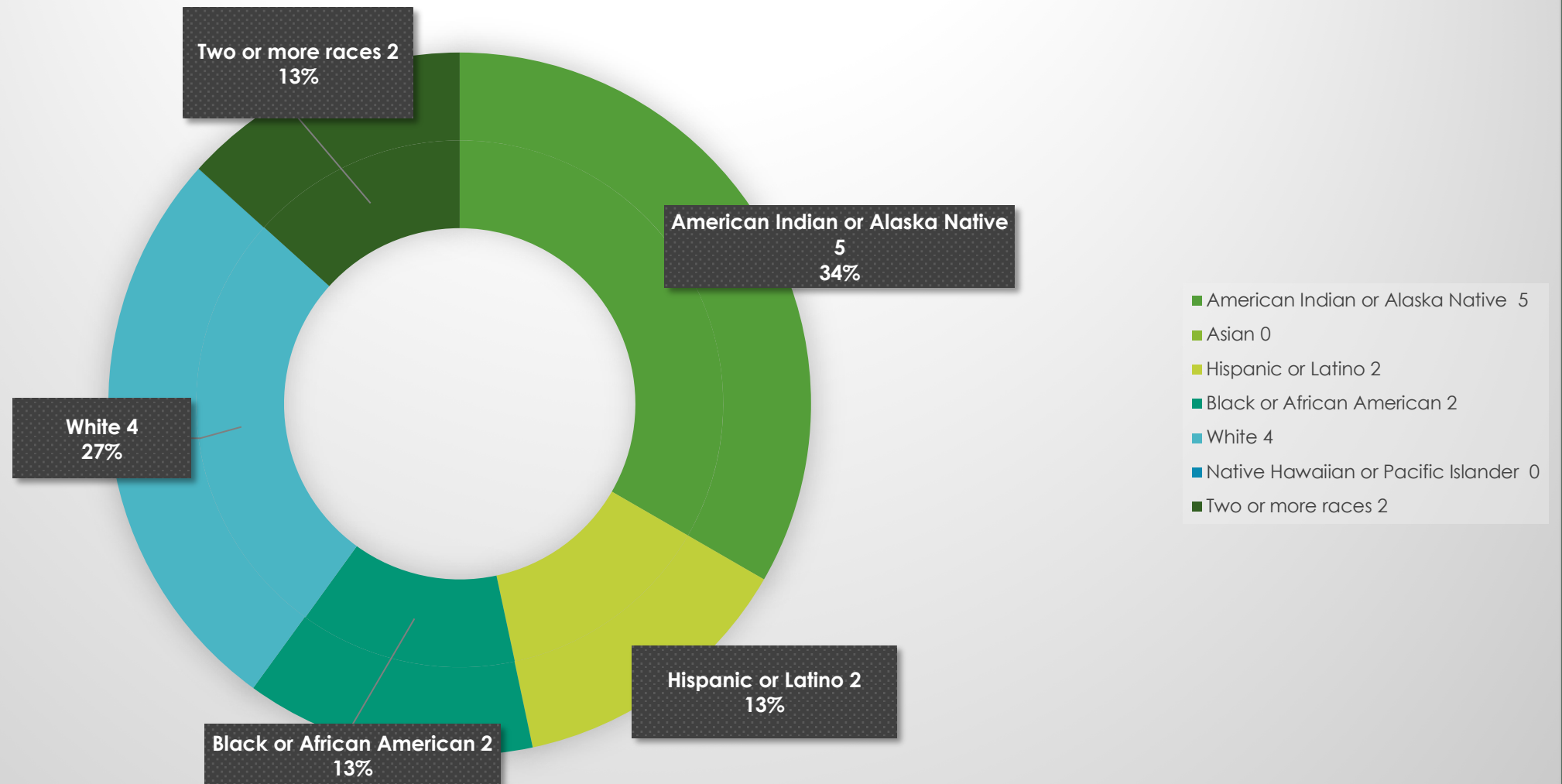
Arizona Boys One or more out-of-school suspension FY 2013-14



Arizona - Girls One or more out-of-school Suspension SY 2013-14



Arizona - More than one out-of-school suspension SY 2013-14



	Girls suspended once or more	Girls suspended more than once	% more than once	Boys suspended once or more	Boys suspended more than once	% more than once
Two or more races	1		0%	2	2	100%
American Indian or Alaska Native	12	1	8%	18	4	22%
Hispanic or Latino	2		0%	9	2	22%
Black or African American			NA	3	2	67%
White	4	2	50%	10	2	20%
Asian			NA	1		0%
TOTAL	19	3	16%	43	12	28%

History of Policies and Mandates

- The 2005 National Prekindergarten Study examined state-by-state policies as well as rates of expulsion. Of 40 states operating state-funded prekindergarten, 18 states disallowed expulsion. Thirty-two or two-thirds reported explicitly allowing expulsion or left the decision to local providers, which was the case in Arizona. Of the 32 states allowing expulsion, only eight required documentation and only four required that families receive assistance in finding another early education provider.

Recent Policies and Mandates

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Service Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings from December 2015 provides overall guidelines and is intended to prevent or severely limit expulsion and suspension practices in early childhood, including but not limited to private child care, Head Start, public, private and faith based prekindergarten programs. This Statement has been echoed and amplified by a Joint Statement by 33 leading organizations in early childhood.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.) Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings.
- National Association for the Education of Young Children. (n.d.). Standing Together Against Suspension and Expulsion in Early Childhood. A Joint Statement.

Arizona Public Law

- For Preschool Development Grant (PDG) recipients, Arizona was similar to most states in utilizing K-12 policies as the foundation for preschool expulsion. In a national review, Arizona indicated that for PDG sites, expulsion is conducted in relation to A.R.S. 15-841. Primary reasons outlined in A.R.S. 15-841 for a teacher removing a student to the principal's office are: repeated interference with classroom communication; unruly, disruptive or abusive behavior; open defiance or possession of a dangerous instrument.

Early Childhood Expulsion

Children in early learning environments are expelled from programs at an alarming rate. Sub-grantees of PDG should consider that they are providing a critical early experience for young children. Children should not be expelled for behavioral issues; instead, sub-grantees should work with families and specialists in order to provide children and families connections to the services they need to successfully participate. Sub-grantees should review local policy and only consider expulsion in terms of the conditions of A.R.S. 15-841.

Child Care Administration - DES

- Notification of Child Care Expulsion.
- Best of Care Form – Parent provides information on child/ren.
- In the event a child is asked to leave a child care program the child care provider must have a discussion with the parent or guardian about the reasons why the child is being asked to leave the program.

Possible Reasons for Immediate Expulsion are:

- The child causes serious injury to others or to himself/herself.
- The parent/guardian/relative threatens or commits physical or intimidating actions toward child care center staff.
- Failure to pay tuition or other program fees.

Head Start

- The Head Start Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension iterates Program Operations Governance Part 1302.17 prohibiting the expulsion or un-enrolling of children from Head Start because of child behavior. It further requires programs to prohibit or severely limit suspension due to child behavior.
- The Head Start Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension references the US Department of Health and Human Services Policy Statement and encourages Head Start Grantees and Delegates to adopt practices in its Appendices 1 and 2 as well as a joint policy statement with recommendations.

Arizona Early Education Expulsion Study

- Key Stakeholder Interviews (2016 and 2018)
- Site Visits: 12 urban, 8 rural; Head Start, Private, Quality First, PDG, School District (2017)
- Online Survey: Early Childhood Workforce Registry (2016)

What is in a Policy?

- Site visits were made to eighteen early education sites. Sites were primarily recipients of PDG funds, participating in Quality First and often included preschool special education or were Head Start programs. In interviews, teachers and educational leaders were asked if their program had an expulsion policy.
- Of the eighteen:
 - 1) ten did not have a written policy related to preschool expulsion,
 - 2) four had a clear written policy with documentation and procedures of which most staff indicated awareness,
 - 3) four had some written policy related to preschool expulsion (in two cases that expulsions were not allowed), however, there was no indication of a process for dealing with behavior challenges of which all staff were aware.

Arizona Early Education Expulsion Study: Head Start Focus

- Online Survey Head Start responses
- 2018 Key Stakeholder Interviews

Online Survey Findings – Head Start

“We are offered trainings and support from [a] mental health consultant. But there are too many priorities and goals that we have to meet. The expectations to implement the goals and the one day trainings with all the teachers from all the centers are unrealistic.” Head Start Teacher

- There were 118 Head Start/Early Head Start respondents, this is three percent of the total number of Head Start professional staff in 2017 (4,239 total with 1,619 preschool teachers/assistant teachers and 529 infant toddler teachers/assistant teachers).

Online Survey Findings – Head Start

“[Children are] no[t] permanently, but partially [expelled]. Once we had a child that started throwing things...if we weren’t able to control the child’s behavior, parents would be called.” Head Start Administrator

- The majority of Head Start/Early Head Start teacher and teacher aide respondents did not expel a child in 2016(79%). Almost ten percent expelled three or more children. NOTE: twelve expulsions reported as Head Start may be child care partners.
- For the majority of Head Start/Early Head Start director and specialist respondents there were no children expelled from their program in 2016(77%).
- Teachers and aides reported 33 expulsions in their Head Start/Early Head Start classroom in 2016. Administrators reported three expulsions in their Head Start/Early Head Start.

Online Survey Findings – Head Start

“[Children are] never directly expelled, however, sometimes there is pressure on parent[s] due to negative feedback about their child’s behavior which causes a family to choose to disenroll.” Head Start Related Service Provider

- The majority of Head Start/Early Head Start teacher and teacher aide respondents did not suspend a child in 2016 (82%). One respondent suspended five or more children. NOTE: eight suspensions, including the report of five or more, reported as Head Start may be child care partners.
- For the majority of director and specialist respondents there were no children suspended from their program in 2016(80%).
- Teachers and aides reported 16 suspensions in their Head Start/Early Head Start classroom last year. Administrators reported 3 suspensions in their Head Start/Early Head Start in 2016.

Director Interviews – Head Start

- In 2018, all but one director interviewed reported having a written policy on suspension and expulsion.* Most included detailed procedures for teachers, specialists and administrators on communication and supports for teachers, children and families.
- About half of directors interviewed reported, that while their policies have been updated in the last year, they were in alignment with a long-term (at least 5 years) practice of prohibiting expulsion and push-out through team supports and early action based on family and child strengths.
- About half of directors have a new policy or have, in the last year, begun to use a “no expulsion” policy to create policies and procedures to address challenging behavior and to guide teacher/family/staff training and supports.

Director Interviews – Head Start

- Challenges:
- Balancing the need to constructively support children with challenging behaviors and keep the commitment to other children in the classroom (safety, learning, development).
- Training that directly addresses how to effectively deal with challenging behavior in the classroom, especially emergent behaviors.
- Training teachers, staff, specialists and administrators, especially considering turnover and need for substitutes.
- Collecting data on characteristics of challenging behavior and the children and families in the situations.
- Supporting teachers to provide great education and minimize burnout or collateral trauma.
- Supporting children who are in full day or extended day education. There are differences of practice about whether any shortening of the day is push out.
- Working with community and system partners to coordinate supports for children and families.

Director Interviews – Head Start

- Strengths:
- Growing common vocabulary about what constitutes suspension, soft expulsion and expulsion.
- Growing understanding of avenues for push out – calling parents during school day, early pick up, shortened schedules, parent conferences where "you just really don't like my child, do you?".
- Early understanding of gender differences, especially related to activity level.
- Early understanding of the impact of trauma and training in trauma informed care.
- General expertise in understanding best practices in tailoring the environment and schedule around the needs of the child.

Next Steps