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### A positive platform for Change: understanding and addressing DMC in New Hampshire

Jessica Santos, State Partnership Grant Coordinator, NH Office of Minority Health and Refugee Affairs

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Source: Florida DMC Network

## *A Positive Platform for Change: Understanding and Addressing DMC in New Hampshire*

### **What is DMC?**

Disproportionate minority contact (DMC) is a term that refers to the overrepresentation of racial and ethnic minority youth in the juvenile justice system.<sup>ii</sup>

Overall, youth of color are more likely to come into contact with the juvenile justice system than white youth. This is true for the U.S. as a whole, as well as for New Hampshire.

- DMC exists if there are more youth of color in the juvenile justice system than in the overall youth population
- In New Hampshire, Black youth are over 3 times more likely to be arrested, and Hispanic/Latino youth are over twice as likely to be arrested, compared to White youth<sup>iii</sup>

### **New Hampshire Efforts to Reduce DMC**

New Hampshire has a unique opportunity to institute and manage a proactive strategy and vision to reduce DMC, at a time when the state's youth population is becoming more diverse.

Across the state, multiple institutions are working together to foster awareness, address, and reduce DMC. This environment has created a positive platform for change. The State Advisory Group on Juvenile Justice (SAG) which oversees federal funds, and the statewide DMC sub-committee led an effort to gather and analyze accurate data regarding the status of racial and ethnic minorities in the state's juvenile justice system.<sup>iii</sup> In 2011, local DMC committees were established in Manchester, Nashua, and Rochester. With leadership from police chiefs in each of these cities, these local committees sponsored and delivered a customized, evidence-based education and training program<sup>iv</sup> at their respective police departments with the goal of reducing DMC.

While these institutions share the goal of reducing contact with the juvenile justice system for all youth, they also recognize that not all youth are treated equally once they enter the system. Reducing DMC means to ensure equal and fair treatment for every youth in the juvenile justice system, regardless of race and ethnicity.<sup>v</sup>

- New Hampshire partners are working together - state and local governments, police chiefs and their police force, educators, community leaders, and parents - to reduce DMC
- Education and training efforts for police in Manchester, Nashua, and Rochester are underway

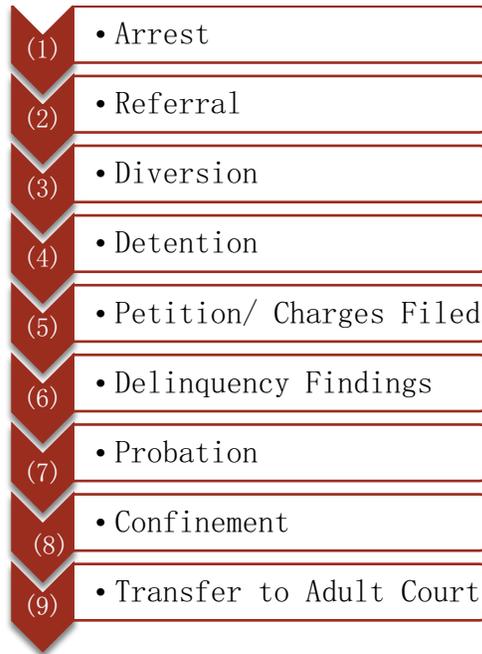
## Measuring DMC

Cities, counties, states, and the U.S. as a whole determine whether DMC exists in their region by looking at different stages, or major decision points, in the juvenile justice system, known as the 9 points of contact. In many regions, DMC exists at all 9 points of contact, and gets worse from point 1 (arrest) to point 9 (transfer to adult court). In New Hampshire, DMC is highest at arrest and does not appear to increase from point 1-9.

In 2007, Black youth accounted for:

- 17% of the total U.S. youth population;
- 28% of juvenile arrests (contact point 1);
- 37% of the detained youth population (contact point 4); and
- 58% of youth committed to state adult prison (contact point 9 and beyond)<sup>vi</sup>

## 9 POINTS OF CONTACT

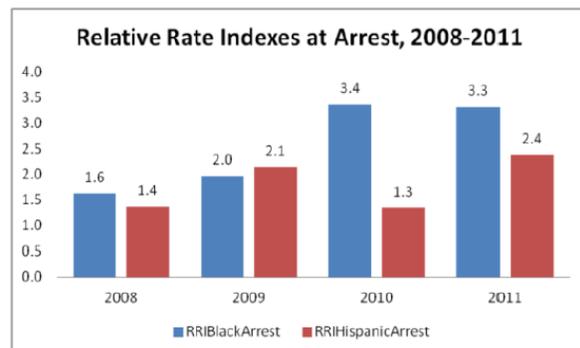
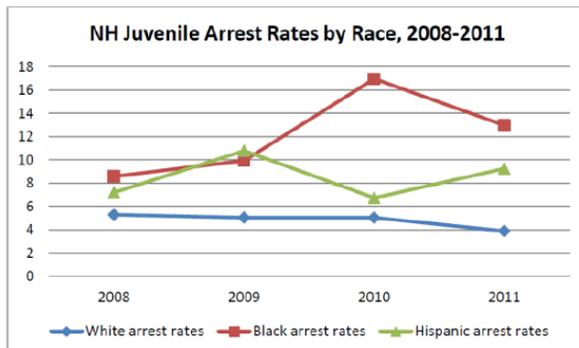


## DMC in New Hampshire

The Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) requires all states to collect data on DMC. They use an indicator called the Relative Rate Index (RRI) which compares the rates of contact for different groups of youth. Each racial/ethnic group is counted at one of the 9 points of contact, and that number is compared to their total count in the youth population ages 10-17. This rate is then compared to the rate of white youth, to figure out whether there is a disparity. For example, the arrest rates shown on the line chart below are compared to create the RRI, shown on the bar chart. The following trends show that although rates go up and down, there are disparities - DMC exists in NH and needs to be addressed. Key facts about DMC in New Hampshire include:

- The first point of contact - arrest - has the highest RRIs (DMC is highest at arrest)<sup>vii</sup>
- Working to reduce DMC at arrest may have the greatest impact
- The statewide RRI for Black and African American youth at arrest is the highest at 3.33
- The statewide RRI for Hispanic and Latino youth at arrest is the second highest at 2.33

### NH ARREST RATES AND RELATIVE RATE INDEX 2008-2011



Arrest rates per 100 youth. Source: OJJDP RRI database.

## What Causes DMC?

Youth of color do not have a higher inherent propensity towards delinquency and violence. However, they are often viewed differently - and their actions and behaviors judged based on different underlying assumptions - than white youth. Inappropriate decision-making criteria or differential treatment cause white youth to receive the benefit of the doubt time and again in situations where youth of color are arrested. Policies, norms, and practices that disproportionately benefit white youth, and disadvantage minority youth, reinforce differential treatment in ways that are often invisible.

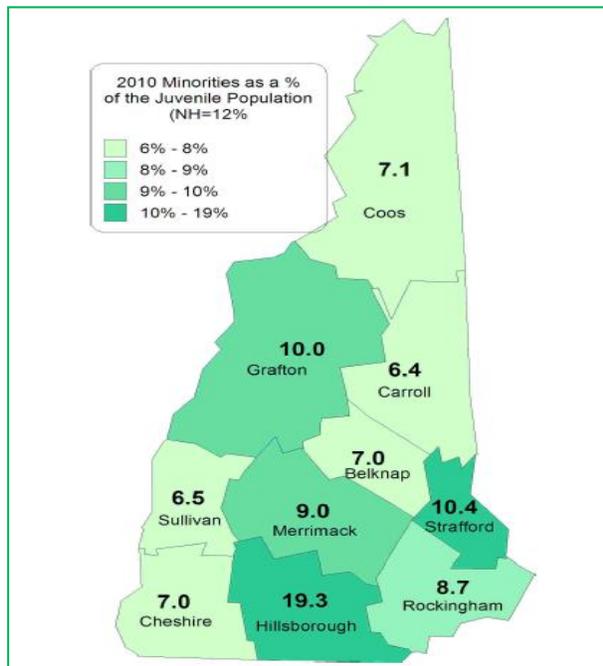
Efforts to reduce DMC require system-wide changes that address inherent biases and institutional forms of disadvantage. These efforts must be co-developed and co-led by a range of partners committed to change.

## Now is the Time to Take Action

New Hampshire is rapidly becoming more diverse, and the largest minority youth populations are concentrated in the state's urban areas. The following maps show that youth of color comprise 19% of the youth population in Hillsborough county, and over 40% of the youth population in certain neighborhoods in Manchester and Nashua.

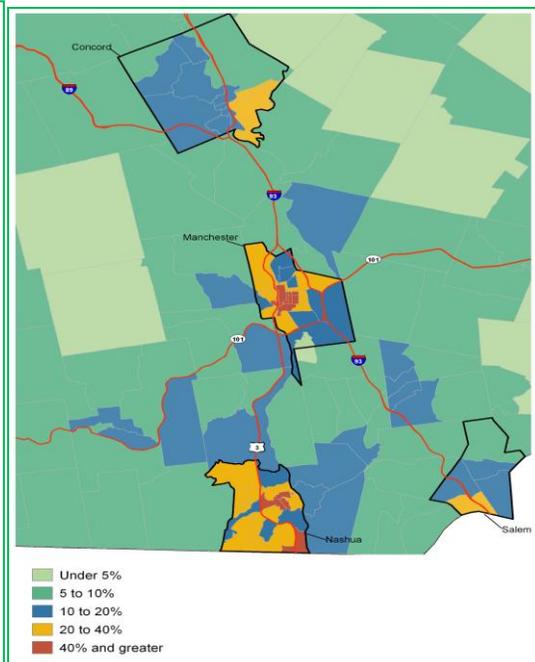
These youth are the future of New Hampshire. If DMC is not addressed, more and more youth of color could end up in our jails instead of in our schools, businesses, and in leadership positions across our state.

**Percent Minority Youth by County**



Source: NH Center for Public Policy Studies

**Percent Minority Youth by Census tract in Merrimack Valley Region**



Source: Carsey Institute<sup>viii</sup>

## Get Involved:

Take action by joining the following initiatives to reduce DMC and address issues related to equity in New Hampshire:

- Local DMC Committees (Manchester, Nashua, Rochester). Contact Andrew Smith, State DMC Coordinator, [Andrew.Smith@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:Andrew.Smith@dhhs.state.nh.us), (603) 419-0242.
- NH Health and Equity Partnership (H&EP), [www.equitynh.org](http://www.equitynh.org). Contact Rebecca Sky, H&EP Project Director, [rsky@healthynh.com](mailto:rsky@healthynh.com), (603) 415-4277.
- People of Color Leadership Summit. Contact the steering committee, [peopleofcolorsummit@gmail.com](mailto:peopleofcolorsummit@gmail.com), (603) 627-4631.



Source: South Carolina DMC reduction initiative <sup>ix</sup>

By Jessica Santos, State Partnership Grant Coordinator, NH Office of Minority Health & Refugee Affairs

In collaboration with:

Dennis Delay, Economist, NH Center for Public Policy Studies

Dottie Morris, PhD, Chief Officer for Diversity and Multiculturalism, Keene State College

Andrew Smith, State DMC Coordinator

Elizabeth Spinney, Research Analyst, Development Services Group, Inc.

Trinidad Tellez, MD, Director, NH Office of Minority Health & Refugee Affairs

## References

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.floridanetwork.org/dmc/about.html>

<sup>ii</sup> U.S. Department of Justice. Office of Justice Programs. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

<http://www2.dsgonline.com/dmc/dmcAbout.aspx>

<sup>iii</sup> NH Center for Public Policy Studies. June 2013. Juvenile Justice in New Hampshire; DMC Identification 2013.

<http://www.nhpolicy.org/UploadedFiles/Reports/DMCIdentification2013.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> <http://www.ct.gov/opm/cwp/view.asp?q=460244>

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.nttac.org/index.cfm?event=trainingCenter.traininginfo&eventID=176&from=training>

<sup>vi</sup> The Sentencing Project. Research and Advocacy for Reform. Disproportionate Minority Contact Fact Sheet.

[http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/publications/jj\\_DMCfactsheet.pdf](http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/publications/jj_DMCfactsheet.pdf)

<sup>vii</sup> 2011 data, NH Center for Public Policy Studies. DMC in New Hampshire: Assessment. *forthcoming*.

<sup>viii</sup> University of New Hampshire Carsey Institute. Ken Johnson (2012). New Hampshire demographic trends in the twenty-first century.

<sup>ix</sup> [http://www.imakenews.com/scdss/e\\_article002174258.cfm?x=0,b11,w](http://www.imakenews.com/scdss/e_article002174258.cfm?x=0,b11,w)