

THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



RISE

Rising STARS Experience

A Rites of Passage Initiative for young people

*Building Pipelines to the Kingdom of God,
Breaking the School-to-Prison Pipeline*

Just like moons and like suns

With the certainty of tides

Just like hopes springing high

Still I'll rise.

—Maya Angelou

RISE

Rising STARS Experience

Overview

What is the Rising STARS Experience?

RISE is a faith-based, Christ-centered, student initiative. Working in collaboration with St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in the Bronx, the Diocese of New York, it is a positive experience that builds life skills and confidence. RISE provides a "surround-sound" approach to supporting young people, mobilizing parents and guardians, community officials and school officials, to work against the negative forces that impact students' lives and their ability to fully develop into the person God has created them to be. Rooted in Christian formation, RISE will help STARS to grow spiritual awareness of God's love for them; their love for God and their neighbor; and to know that God is always with them.

What is the purpose of RISE?

The School-to-Prison Pipeline is fueled by zero-tolerance disciplinary policies adopted in schools across the United States which criminalize children from an early age. RISE provides a positive environment to give young people an opportunity to learn more about themselves; recognize their gifts and realize their God-given potential for success.

Who is the program for?

RISE is for young boys and girls (STARS) ages 7 to 14, their parents and guardians. It is designed for young people who are currently attending public schools within communities in which the Episcopal Church has a presence.

How are parents and guardians involved?

The intention of RISE is to convene a group of young people for the period of 18 months for positive interactions with mentors. RISE expects parents and guardians to be supportive of their STARS to ensure regular attendance and full participation.

When does RISE meet?

RISE meets on Wednesdays from 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

- Mentor Training 10 weeks
- Program Duration 18 months

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Principles Adopted by RISE

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Christ-centered	Faith-based	Excellence
Parent/Guardian Relationships	Honesty	Respect
Pastoral Listening	Integrity	Enthusiasm
Open-mindedness	Dignity	Punctuality
Positive Attitude	Acceptable Behavior	Correct Speech
Perseverance	Neat and Clean Attire	Dress for Success
Regular Attendance	Full Participation	Hope-building

RISE Responsibilities

- Conduct the program in full compliance with School and DFMS requirements.
- Ensure background checks are processed for all participants.
- Provide Safeguarding God’s Children Training for all adults.
- Interview, meet with STARS, parents and guardians, School and DFMS personnel for official approvals.
- Have participants sign covenants.

RISE Programming

Weekly Curriculum with STARS Includes:

- Public speaking & presentation skills
- Values to Live By
- Conversations about the school day
- Development of social and coping skills
- Problem solving

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Weekly Curriculum with STARS

Weekly Curriculum with STARS (cont.)

- Conflict management
- Negotiation
- Anger management skills
- Storytelling and story writing
- Steel band practice
- Piano lessons
- Arts and crafts
- One-on-one conversations with mentors
- Outings
- Other topics as identified by STARS and parents

Additional Programming

- **Shadowing Component-A Day in the World of Work**
STARS will experience and reflect upon a day with their mentor at the workplace.
- **Parent/Teacher Meetings**
- **Monthly Parent/STARS Gatherings**
- **Summer Experience**
Enroll STARS in a summer program. Experiences will be shared with one another.
- **Quarterly Social Events**
To be determined by the STARS
- **Commencement Celebration**
To include STARS, parents, guardians, family and friends to be planned by the STARS.

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Ways to Get Involved

RISE provides additional opportunities for adults to participate in school-based activities and other forms of involvement that include:

Principal for a Day	Spend one day (to be determined with school officials) with STARS in classrooms and/or assembly throughout the day for motivational talks
Teacher for a Day	Spend one period in the classroom with STARS
In-School Mentor	Meet one-on-one with STARS as assigned by school officials
Shadowing	Take a STAR to work for the day
Advocacy	Write letters to, and speak with, legislators; provide research to support follow up action
Teach a Skill	Music, arts, crafts, tennis and more
Storytelling	Share stories and invite STARS to tell their own

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Mentor Training

Includes Discussion in the following areas and more:

- The problem of naming and labeling
- Why we will not refer to our STARS as “At Risk”
- Talk about “risky environments”
- Maintaining a positive environment
- Demonstrate respect
- Goals Setting
- Pastoral Listening
- RISE Curriculum
- Programmatic Principles & Values
- Expectations
- Procedures
- Guidelines

Become a Part of RISE in Your Community

Every individual can make a difference.

Together our STARS will rise!

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Appendix

VALUES TO LIVE BY

For young people

You are God's loving creation.

Love God; love your neighbor as yourself.

Make Christ the center of your life.

You are never alone; God is with you always.

**Seek out a family member, a friend, your priest, a teacher
and your parish family.**

Believe in God; believe in yourself.

Stay in school; make your life count for something.

Do good work; strive for excellence.

Know where you come from; make wise choices for your future.

Lose the words "I Can't."

Respect yourself; respect others.

Choose a role model; be a role model.

Diffuse a bad situation; say I'm sorry.

Help someone else on the way.

Be on time always.

Dress for success.

You have power; claim it!

Let no one but you define you.

Seize the moment; a lost opportunity does not come back.

Be a leader.

Value your life and that of others.

Assert yourself.

VALUES TO LIVE BY “2”

For young people

Someone cares about you!

Aim for the stars.

Take the first step.

Write the first word.

God forgives: forgive yourself, forgive others.

Find out your life’s purpose.

You are the power of one.

Learn to laugh at yourself.

Words spoken cannot be taken back.

Do it today.

Learn from your mistakes.

Measure yourself by your successes.

Failure is experienced only when you are doing something.

It is an opportunity in disguise.

Find the challenge in every situation. Think, don’t panic.

You can do more than you can think or imagine.

The turn may be just beyond the hardest moment.

Go for it!

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Prayers

Prayer for Young Persons

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than ways of the world and following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For the Care of Children

Almighty God, heavenly Father, you have blessed us with the joy and care of children: Give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

What is the School to Prison Pipeline?

“If you look at state budgets, part of the reason that tuition has been rising in public universities across the country is because more and more resources were going into paying for prisons, and that left less money to provide to colleges and universities.”

- President Barack Obama, Time Magazine

“The School to Prison Pipeline is the most important Civil Rights challenge facing our nation today.”

—American Civil Liberties Union

“More African-American men are in prison or jail, on probation or parole than were enslaved in 1850, before the Civil War began.”

*—Michelle Alexander, Author,
The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration the Age of Colorblindness*

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) reports that:

- The School to Prison Pipeline is fueled by zero-tolerance disciplinary policies adopted in schools across the United States and pushes children out of the classroom and into the prison system.
- Zero-tolerance disciplinary policies are often the first step in a child’s journey through the pipeline.
- Zero-tolerance has become a one-size-fits-all solution to all problems that schools confront. It has redefined students as criminals, with unfortunate consequences... Unfortunately, most current (zero-tolerance) policies eliminate the common sense that comes with discretion and, at great cost to society and to children and families, do little to improve school safety.²
- Zero-tolerance disciplinary policies have re-characterized minor infractions in schools to justify the arrest of children, holding them prisoners without parental or legal representation.
 - ❖ A child is charged with battery for pushing & shoving
 - ❖ A child is charged with theft or robbery for swiping any item
 - ❖ A child is charged with Disorderly Conduct for talking back
- Schools today rely on law enforcement, rather than teachers and administrators to handle minor school misconduct.
- Over 3 million students are suspended at least once each year and over 100,000 are expelled.³

Disparities in School Discipline Move Students of Color toward Prison

- 4 out of 5 black youth in some inner-city communities can expect to be incarcerated in their lifetimes.¹
- African-American students are nearly 3 times as likely to be suspended and 3.5 times as likely to be expelled as their white peers. Latino students are 1.5 times as likely to be suspended and twice as likely to be expelled as their white peers.³
- In 2008, there were more than 846,000 black men in prison, making up 40.2 percent of all inmates in the system.¹
- In 2003, African-American youth made up 16% of the nation's overall juvenile population, but accounted for 45% of juvenile arrests.⁴
- While approximately 8.6% of public school children have been identified as having disabilities that impact their ability to learn,⁵ a recent survey of correctional facilities found that students with disabilities are represented in jail at a rate nearly four times that.⁶
- Minority students with disabilities are particularly vulnerable, since many schools regard jail as the default special education placement for poor and minority children. AfricanAmerican students with disabilities are three times more likely to receive short-term suspensions than their white counterparts, and are more than four times as likely to end up in correctional facilities.⁷

Costs of Education vs. Incarceration³

- The average annual per child cost of Head Start is \$7,028.
- The annual per child cost of a high-quality after-school program is \$2,700.
- The average annual per prisoner cost is \$22,650. States spend on average almost three times as much per prisoner as per public school pupil.

To Learn More about the School-to-Prison Pipeline:

American Civil Liberties Union:

<http://www.aclu.org/racial-justice/school-prison-pipeline-talking-points>

Children's Defense Fund:

<http://www.childrensdefense.org/programs-campaigns/cradle-to-prison-pipeline/>

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People:

[http://www.naacpldf.org/files/case issue/PRRAC%20journal%20Jan_Feb%202011-%20Dismantling_the_School-to-Prison_Pipeline.pdf](http://www.naacpldf.org/files/case%20issue/PRRAC%20journal%20Jan_Feb%202011-%20Dismantling_the_School-to-Prison_Pipeline.pdf)

American Bar Association:

<http://apps.americanbar.org/litigation/committees/childrights/content/articles/01-17-13-federal-spotlight-school-to-prison-pipeline.html>

Notes:

1. Burton, Nsenga. *More Black Men in Prison Today Than Enslaved in 1850*. Retrieved on January 30, 2012.
<http://www.theroot.com/buzz/more-black-men-prison-enslaved-1850>
2. ABA Juvenile Justice Committee, *Zero Tolerance Policy*: Report (Feb. 2001).
3. Cregor, Matt and Hewitt, Damon. *Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline: A Survey from the Field*. Retrieved on January 30, 2013.
[http://www.naacpldf.org/files/case issue/PRRAC%20journal%20Jan_Feb%202011-%20Dismantling_the_Schoolto-Prison_Pipeline.pdf](http://www.naacpldf.org/files/case%20issue/PRRAC%20journal%20Jan_Feb%202011-%20Dismantling_the_Schoolto-Prison_Pipeline.pdf)
4. Advancement Project. *Education on Lockdown: The Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Track*. March 2005, p.17.
5. Sue Burrelland Lauren Warboys, *Special Education and the Juvenile Justice System*, OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin (July 2000), p. 1.
6. Mary M. Quinn, Robert B. Rutherford, Peter E. Leone, ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education, *Students with Disabilities in Correctional Facilities* (2001).
7. Johanna Wald and Dan Losen, *Defining and Re-directing a School-to-Prison Pipeline*, *New Directions for Youth Development* (No. 99, Fall2003).
8. Children's Defense Fund. *An Overview of Key Factors Contributing to America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline® Crisis*. Retrieved on January 30, 2013. <http://www.childrensdefense.org/child-research-data-publications/data/cradle-prison-pipeline-reportpt1-ch1.pdf>

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The Episcopal Church's Action

In response to the School to Prison Pipeline the Episcopal Church passed Resolution B024 at its 2012 General Convention calling on the Church to Build Pipelines to the Kingdom of God.

Building Pipelines to the Kingdom of God

- To bring together spiritual, educational, organizational and formational pipelines that can inspire children to strive to realize their God-given potential.
- Teach the power of the Gospel, proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God.
- Repudiate cultural challenges such as the School to Prison Pipeline, failed educational policies, violence, and poverty that undermine the future of children who have come to believe that incarceration is a Rite of Passage.
- Collaborate with ecumenical partners, educators and community leaders for advocacy against the criminalization of children.
- Create positive environments for young people to learn more about who they are and whose they are.
- Strive for justice and peace among all people and uphold the respect and dignity that every human being deserves.
- Use faith formation principles to invite, inspire and transform individuals and communities.

The Rising Stars Experience (RISE) that was launched at the Episcopal Church of St. Andrew's on Castle Hill Avenue in the Bronx is one example of a Rite of Passage Resource developed for young people.

To Learn More about the Rising STARS Experience (RISE), A Positive Alternative to the School-to-Prison Pipeline

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**Black
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