

Policy Pack

# End Racial Profiling & The Criminalization of Women and Girls of Color

March 12, 2018

Made possible by the writing, leadership, and  
guidance from YWCA

**eliminating racism  
empowering women**

**ywca**

**PLATFORM**

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This Women's History Month we recommit ourselves to recognizing and amplifying the leadership of women who have led throughout history. However, to truly understand their power and strength, we have to address the systems and forces of oppression they worked to tear down. We have to confront the brutal ways the legacy of slavery, continuation of racism, and power of patriarchy shape our institutions. While we pledge to continue these conversations and actions well beyond March, we took this opportunity to center the critical anti-racist work and leadership of those who teach us, inspire us, and challenge us to do more and do better. That is why we are beyond grateful for the opportunity to partner with and learn from YWCA USA, which has been at the forefront of the movement to “eliminate racism and empower women” for over 150 years.

Thanks to the leadership of organizations, like YWCA, and their commitment to racial justice, we are in a far better place than we were 150 years ago. They have helped us understand that everyone should be proud of the skin we are in; be proud of the native languages that brings us closer to our roots; and be proud of our heritage and what sets us apart from everyone else. And as a country, they have taught us that differences should be recognized as our nation's strengths and that our differences have humanized America's struggle to become one.

Yet we are not one. In reflecting upon their century-and-a-half of work, we are challenged to reconcile our place in this moment in time with our history and our future. When we reflect on all that has happened in this year, we also remember that our laws, customs, and norms are rooted in forms of social control that were born to protect white power and privilege. When we read the stories of racist violence, we need also to make ourselves aware of the everyday violence and discrimination that do not make the news.

We are no closer to equality if we are only able and willing to engage with white supremacy when it manifests itself through pointed hoods, Confederate flags, and swastikas. We have to reflect on the systems, customs, and norms in place that uphold and perpetuate white power and privilege because in more ways than one, you can still feel the lashes of racism in this country and its impact on the safety, security, and equality of opportunity for all Minoritized communities. In this country, if we criticize the government, we are un-American. If we are confident in our own skin and are proud of our background, we have to prove how “American” we are. It is hard to describe racism and how it plays out; but, as a person of color it is something I feel and it dictates how I act. As a Muslim and a hijabi, covered head to toe, I can feel the stares on my back and the uncomfortable double takes. With every conscious step I take towards my career, I have to make sure I am representing myself properly because I know I am not going to be forgiven easily if I mess up.

It is time to shine a light on this racism and discuss the gender and racial inequality that inherently impacts the growth of this country. Women of color deserve better, women of all walks of life deserve better, and Platform is getting to work to do better. We have no option but to understand that the feminist pursuit of equality for women cannot now, nor could it ever, be divorced from the pursuit of equality for all.

- Aklima & The Platform Team

We know that that not all violence is physical, visible, acknowledged, or responded to equally, especially violence against women and girls. We also know that the intersection of race, gender and violence is often unexplored in mainstream discussions of criminalization and racial profiling. While recent high-profile incidents focus on Black males, girls and women of color are also at risk.

Like men of color, women of color commonly experience racial profiling and criminalization outside of the home—in traffic stops, airport security screening, border checkpoints, schools, and other interactions with government institutions and law enforcement. Recent incidents make clear, however, that women of color also experience profiling, criminalization, and police violence in their homes and other safe spaces, in front of children, and when in need of help. From police responses to domestic violence and mental health crises in their homes and neighborhoods, to the policing of pregnancy and motherhood, to road-side strip searches and body cavity searches during traffic stops, to the excessive use of force in school and community settings, girls and women of color experience criminalization and racial profiling by law enforcement in ways that are overlooked in data collection, in media accounts of disturbing incidents, and by the current policy narrative.

The violence against women of color by police cannot continue. For Black women, police intervention too often becomes violent or deadly. Black women and girls make up 13 percent of the population but are one third of all women killed by police. Especially cruel, women of color frequently experience this violence in front of their children. This atrocity is not an anomaly.

Women of color should not be expected to be blameless in order to receive justice or safety. Involvement of a knife does not change her right to equal protection and care under the law. As advocates, we understand that there are no perfect victims. However, we also know that White people more frequently receive assistance and de-escalation from police whereas people of color are subjected to excessive force. We are horrified that calls for help frequently leave women of color dead.

This violence and discrimination against marginalized women of color needs to end. Enough is enough.

YWCA USA is on a mission to eliminate racism, empower women, stand up for social justice, help families, and strengthen communities. We are one of the oldest and largest women's organizations in the nation, serving over 2 million women, girls, and their families.

YWCA has been at the forefront of the most pressing social movements for more than 150 years — from voting rights to civil rights, from affordable housing to pay equity, from violence prevention to health care reform. Today, we combine programming and advocacy to generate institutional change in three key areas: racial justice and civil rights; empowerment and economic advancement of women and girls; and health and safety of women and girls.

Please join us in our efforts to eliminate racism and empower women.

– Alejandra Y. Castillo, CEO of YWCA USA

**Criminal Justice System-** “The criminal justice system is the set of agencies and processes established by governments to control crime and impose penalties on those who violate laws. There is no single criminal justice system in the United States but rather many similar, individual systems. How the criminal justice system works in each area depends on the jurisdiction that is in charge: city, county, state, federal or tribal government or military installation. Different jurisdictions have different laws, agencies, and ways of managing criminal justice processes.” <sup>1</sup>

**School Resource Officer (SRO)-** “A sworn law enforcement officer assigned to a school on a long-term basis trained to perform three major roles: law enforcement officer, law-related counselor and law-related educator.” <sup>2</sup>

**Implicit Bias-** “Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual’s awareness or intentional control.” <sup>3</sup>

**Racial Profiling-** 1. A form of racialized community violence. 2. Structural and institutional racial xenophobia. 3. Refers to the practice of a law enforcement agent or agency relying, to any degree, on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin in selecting which individuals to subject to routine or investigatory activities such as traffic stops, searches, and seizures. 4. A manifestation of racial prejudice that materializes on institutional and structural levels. 5. The systemic targeting, surveillance, policing, and harassment of people of color that begins with the assumption that people of color are more likely to be criminals. At the community level, the discriminatory practice of racial profiling has emerged as a national concern.

*Example: In the aftermath of Sept. 11, law enforcement agents at the federal, state and local levels are permitted to engage in racial profiling to prevent terrorist related activities. Arabs and Muslims, and in many cases, any individual who “appears” to be Arab, Muslim, South Asian or Sikh are vulnerable to unfair treatment at the hands law enforcement who have the dual responsibility to protect communities they work in, while respecting the civil liberties of all those they serve.*

**Criminalization-** Turning an activity into a criminal offense by making it illegal, or treating people as criminals by making their activities illegal. For example, the criminalization of poverty and the criminalization of people of color are interactive dynamics that perpetuate negative societal stereotypes and perceptions such that being Black, or being poor, is itself viewed as criminal.

**Zero-Tolerance Policies-** “Policies that require school officials to hand down specific, consistent, and harsh punishment—usually suspension or expulsion—when students break certain rules.” <sup>4</sup> The school version of Mandatory Minimums.

**Sexual Abuse-to-Prison Pipeline-** Many of the young women in the juvenile justice system have experienced sexual violence and other trauma. In response to their trauma, they reacted in ways that are often consistent with the actions of those suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). However, those reactions have been criminalized and the young women are in turn treated as criminals rather than victims and survivors deserving of care and support. <sup>5</sup>

**Human Trafficking-** 1. A form of (targeted) community violence involving kidnapping, forced relocation, and forced labor. 2. The illegal and/or immoral forced relocation of people, typically for the purposes of forced labor and/or commercial sexual exploitation.

*Example: a) The kidnapping, transport and selling of African people across the Atlantic Ocean (Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade) to be used as free labor in the “New World.” b) The kidnapping, transport and selling of women and girls across state lines and international borders (often to be used in the sex trade); also referred to as sex trafficking.*



**Sanctuary Cities-** While, there is no universal definition of ‘sanctuary cities,’ they typically have policies limiting cooperation with government immigration officials. <sup>6</sup>

**Prison Industrial Complex-** “A term used to describe the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems.” <sup>7</sup>

**Minoritized Population-** 1. A community of people whose access to institutional and structural power has been severely limited regardless of the size of the population. As a result, the community is constantly being disenfranchised and disempowered by the Majoritized population. 2. Also referred to as a subordinated population.

**Privilege-** 1. The unearned social, political, economic, and psychological benefits of membership in a group that has institutional and structural power. 2. Living and existing in a world where standards and rules are premised upon your needs wants and desires. 3. To identify with or be identified as a member of a dominant social group (as opposed to a Minoritized group).

**Women of Color-** 1. Political (not biological) identity of solidarity among and across Minoritized ethnic communities historically referred to as ethnic minorities or non-White people. 2. A term used to disrupt the Black/White racial binary in the U.S. 3. A linguistic tool of inclusion and reminder that people of the African diaspora are not the only people who have been racialized or have been impacted by institutional and structural racism; common variations include: people of color, youth of color, students of color, queer or LGBTQ people of color. An interview with Loretta Ross, co-founder and national coordinator of SisterSong - Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective - shares one of the birthing moments of the term “women of color.” <sup>8</sup>

*Note: Our use of this term is not to suggest that all Women of Color are the same, or that the term is accepted and used by all. The creation of the Women of Color framing came out of political discussions among social activists about how to represent the common needs of various women from Minoritized racial/ethnic communities.*

**Xenophobia-** Fear and/or loathing of people who have social group identities or memberships that are different from your own; the “other” or “those people.”

*Example: Since Sept. 11, 2001 and the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, American people and policy have become explicitly xenophobic. This xenophobia is directed at people who identify as or “appear” to be Muslim. This specific xenophobia is also known as Islamophobia.*

**Oppression-** 1. A system for gaining, abusing and maintaining structural and institutional power for the benefit of a limited dominant class. 2. The inequitable distribution of structural and institutional power. 3. A system where a select few hoard power, wealth and resources at the detriment of the many. 4. The lack of access, opportunity, safety, security and resources that Minoritized populations experience; a direct result of a vacuum created by privilege. 5. A state of being that is the opposite of social justice.

**Ally-** 1. One who is not (most) directly impacted by an issue but works in solidarity with those who are most directly impacted by the issue. 2. One who understands that their primary role is to: a) educate themselves, b) educate their community, and c) lend their support to the leadership of those most directly impacted by the issue.

*Example: A White racial -justice ally would be someone who has educated themselves on the issue of racial justice, seeks to be anti-racist in their everyday life, participates in the education of other white people about racial justice, actively works to use their white privilege to support the cause of racial justice, seeks to transform spaces where they have power or influence, and supports people of color leadership on racial justice issues and in racial justice movements. There is a difference between being an ally and being an advocate; allies work closely with and in support of those most impacted by an issue. However, one can be an advocate and not work with or know any of the people or groups that you are advocating for.*

**Spectrum of Violence-** 1. A model or understanding of violence built upon the assumptions that not all violence is: physical, visible, and/or valued equally. 2. An acknowledgement that there are many types of violence in the world and not all of these types of violence are acknowledged or responded to equally. 3. Beginning with Community Violence, the spectrum, goes clockwise, ordering types of violence from the most “visible” to the least “visible” (noticed in the mainstream). However, each point on the spectrum has “visible” and invisible aspects.

*Example: violence against women and girls of color (sex trafficking, murder, sexual assault domestic violence or police brutality receives less attention (invisible) than police violence against men and boys of color (visible).*

**Violence-** 1. A primary tool of oppression. 2. A coercive spectrum of tools used to acquire, build and/or maintain power. 3. A continuum of economic, political, cultural, religious, psychological, and physical resources, behaviors and practices used as vehicles of violence

*Community Violence - A combination of violence directed at communities, such as police violence, war, and colonialism, and violence within communities, such as sexual and domestic violence.*

*Political Violence - 1. A tool in the spectrum of violence used to exploit the most vulnerable people and communities in our society. 2. The targeted coercive or abusive use of political systems, policies and/or practices in the service of acquiring, maintaining, and/or building power (institutional or structural) for a majoritized community.*

*Economic Violence - 1. A tool in the spectrum of violence used to exploit the most vulnerable people and communities in our society. 2. The targeted coercive or abusive use of economic systems, policies and/or practices in the service of acquiring, maintaining, and/or building power (institutional or structural) for a majoritized community.*

*Racialized Violence- 1. A tool in the spectrum of violence used to exploit the most vulnerable people and communities in our society. 2. A form of racialized community violence. 3. Tool of oppression directed against communities of color, such as economic policies, cultural practices, political maneuvers, police brutality, war, criminal justice systems, hate crimes, genocide, and colonialism used in the service of acquiring, building, or maintaining institutional and structural power at the expense of people of color.*

**Microaggressions-** 1. Racial microaggressions are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color. 2. The “normalized” (verbal and non-verbal) violent behaviors that daily challenge the full humanity and dignity of people who are or appear to be members of a minoritized population. Due to their frequency, microaggressions have a cumulative (negative) impact on the psychological, emotional, and/or physical well-being of the recipients of these assaults.

**Bias-** An orientation toward something or someone, this orientation can be positive, negative or neutral; a bias can be informed by a previous experience. In other words, biases can be rational.

*Example: Any distrust of the U.S. Government that Native American communities have could be considered a rational bias rather than prejudice because there are actual historical and contemporary reasons for indigenous people not to trust the government: desecration of sacred land, genocide, forced relocation, biological warfare, and broken treaties to name a few.*

**Prejudice-** An assumption of knowledge about something or someone not rooted in personal experiences with the particular something or someone in question; prejudice is informed by stereotype rather than experience.

*Example: A White woman clutching her purse when a person of color gets on the elevator with her could be bias but given the prevalence of racism in US culture is more than likely prejudice.*

**Stereotype-** 1. A trait and/or characteristic assumed to be true of all members of a particular social group. Many American cultural practices and public policies are rooted in racial, gendered and class-based stereotypes such as Asians are the model minority; meaning submissive, assimilating, and accommodating (e.g., honorary White people). 2. Stereotypes focus on one aspect of a person’s identity to the exclusion of their full humanity.

## Numbers You Need to Know

*As you read these numbers, please note that statistics are not facts. Statistics are evidence of problems, trends, etc. Furthermore, the identity and demographic language in each point below mirrors the language used in the reports, but do not necessarily reflect the language used by Platform. For example, a study may have only allowed respondents to identify as “man” or “woman,” “male” or “female,” rather than cisgender, transgender, genderqueer, nonbinary, or woman-identified. Other studies may have only provided racial identifiers such as Hispanic rather than Latinx, African American rather than Black, American Indian rather than Indigenous, and have homogenized Asian and Pacific Islander communities into one identity. In each instance, the language used in the study could have inhibited respondents from being able to accurately identify as well as perpetuated harmful categorization that misrepresents reality. It is also important to understand that **while Minoritized communities experience higher rates of incarceration it is not because Minoritized demographic groups are more violent or criminal, but very much because the activities of Minoritized demographic groups have been criminalized as means of social control.** Finally, every victim and survivor’s story is unique and important and cannot be properly summed up through a number.*

### The Perceptions

- Supporters of racial profiling are most likely (64 percent) to believe that the American criminal justice system treats all racial groups equally, while 25 percent believe that White Americans are given preferential treatment by the system. Fifty-three percent of those opposed to racial profiling believe the system is biased against minorities, while 47 percent believe everyone is treated equally.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2011, 28 percent of the public viewed racism as ‘a big problem in our society’ In 2015, 50 percent of the public held this view, but after the 2017 Charlottesville, Virginia rally and attack, 58 percent say racism is a ‘big problem in our society.’ 29 percent say it is ‘somewhat of a problem,’ and 12 percent say racism in the U.S. is a ‘small problem or not a problem’.<sup>10</sup>

### Traffic Stops

*Women of color experience higher rates of adverse outcomes during routine traffic stops than white women.*

- In 2011, about 80 percent of drivers pulled over by police felt they had been stopped for a legitimate reason. However, about 68 percent of Black drivers and 74 percent of Hispanic drivers believed police had a legitimate reason for stopping them compared to 84 percent of White drivers.<sup>11</sup>
- A 2011 report on police contact with the public found that Black drivers (12.3 percent) were more than three times as likely as White drivers (3.9 percent) and about twice as likely as Hispanic drivers (5.8 percent) to be searched during traffic stops.<sup>12</sup>
- One study of police interaction in New York City found that Black women were 53 percent of all women stopped,<sup>13</sup> but made up less than 24 percent of New York City residents.<sup>14</sup>
- Another 2012 study of traffic stops found that while women overall were less likely than men to be ticketed, arrested, or searched during a traffic stop for speeding, stop sign violations, or similar reasons, White women were more likely to receive only a warning or have no negative outcomes during a traffic stop compared to Black women and Latinas, who were ticketed, arrested, or searched at rates similar to White men.<sup>15</sup>

### Immigration Enforcement

*A rise in anti-immigrant sentiment, legislation, and policing has contributing to increased profiling and criminalization of women of color, including Latinas, Arabs, South Asians, Muslims, Sikhs, and others who are perceived as Muslim, particularly in border communities and airport settings.*<sup>16</sup>

- In June 2002, then-Attorney General John Ashcroft announced the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS), a “special registration” program that required all males from designated Arab and Muslim countries report to the government for registration and fingerprinting. Before it was suspended in May 2011, out of the tens of thousand of people forced to register, the program did not receive a single terrorism-related conviction.<sup>17</sup>
- Highly intrusive surveillance is often used against Latinx communities. In one case, undercover officers followed five Latinas suspected of being undocumented for several days until their employment eligibility was verified. The women were followed dropping their children off at school, shopping for groceries, visiting relatives, and attending church.<sup>18</sup>
- One study of Latinas’ sense of safety in Phoenix and Tucson showed widespread fear of leaving home, even among those with legal status. Former Maricopa County Sheriff, Joe Arpaio, and his deputies were cited most often as the source of this fear.<sup>19</sup>



## Numbers You Need to Know (cont'd)

### Immigration Enforcement (cont'd)

- In early 2017, Aravinda Pillalamarri, an Indian-American woman and U.S. citizen, was stopped by police while simply walking in her Maryland neighborhood and asked to reveal her immigration status. The only cause for the stop was a report from a neighbor that an Indian-American woman walking in her neighborhood was "suspicious."<sup>20</sup>

### Airport Security

*Women of color continue to experience heightened profiling by airport security personnel.*

- Sikhs are subject to extra screening 100 percent of the time at some airports,<sup>21</sup> in addition to other intrusive measures. For example, in 2015, Valeria Kaur, a Sikh-American woman was asked to show her breast pump to fellow Delta Airlines passengers to "prove she wasn't a terrorist."<sup>22</sup>
- As far back as 2000, the U.S. Government Accounting Office has documented that Black female airline passengers were more likely to be subjected to intrusive searches at U.S. airports despite being less likely to be found with illegal drugs or contraband than other demographic groups.<sup>23</sup>
- In early 2015, TSA agreed to place special emphasis on hair pat-downs in its security training activities in response to multiple complaints that Black women were targeted at airports for unnecessary, unreasonable, and racially discriminatory hair searches.<sup>24</sup>

### Policing of Pregnancy and Motherhood

*Women of color have experienced gendered and racialized policing of pregnancy and motherhood in ways that are distinct from White women.*

- One study conducted in Pinellas County, Florida found that Black women who prenatally exposed an infant to an illegal drug were 10 times more likely to be reported to civil authorities for termination of their parental rights than White women accused of the same conduct. A separate 2013 study by the National Advocates for Pregnant Women found that 59 percent of arrests and forced medical interventions on pregnant women in the U.S. involved women of color.<sup>25</sup>
- In July of 2015, Laura Browder, a single Black mother was arrested for "abandoning" her children at a food court while she interviewed for a job less than 30 feet away, within sight of her children.<sup>26</sup>
- Similarly, in 2015, Shanesa Taylor, a homeless Black mother, was charged with felony child abuse when she was unable to find child care and left her children in the car for 45 minutes to interview for a job.<sup>27</sup>

### Sex Work and Profiling

*Women of color, including transgender women of color, have been profiled by law enforcement as engaging in sex work when simply walking to the store or having drinks with friends. Moreover, women of color who are sex workers are often disproportionately targeted by law enforcement.*

- A recent study in North Carolina showed that Black female sex workers were two to three times more likely to be arrested on charges of prostitution than White female sex workers, rates that were disproportionate to their presence in online advertisements.<sup>28</sup>
- In a 2012 report, nearly 60 percent of transgender and gender non-conforming people of color living in Jackson Heights, NY reported being stopped by police, many of whom also stated that they believed they were profiled as sex workers solely because of their race and gender identity. Those carrying condoms were later charged with prostitution-related offenses to justify the stops.<sup>29</sup>
- In August 2014, a security guard at a New York hotel asked three Black women - a lawyer and two teachers - to stop soliciting when they were merely having drinks.<sup>30</sup>
- Amnesty International has received reports of transgender women of color being specifically targeted in U.S. cities, including Los Angeles, where transgender Latinx women reported being targeted as sex workers while walking down the street or hailing a cab.<sup>31</sup>

### School Discipline

*Students who are suspended from school are more likely to drop out entirely and have “contact” with the juvenile justice system. For Black and Latinx girls, it also increases likelihood of low-wage work and unemployment.* <sup>32</sup>

- Black girls are suspended at higher rates (12 percent) than girls of any other race or ethnicity, and at higher rates than White boys (6 percent) and White girls (2 percent); American Indian/Alaska Native girls (7 percent) and Latinas (4 percent) are also suspended at rates that exceed those of White girls. <sup>33</sup>
- About one-fifth of girls of color with disabilities receives an out-of-school suspension. <sup>34</sup>
- Black pupils represent 19 percent of students with disabilities served by IDEA, but 36 percent of the students who are physically restrained at school. <sup>35</sup>
- In 2011-2012 New York City, ninety percent of all the girls expelled from school were Black and none were White. If one imagined a single White girl was expelled, the ratio of Black to White girls expelled would be 53:1. <sup>36</sup>
- In the 1970s, there were fewer than 100 School Resource Officers (SROs), but between 2013-2014, there were 14,380 full-time and 16,330 part-time SROs in public schools. <sup>37</sup>
- 77 percent of SROs in a poll reported that they “sometimes arrested students simply to calm them down.” <sup>38</sup>

### The (In)Justice System

*Women and girls of color experience disparate rates of contact with and deeper levels of involvement in the justice system, driven by over-policing, profiling, and criminalization of people of color.*

- In 2013, Black girls were nearly three times as likely as White girls to be referred to juvenile court for a delinquency offense, 20 percent more likely to be detained, and 20 percent more likely to be formally petitioned to court. <sup>39</sup> American Indian and Native Alaskan girls were 40 percent more likely to be referred to juvenile court for delinquency, 50 percent more likely to be detained, and 20 percent more likely to be adjudicated. <sup>40</sup>
- For nonviolent, ‘public order’ offenses such as gambling and prostitution, Latinx youth were more likely than White youth to be admitted to state public facilities, and were incarcerated more than 50 percent longer than White youth (220 days vs. 147 days). <sup>41</sup>
- Girls of color have the highest rates of confinement in juvenile facilities for non-violent status offenses typically associate with responses to underlying trauma—like truancy, curfew violations, and running away—that are only punishable because of a young person’s age. <sup>42</sup>
- Girls in correctional and detention facilities experience major depression at a rate four to five times that of girls the general community. <sup>43</sup>
- While “LGBT/GNC youth comprise only 5 to 7 percent of the general population, they represent 13 to 15 percent of youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system... LGBTQ/GNC girls, in particular, “are involved in the system at disproportionately high rates: a survey of 1,400 girls across seven jurisdictions found that 40 percent of girls in the juvenile justice system are LGBTQ/GNC (compared to 14 percent of boys).” <sup>44</sup>
- Women of color are the fastest growing jail population. They represent only 38 percent of U.S. women, but 64 percent of women in jails across the country. One in every 18 Black women and one in every 45 Latinas will go to prison during their lifetime, compared to one in every 111 White women. <sup>45</sup>
- Black women represent 30 percent of all incarcerated women in the U.S., but only 13 percent of the female population; Latinas represent 16 percent of incarcerated women, but only 11 percent of all women in the U.S. <sup>46</sup>

### Excessive Force and Violence

*Women of color, including transgender women of color, have been profiled by law enforcement as engaging in sex work when simply walking to the store or having drinks with friends. Moreover, women of color who are sex workers are often disproportionately targeted by law enforcement.*

- In 2015, Dajerria Becton, a 15-year-old Black girl attending a pool party, was thrown to the ground, kneeled on, and handcuffed by a Texas police officer responding to reports of trespassing in an upscale neighborhood; the officer also drew his weapon when friends attempted to help her.<sup>47</sup>
- In a study of law enforcement and Latina transgender women in Los Angeles County, two-thirds of the women reported being verbally harassed and 24 percent reported being sexually assaulted by law enforcement, while 21 percent reported being physically assaulted.<sup>48</sup>
- In another 2015 incident, a police officer was caught on video tape flipping a Black schoolgirl in South Carolina out of her chair and dragging her across a classroom for being disobedient.<sup>49</sup>
- Being arrested is nearly two times as deadly for Black individuals as it is for White individuals.<sup>50</sup> For Black women, death in police custody is due to neglect, lack of medical care, and use of force.<sup>51</sup>
- Between June 2007 and June 2017, out of about 10,000 police shootings, “only five white police officers have been imprisoned for killing someone [B]lack.”<sup>52</sup>
- “Police are 33 percent less likely than a regular citizen to be convicted of a crime, and the conviction rate for cops charged with some form of murder is 35 percent—half that of the normal population.”<sup>53</sup>

The well known faces and stories of #BlackLivesMatter victims and survivors are often men, but women and girls of color experience the same racial profiling and criminalization as their male counterparts.

Like men and boys of color, they experience profiling and criminalization across a broad range of situations outside of the home—in traffic stops, airport security screening, border checkpoints, schools, and other interactions with government institutions and law enforcement. However, women and girls of color are not free from the burden and dangers of criminalization even in their own homes.<sup>54</sup> When police respond to reports of domestic violence, women and girls of color are in danger.<sup>55</sup> When mothers of color are pregnant or taking care of their children, they are policed.<sup>56</sup>

This systemic problem of over-policing women and girls of color starts young. Black girls make up 14 percent of the population but more than double that of the percentage of girls in the juvenile justice system at 33.2 percent. Similarly, Native American/Alaska Native girls are one percent of the general youth population, but 3.5 percent of detained and committed girls.<sup>57</sup>

These girls commit the same crimes and delinquent offenses as their White counterparts, often no more frequently, but receive much harsher sentences. For instance, in 2013, Black girls were three times as likely to be referred to juvenile court for a delinquency offense, 20 percent more likely to be detained, and 20 percent more likely to be formally petitioned to court than White girls.<sup>58</sup> The rates are even higher for American Indian and Alaska Native girls.<sup>59</sup>

The criminalization starts early, with schools suspending, expelling, and penalizing girls of color at rates that far exceed their White peers. Mya and Deanna Cook know this far too well. After showing up to school sporting braids and hair extensions, they were subsequently banned from joining sports teams, from attending prom, and were issued detentions. The school punished them for violating the the uniform policy, which prohibited, “anything artificial or unnatural in their hair.” The school only rescinded the girls’ punishment, and later the policy, after the ACLU filed a discrimination complaint with the state’s Education Department, prompting the state’s Attorney General to investigate allegations that the school did not hold White students to the same dress code standards. As Harvard professor Robin Bernstein noted, “[the policy] invents braids and hair extensions as a problem—they are not a problem—and by inventing this problem it creates challenges for black girls to learn.”<sup>60</sup>

Girls of color are also disproportionately criminalized for crimes that relate to underlying trauma like prostitution, truancy, curfew violations, and running away. Just ask Cyntoia Brown. Brown is currently serving a life sentence after killing a man who solicited her for sex. Her story resurfaced late last year with the help of social media and celebrity attention drawing attention to how we treat victims of color in our justice system. According to CNN, Brown suffered from fetal alcohol syndrome, grew up in an abusive home and ran away from her adoptive parents' house. She fell into drugs and alcohol and met a 24-year-old named "Cut Throat" who began physically and sexually abusing her and forced her into prostitution. In 2004—at the age of 16—she was solicited for sex by a 43-year-old who brought her back to his house where she noticed he had a gun cabinet and feared he would attack her. She shot him, killing him, but it wasn't seen as self defense. Brown is now 30 years old and will be up for parole at 69.<sup>61</sup>

Girls of color grow into women of color who continue to be at risk for racial profiling and unbalanced criminalization. Women of color are the fastest growing jail population.

“In 2014, the incarceration rate for Black women was more than double that of white women. Specifically, 109 out of every 100,000 Black women were sentenced to state or federal prison, compared to 53 out of every 100,000 White women.”<sup>62</sup>



Disproportionate incarceration is just part of it. For women of color, racial profiling can be a death sentence. We know this from Sandra Bland's story. Bland was a 28-year-old woman who was pulled over by Texas state police after making an improper lane change. The arresting officer claimed she became combative during the traffic stop and was arrested. Bland was found three days later—after guards failed to do timely checks—dead in her cell. Her death was ruled a suicide, but failing to use your turn signal should never end in an arrest let alone jail time.

These stories have garnered national attention, but this is an issue that affects more than a few, has always existed and continues today. Organizations like YWCA are fighting to enact legislation to correct these disparities through advocacy, policy, and legislative changes. For example, the End Racial (and Religious) Profiling Act (S.411/H.R.1498) would require local law enforcement agencies receiving federal funds to maintain adequate cultural competency policies and procedures for eliminating racial profiling. The Pretrial Integrity and Safety Act of 2017 (S.1593) would encourage states to replace the practice of money bail, which has a disproportionately negative impact on women of color. Other changes include prohibitions against excessive force when handling a pregnant person, groping to identify gender, and ensuring appropriate training, supervision, and discipline regarding sexual harassment and sexual assault of members of the public by law enforcement officers.

## Who's Saying What?

**Student Interviewed for *Be Her Resource* Report:** "Did I do anything wrong?' Like, am I walking away [and] I shouldn't be walking or something? And then so the officer was like, 'No.' And then I was like, 'Why are you searching me then?' ... So he was white, and he said, 'You're just another Black girl. I need to make sure you're good.'" <sup>63</sup>

**YWCA:** "To be clear, the job of a police officer in schools is to help keep students safe – but that can't happen when students are cast as criminals on the basis of skin color." <sup>64</sup>

**U.S. Senator Bob Menendez upon Introduction of the PROFILED Act:**

"Our laws must be enforced in a manner that doesn't undermine the civil rights of American or immigrant families by targeting them just because of the color of their skin... All immigrants—permanent residents, refugees and citizens alike—must be afforded the same fundamental right to due process, the same protections, and the same faith that the system works fairly for everyone." <sup>66</sup>

**Professor Deborah Ramirez from Northeastern University School of Law at a House Hearing on "Racial Profiling and the Use of Suspect Classifications in Law Enforcement:**

"Racial profiling is not an effective component of a counter-terrorism strategy. It is a sloppy and lazy substitute for the kind of strategic and intelligent law enforcement that we need to keep our homeland safe." <sup>65</sup>

**President of the International Association of Chiefs of Police Terrence M. Cunningham:**

"While we obviously cannot change the past, it is clear that we must change the future... For our part, the first step is for law enforcement and the IACP to acknowledge and apologize for the actions of the past and the role that our profession has played in society's historical mistreatment of communities of color." <sup>67</sup>

**Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.), Ranking Member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee:**

"Any effort to address school discipline must also consider the deeply rooted inequities, including documented and pervasive racial bias, in school discipline practices that disproportionately harm students of color and contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline. Secretary DeVos has promised to protect the civil rights of all students. I urge her to make good on that promise by maintaining the Department's evidence-based guidance on school discipline and civil rights enforcement." <sup>68</sup>

**Donald Trump at an Address to Law Enforcement Officials in Long Island:** "I said, please don't be too nice. Like when you guys put somebody in the car and you're protecting their head, you know, the way you put their hand over? Like, don't hit their head and they've just killed somebody — don't <sup>69</sup> hit their head. I said, you can take the hand away, okay?"

*The boxes provide an overview of relevant bills introduced during the 115th Congress .*

*Bills written in pink indicate YWCA support and leadership*

#### Juvenile Justice

**S.860 - Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act / H.R.1809, Juvenile Justice Reform Act-** To reauthorize and improve the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, and for other purposes.

**H.R.47, Kalief's Law-** To amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide for the humane treatment of youths who are in police custody, and for other purposes.

#### Broader Criminal Justice Reform

**H.R.1556, Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act-** To amend title 10, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Defense to make certain limitations on the transfer of personal property to Federal and State agencies, and for other purposes.

**H.R.4261 - SAFE Justice Act-** To improve public safety, accountability, transparency, and respect for federalism in Federal criminal law by applying evidence-based reforms already made by some States, and reinvesting the resulting savings from doing so in additional evidence-based criminal justice strategies that are proven to reduce recidivism and crime, and the burden of the criminal justice system on the taxpayer.

**H.R.4332, Grand Jury Reform Act-** To provide that in the case of a law enforcement officer who uses deadly force against a person, and thereby causes the death of that person, a hearing shall be conducted before a judge to determine whether there is probable cause for the State to bring criminal charges against the law enforcement officer relating to the death of the person, and for other purposes.

**S.748, PROFILED Act-** To protect United States citizens and residents from unlawful profiling, arrest, and detention, and for other purposes.

**S.1593, H.R.4019, Pretrial Integrity and Safety Act-** To provide grants to States and Indian tribes to reform their criminal justice system to encourage the replacement of the use of payment of secured money bail as a condition of pretrial release in criminal cases, and for other purposes.

**S.411, H.R.1498, End Racial and Religious Profiling Act-** To eliminate racial profiling by law enforcement, and for other purposes.<sup>70</sup>

**H.R.1983, David's Law-** To enhance Federal enforcement of hate crimes, and for other purposes.

**S.2250, H.R.4680, Korematsu-Takai Civil Liberties Protection Act-** To ensure due process protections of individuals in the United States against unlawful detention based solely on a protected characteristic.

**S.1610, Walter Scott Notification Act-** To require law enforcement agencies to report the use of lethal force, and for other purposes.

**H.R.266, Law Enforcement Inclusion Act-** To amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide that COPS grant funds may be used to hire and train new, additional career law enforcement officers who are residents of the communities they serve, and for other purposes.

Broader Criminal Justice Reform (cont'd)

**H.R.4331, Police Accountability Act-** To amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a penalty for assault or homicide committed by certain State or local law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

**S.1918, H.R.3944, Police CAMERA Act-** To amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize a grant program to assist State and local law enforcement agencies in purchasing body-worn cameras and securely storing and maintaining recorded data for law enforcement officers.

**H.Res.652, Supporting the practice of community-oriented policing and encouraging diversity hiring and retention in law enforcement.**

**S.1258, H.R.2676, PRIDE Act-** To require States to report to the Attorney General certain information regarding use of force incidents involving law enforcement officers and civilians, and for other purposes.

**S.1917, Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act-** To reform sentencing laws and correctional institutions, and for other purposes.

**H.R.3060, Preventing Tragedies Between Police and Communities Act-** To require that States and localities receiving grants under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program require law enforcement officers to undergo training on and thereafter employ de-escalation techniques to assist in reducing the need for the use of force by such officers, and for other purposes.

**S.1524, Dignity for Incarcerated Women Act-** To improve the treatment of Federal prisoners who are primary caretaker parents, and for other purposes.

Immigration

**S.54, Protect American Families Act-** To prohibit the creation of an immigration-related registry program that classifies people on the basis of religion, race, age, gender, ethnicity, national origin, nationality, or citizenship.

**H.R.1076, Protect Our Sanctuary Cities Act-** To provide that section 9 of Executive Order 13768, relating to sanctuary jurisdictions, shall have no force or effect, to prohibit the use of funds for certain purposes, and for other purposes.

**H.R.1497, ICE Body Camera Act of 2017-** To require all deportation officers of U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement to wear body cameras when engaged in field operations and removal proceedings, and for other purposes.

**H.R.735, USA Values Act of 2017-** To prohibit the enforcement of certain Executive orders.

Jobs

**S.511, Clean Start Act-** To provide for the sealing of records relating to Federal nonviolent criminal offenses related to substance use disorders, and for other purposes.

**S. 827, H.R. 1906, REDEEM Act-** To provide for the sealing or expungement of records relating to Federal nonviolent criminal offenses, and for other purposes.



Youth-Oriented Prevention

**H.R.1748, Opening Doors for Youth Act-** To provide at-risk and disconnected youth with subsidized summer and year-round employment and to assist local community partnerships in improving high school graduation and youth employment rates, and for other purposes.

**S.774, H.R.1757, Trauma-Informed Care for Children and Families Act-** To address the psychological, developmental, social, and emotional needs of children, youth, and families who have experienced trauma, and for other purposes.<sup>71</sup>

Recognition

**H.Res.545, Recognizing the violence and other challenges faced by transgender women of color in America**

**S.Res.70, A resolution recognizing the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 and expressing the sense of the Senate that policies that discriminate against any individual based on the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion of that individual would be a repetition of the mistakes of Executive Order 9066 and contrary to the values of the United States**

*Below you will find an overview of the policies, changes, and advancements leaders in the space are pursuing.*

### YWCA Recommendations:

**Data Collection:** Requiring comprehensive, robust, publicly available data collection disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender. Priority should be given to studying and assessing the unique impact of criminalization on girls and women of color.

**Training:** Establishing comprehensive, robust national standards for mandatory training of all law enforcement, school resource officers, and immigration agents on implicit bias. The training should cover:

- The ineffectiveness of racial profiling
- Guidelines on use of force
- De-escalation techniques
- Procedural justice
- Sexual harassment and assault prevention
- Other topics that support effective and ethical policing

**Policy Changes:** Enacting and enforcing policies that:

- Ensure appropriate training, supervision, and discipline regarding sexual harassment and sexual assault of members of the public by law enforcement officers.
- Impose strict bans on the use of force against pregnant persons.
- Prohibit officers from conducting strip searches and body cavity searches on roadsides or in other public spaces.
- Explicitly ban officers from groping or searching people to identify anatomical features as a means of assigning gender; and require officers to respect gender identity and expression in all police interactions.

### ACLU Recommendations:<sup>72</sup>

**Independent Data Collection:** Tracking law enforcement officers' stops and searches to accurately measure the extent of racial profiling.

**Redress of Grievances:** Finding a way for people to redress their grievances if they are a victim of racial profiling, which will hold officers accountable for their actions.

### "Be Her Resource" Report Recommends:<sup>73</sup>

**Clearly restricting law enforcement roles and responsibilities in formal agreements with schools:** Every jurisdiction with a school and law enforcement partnership should have a memorandum of understanding that clearly defines roles and responsibilities of the individual partners involved... It should clearly indicate that SROs will not respond to or be responsible for requests to resolve routine discipline problems involving students... [which] is the responsibility of school administrators unless the violation or misbehavior involves criminal conduct.

**SRO Training:** That covers trauma-informed, non-punitive responses to girls of color and that shows them how to work with mental-health experts to divert students from the juvenile justice system where appropriate and provide them with responses and resources from mental-health professionals.

### "The Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline: The Girls' Story" Report Recommends:<sup>74</sup>

**Implement Gender-Specific Health Screening and Assessment:** State and local jurisdictions should require facilities to implement gender-specific health screening at intake. The Girls Health Screen (GHS), developed by Leslie Acoca of the National Girls Health and Justice Institute, is a helpful model to guide the development of gender-specific medical triage in juvenile justice settings.

**“[I] had nowhere else to take [my] children.”**

Shanesha Taylor was arrested and charged with child abuse after leaving her two children in the car during a job interview. “Taylor’s story rests on the assumptions that poor Black women are careless, unfit mothers and a threat to their own kids. With no nuance in the infliction they face on a daily basis trying to survive in poverty, the state is allowed to strip them of their resources then blame and jail them for their hardships.” Her inability to find child care was exacerbated by the child care subsidy cuts in her state.<sup>75</sup>

**“I told him it was my science experiment... They told me I made a bomb on school property.”**

A young scientist, Kiera Wilmot, brought her experiment (think a more impressive version of the typical volcano project) to school to present to her teacher. Her friends asked her to do a quick demonstration before school and the project started to release smoke. She was called to the principal’s office where she was later arrested.<sup>76</sup>

**“I believe that she saved all of us.”**

Fourteen-year-old Bresha Meadows killed her emotionally and physically abusive father in self-defense. She was charged with aggravated murder and prosecutors worked to try her as an adult. While she was eventually tried as a child, she was still treated as a criminal and sentenced to a year in juvenile detention, with credit for time served, followed by six months at a mental health facility and two years of probation.<sup>77</sup>

**“Of course I care about profiling partly because I’m affected. But does one have to face this issue to feel that it’s wrong?”**

Nafees A. Syed is no stranger to the “random” selections at the airport. Since she started wearing her hijab, she is consistently pulled aside for additional screening, during which she has been both told to remove her head scarf and had her head probed.<sup>78</sup>

**“He grabbed me, twisted my arm on my back and shoved me in the grass and started pulling the back of my braids.”**

Dajerria Becton was at a pool party one June, a typical summer activity for 15 year-olds. However, when cops showed up to respond to a disturbance call, she was not treated like a 15 year-old girl, but a criminal. The police officer tackled, dragged, and pinned her to the ground.<sup>79</sup>

**“How could you arrest me for my hormones?”**

Meagan Taylor was staying at a hotel with a friend, both Black transgender women, before heading to the funeral of her friend’s brother. The hotel employees called the police to complain about “two men dressed as women” and a fear about prostitution. The police searched their room and then arrested Meagan.<sup>80</sup>

**“I am capable, ambitious and an asset in our community. The word ‘illegal’ criminalizes and dehumanizes me.”**

A DACA recipient and student at Colorado State University wrote a letter, unsigned for fear of backlash, chronicling her life. She wrote of the challenges she overcame so she could call the United States her home and so she could serve her community. DACA was a critical turning point on her journey and enabled her to work, get an education, and drive a car. Yet the racist rhetoric continued and took a toll on her sense of self.<sup>81</sup>

*We provided you with the information we found most relevant, but there's always more to the story. Here are some sources to help you continue learning in order to develop your own conclusions.*



YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. That was only the beginning of more than 150 years of active advocacy and programming for women's rights and civil rights. They continue to evolve to meet today's challenges in eliminating racism and empowering women. They've shifted to a bottoms-up, grassroots structure. They've launched a revitalized brand that reaffirms the mission of working aggressively for women and people of color.

[ywca.org](http://ywca.org)

**Rights4Girls** is a human rights organization working to end sex trafficking and gender-based violence in the U.S. We advocate for the dignity and personhood of young women and girls—so that every girl may possess the right to be safe and live a life free of violence and exploitation.

[rights4girls.org](http://rights4girls.org)



**The African American Policy Forum** is an innovative think tank that connects academics, activists and policy-makers to promote efforts to dismantle structural inequality. They promote frameworks and strategies that address a vision of racial justice that embraces the intersections of race, gender, class, and the array of barriers that disempower those who are marginalized in society.

[aapf.org](http://aapf.org)

**The National Black Women's Justice Institute (NBWJI)** is a nonprofit organization focused on reducing racial and gender disparities across the justice continuum affecting cisgender and transgender Black women, girls, and their families, by conducting research, providing technical assistance, engaging in public education, promoting civic engagement, and advocating for informed and effective policies.

[nbwji.org](http://nbwji.org)



**Girls Study Group of the US Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention** was created in 2004 to research issues, including the increasing arrests of girls, and provide a sound foundation to guide the development, testing, and implementation of strategies designed to prevent girls' delinquency.

[ojjdp.gov/programs/girlsatrisk.html](http://ojjdp.gov/programs/girlsatrisk.html)

**The National Crittenton Foundation** advances the self-empowerment, health, economic security and civic engagement of girls and young women impacted by violence, childhood adversity, and trauma.

[nationalcrittenton.org](http://nationalcrittenton.org)





## What Will You Do?

*You've read all that you can read, you've thought critically about the topic at hand, you've pondered the state of our world. Now you're feeling fired up. What policy solutions did you come across that seem like an idea worth pursuing, or what solutions did you brainstorm? It's time to see how they would hold up against your objectives.*

- 1. Select your Solution:** Place them in separate boxes underneath the "Policy" column.
- 2. Determine the Tool:** Does the tool in your solution employ a grant, regulation, tax incentive, other?
- 3. Select your Criteria/Objectives:** Types of criteria can include Cost to Government, Number of People Served, Ability to Improve X, Risk Averse, Etc.
- 4. Rank your Criteria:** Rank in terms of importance. That way, if a solution measures up to your most important criteria but slightly misses the mark on one of low-importance, you can weigh that during your analysis.
- 5. Calculate:** How well does each solution meet each criteria? This can be either qualitative or quantitative. If your solution is continuing a program, research program evaluations. If your solution is creating a program or incentive or regulation, research evaluations of similar policies and make your best estimation. For qualitative, rank it on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being very effective. If it is quantitative, i.e. cost, fill in the number.
- 6. Analyze the Arena:** Who are the stakeholders, allies, and opponents for your solutions? Consider both elected officials and organizations with political strength.

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		Criteria		
		Criteria 1:	Criteria 2:	Criteria 3:
		Low/Moderate/High Importance	Low/Moderate/High Importance	Low/Moderate/High Importance
Policy	Tool			
Idea 1:	Grant/Regulation/ Incentive/Other	How well/poorly the policy meets the criteria (Score of 1-5)	How well/poorly the policy meets the criteria (Score of 1-5)	How well/poorly the policy meets the criteria (Score of 1-5)
Idea 2:	Grant/Regulation/ Incentive/Other	How well/poorly the policy meets the criteria (Score of 1-5)	How well/poorly the policy meets the criteria (Score of 1-5)	How well/poorly the policy meets the criteria (Score of 1-5)
Idea 3:	Grant/Regulation/ Incentive/Other	How well/poorly the policy meets the criteria (Score of 1-5)	How well/poorly the policy meets the criteria (Score of 1-5)	How well/poorly the policy meets the criteria (Score of 1-5)

Your Turn:

		Criteria		
Policy	Tool			

*When we surround ourselves with passionate women, our knowledge grows. Get together with your organization, a few friends, or your peers and talk about your process in learning or reexamining this topic. These questions are meant to aide your conversation, but feel free to explore ideas and questions of your own.*

*Step outside your comfort zone. None of us have all the answers, that's why we need to work together, You are sure to bring something to the table that no one else considered. Your voice is meant to be heard. Let's hear what ideas you have on the table. Share only what you feel comfortable sharing, but be sure to share the space.*

1. Do you have any lingering questions about the topic?
2. What were your initial reactions to the statistics or the information presented?
3. How did you feel learning about/working through this topic?
4. What do you think is the most common misconception about the topic?
5. What are the main barriers to addressing racial profiling and criminalization of women and girls of color?
6. What strategies would you employ to overcome them?
7. Of the bills in Congress, which one do you want to mobilize around? How would you build a campaign to promote/prevent it?
8. Of the policy needs, which do you think should be addressed first and how would you go about it?
9. What were your evaluative criteria? Why did you select them?
10. What was your favorite solution that you evaluated?
11. What would be your "silver bullet," ideal solution?
12. What was one solution that someone else suggested that you want to discuss more?
13. What do you wish people knew about this topic?
14. What does your campus/community do to help end racism and support survivors of racism?
15. What can you do at the local level to address this topic?
16. What policy would you like to see advocated for by Platform?

## Do Something

*The ideas brought forth by these Policy Debate Packs will inform our 5-point Agenda which will be created at our National Convention in the summer. From there, we will use our Agenda to hold our officials accountable to respecting our voices and protecting our rights. However, not every issue we raise will make it into our Agenda. So take a stand now and make your thoughts heard. We ask that in your outreach you do not state that your opinion is the official stance of Platform unless it is taken from our Declaration of 21st Century Feminism or a forth-coming Agenda. But you can certainly give Platform a shoutout for having the conversation.*

### Blog It/ Vlog It *We know you have something to say*

Walk us through your perspective and rally people to your cause. Your posts will be featured on our website and social media.

Email your blog to: [media@platformwomen.org](mailto:media@platformwomen.org), include "Blog Post" and a title in the subject line

### Get On Social Media *This isn't #slacktivism*

According to a report from the Congressional Management Foundation, which surveyed Congressional Staff, "71 [percent of respondents] said social media comments directed to the Member/Senator by 'multiple constituents affiliated with a specific group or cause' would have 'some' or 'a lot' of influence on an undecided lawmaker." There you have it—tweet, Instagram, and post away on Facebook. #GiveMeAPlatform.



@PlatformWomen | [facebook.com/PlatformWomen](https://facebook.com/PlatformWomen) | @PlatformWomen  
@YWCAUSA | [facebook.com/YWCA.org](https://facebook.com/YWCA.org) | @YWCAUSA

### Contact Your Reps *You don't even have to search for their contact info*

Head over to All In Together's Action Center\* and once you sign up they will provide you with the names and portals to contact your elected officials. You can write/say whatever comes to mind, but feel free to use the prompt below.

\*All In Together is nonpartisan and does not take a stance on this issue but gives you the tools to make your input known.

\_\_\_\_\_,  
This month, I, along with young women across the nation, worked with Platform and YWCA to advance the conversations surrounding racial profiling & the criminalization of Girls and Women of Color. As your constituent, you should know that I believe \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_. We need to further conversations and advance policies that will \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_. I ask that you \_\_\_\_\_. I plan on using my voice and staying active until change is realized. You should know that I certainly exercise my right to vote.

Go to: [aitogether.org/actioncenter](https://aitogether.org/actioncenter)



### Act Now! *YWCA has you covered*

YWCA is leading a number of advocacy and petition campaigns that make it easy to take action. With YWCA's guidance, you can put the essential information in your representatives' inboxes in just a few minutes.

Go to: [ywca.org](https://ywca.org)

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