



FUND CARE & COMMUNITIES

DEFUND & DELEGITIMIZE YOUTH CRIMINALIZATION

NEW YORK CITY BUDGET DEMANDS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022 & BEYOND

PART I – OUR LANDSCAPE

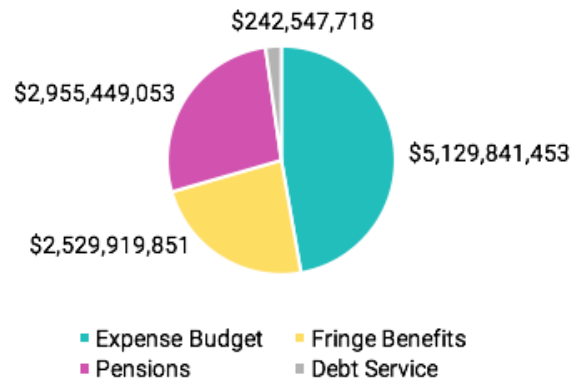
New York City continues to funnel increasing amounts of resources – resources gathered from the public for the public – into the surveillance, policing, incarceration, and control of young people.

As City agencies, particularly the Department of Education (DOE), anticipate billions in temporary stimulus funds to spend over the next three years, now is the time to build the infrastructure to address community needs, fundamentally transform learning environments, and end youth criminalization – those practices that control, police and incarcerate young people in lieu of nurturing opportunity or care, or respecting their dignity and autonomy.

Mayor Bill de Blasio’s administration has grown the school policing budget by nearly 40% during the Mayor’s tenure, marking a significant era of growth in the city’s 50+ years of school policing.

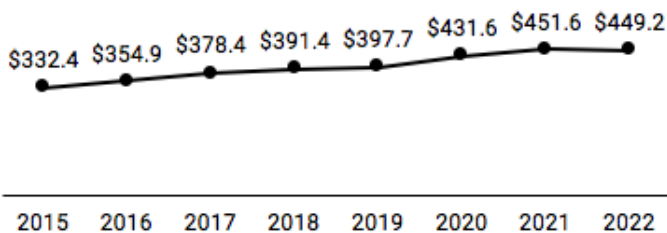
In this context, the influx of new resources will not on it’s own negate the deep footprint of policing and criminalization. Directing public money toward and fueling systems of youth control thwarts any potential to develop new ways to meet peoples’ real needs.

THE NYPD’S \$10.9 BILLION FY22 EXECUTIVE BUDGET



If we do not shift government spending now, including with these new stimulus funds, then the legacy of austerity measures – like the [Fiscal Year 2021 dismantling](#) of the Division of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) in favor of preserving the NYPD – will live on.

PUBLIC SCHOOL POLICING EXECUTIVE BUDGETS BY FISCAL YEAR, DOLLARS IN MILLIONS



In late 2020, the “[Disconnected Youth Task Force](#)” (created by the City Council and Mayor Bill de Blasio) released a report, [Connecting Our Future](#), asserting that the number of young people ages 16 to 24 who are both out of school and unemployed likely doubled during the pandemic, from one in eight pre-pandemic to nearly one in four. The pandemic has also raised the talking point of a legacy of disinvestment or underinvestment in the public good. When speaking of economic justice, it must be raised that the NYPD currently accounts for [1 of every 6 City employees](#). The NYPD has been able to receive the lion’s share of all of the City’s resources for employee recruitment, and hiring, at the expense of other non-enforcement job opportunities. Scaling accessible non-enforcement employment opportunities for young people must be incorporated into the City’s “Recovery for All” agenda.

On March 25, 2021 the City Council voted through an amended [Police Reform and Reinvention Plan](#) (Res 1584-2021), pursuant to State Executive Order 203, later disclosed to cost the public upwards of at least [\\$15,459,000](#) for implementation. Many of the reforms outlined in the plan function to preserve police power and presence, particularly in communities of color, like “engag[ing] with community-based organizations” on “a paid recruitment campaign” to cement policing for the long haul.

In April, the city waived the [\\$40 fee](#) to take the police exam and [dispatched](#) department recruiters

all over in an effort to increase the number of people who take the [exam](#). With the recent announcement that [14,000](#) people signed up after this expansion of recruitment initiatives, we are contending with a reactionary trend of bolstering city spending for rebranding and public relations for the police department – further entrenching an ideology that community safety means hyper-exposure to the threat of arrest, detention, or police brutality. GGE’s fund/defund agenda demands the end to policing the public life, and joy, of young people.

To be clear, despite political rhetoric alleging otherwise, the NYPD has not been “defunded” and, specifically, it has not been defunded by \$1 billion [as put forward](#) by the Mayor. In reality, [the NYPD saw a modest, nonrecurring reduction of \\$300 million](#) – that is, compared to what was a cut of [\\$700 million](#) to the Department of Education. More recent budget documents [reveal](#) the FY21 policing budget has steadily grown since the June 2020 vote. [Including pensions and fringe, this proposed Fiscal Year 2022 budget for the NYPD reaches \\$10.9 billion](#) – the largest it has ever been.

DEFUND · [Law Enforcement Academies](#)

A school allocation memorandum funds the implementation of “Law Enforcement Academies” in six high schools, aiming to increase the numbers of students interested in law enforcement careers.

A total of \$320,000 is used for designated program classes, activities and materials like teacher per session and food.

DEFUND · [Saturday Night Lights](#)

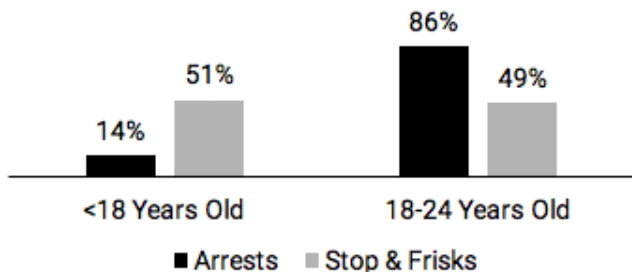
The Fiscal 2022 Executive Budget includes a total of \$7 million, \$4.4 million for DYCD and \$2.5 million for the New York Police Department (NYPD) to expand the Saturday Night Lights (SNL) program, which positions law enforcement as youth workers. SNL, launched by the Manhattan District Attorney (DA) in 2011, is a “partnership” between the Manhattan DA, the NYPD, and other law enforcement agencies that provides free, recreational programming to youth in communities that are “disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system.”

With the funding increase, SNL will expand to over 100 sites, including Cornerstones, beginning in Fiscal 2022.

The SNL program devotes considerable public funding to the NYPD’s public relations efforts, and allows the police to collect information about mostly Black and Latinx children, without their parent’s knowledge. The money spent for police to run “youth programs” like SNL should go to qualified youth and community organizations, to be run by people prioritizing youth development. There is no evidence-based or pedagogical reason for police – who have the legal authority to arrest and weaponize physical and deadly force, and who already engage in [brutality at alarming rates in communities of color](#) – to run youth programs. New York must disconnect policing from all youth programs, not create policing in new forms.

**PART II –
POLICING AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**

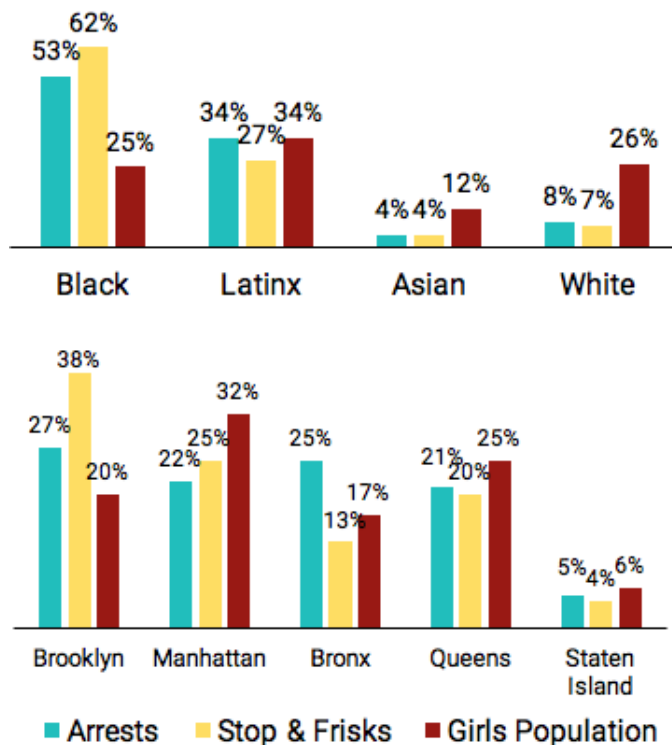
On March 22, 2020 the city shut down. In the weeks of 2020 that followed, [4,150](#) young people gendered as female were arrested, and [184](#) were stopped and frisked:



This data included Black girls as young as 13 being stopped, and logged by NYPD as “combative and aggressive,” among other labels like “angry” and “hostile.”

Further, Black girls were 6.4x as likely to be arrested and 8.9x as likely to be stopped than white girls:

YOUTH ≤24 GENDERED FEMALE IN NYPD REPORTING



[Andrea Ritchie's work](#) has brought forward research that police frequently target victims or witnesses of sexual violence, young people they patrol in school hallways or through youth engagement programs. The New York Civil Liberties Union April 2021 [NYPD Misconduct Complaint Database](#) lists over 8,000 complaints filed by on or behalf of girls age 24 and younger – 90% girls of color and 53% Black girls. Thousands of complaints are listed as “physical force” and hundreds for sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, and sexual humiliation. This culture of policing and gender-based violence obstructs Black girls’ access to and enjoyment of public space.

Perspectives on Police-Free Schools in Fresno, California” report and platform. Included in the [launch](#) was Dr. John Zweifler, a Medical Consultant with the Fresno County Department of Public Health, who spoke on “Police in Our Schools: Population Health, Social Determinant, and Health Disparity Considerations:”

“When we think about the issues related to having police in our schools, we can see that, from a public health perspective first of all, it contributes to disproportionate rates of incarceration for Black and Brown youth, we can see that it drains resources away from needed health services, and finally that it detracts from more loving, nurturing messages that our children need.”

DEFUND · [Youth Policing Strategies](#)

In June 2020 the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) released a policy report with the following excerpt:

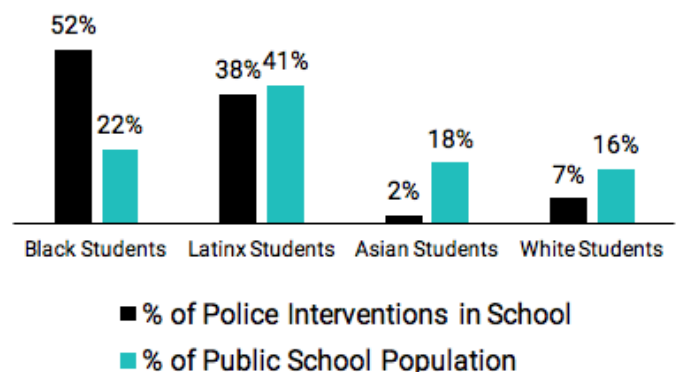
“The fully-investigated cases, and particularly the substantiated cases, include cases where youth between the ages of 10 and 18 were policed while participating in seemingly innocuous activities such as playing, high-fiving, running, carrying backpacks, and jaywalking... young people faced troublesome interactions with the police ranging from being stopped, to being handcuffed, detained, and arrested.”

There are currently [122 public schools](#) in New York City – serving 22,339 students – that have neither a full-time school counselor or social worker but have a full-time school-based cop. While the administration has announced the new hiring of about 500 school social workers, covered by temporary [federal relief dollars](#), there has been no commitment to reducing or sustaining a reduced headcount of school cops.

The trend of police “reform” proposals that increase the presence of NYPD employees around youth, attempts to disguise the dangerousness of widespread surveillance long underway in hyper-policed neighborhoods.

In April 2021, Fresno Barrios Unidos, part of a growing continental community of organizers for [police-free schools](#), launched their “Student

SCHOOL-BASED POLICING IN SCHOOL YEAR 2020-21



So far this school year, the NYPD has reported 221 police interventions in public schools, even as school buildings have operated at less than 30% capacity. With the \$450 million budgeted for school policing this current fiscal year, Black and Latinx students represented 90% of all police interventions while only representing 60% of students learning in school buildings. Mayor de Blasio has given the school policing division of the NYPD the largest operating budget in history – despite its inefficacy, its immorality, and its function to deprive Black and Latinx students equal access to a quality education.

In January 2021, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) announced it had entered into partnerships with five community organizations to “reimagine” school safety strategies as new alternatives to the existing school resource officer (SRO) program. CPS said it sought out community-based organizations to partner with through a selection committee that included students, a teacher, a parent, an LSC chair, a principal, and a CPS chief safety and security officer. That committee chose five groups out of 15 applicants, each of those organizations will receive a \$30,000 stipend, which CPS said was funded by philanthropic organizations.

As New York City scrambles to quickly hire school social workers and passes funding to school budgets to hire educators to reduce class sizes, we are reminded that the 750,000-square-foot NYPD Training Academy was built at a cost of \$950 million, and the NYPD has the infrastructure to offer full salary and benefits on the first day of academy

training. With what seems like unencumbered access to limitless funding, the NYPD has built up one of the most, if not the most, accessible pathways to school-based work. This is unacceptable.

DEFUND · [School Safety Training Unit](#)

This NYPD Unit provides training and “support” for over 5,000 members of the School Safety Division including: Entry Level Recruit Training; Promotional Training; Reinstatement Training; In-Service Training; and Command Level Training. The entry-level training entails 17 weeks of instruction at the Police Academy. Upon graduation, school safety agents are assigned to one of many New York City's public schools.

With the redistribution of the money spent on school policing, we can create a system which includes pathways to school-based careers not preempted on violence or disproportionate power over young people, but rooted in restorative practices and healing-centered community care. Real change comes from material redistribution, not renaming systems or simply replacing police with new actors performing the same functions.

During the Council’s Executive Budget Oversight process, it came to light that the School Policing Division of the NYPD has seen a reduction of 554 school police through attrition since the graduation of the last class in January 2020. We call on City Hall to permanently downsize the authorized headcount of school policing, and to discontinue the recruitment, training, and hiring of school police in Fiscal Year 2022, and for the future administration, all fiscal years to come.

PART III – OUR DEMANDS

At this moment, we are reckoning with a legacy of underinvestment in young people at the same time as public funding flows to adapt and expand systems and practices of youth control. GGE's defund/fund vision for education equity and youth justice centers the wellbeing of young people in New York City's evolving "Recovery for All" agenda:

+ **BASELINE SCHOOL-BASED RESTORATIVE JUSTICE STAFF & RESOURCES**

As a necessary recommitment to the "[Resilient Kids, Safer Schools](#)" initiative, the City must ensure at least one restorative justice coordinator in each public middle and high school, with ongoing training and coaching in Restorative Justice for all students, educators, and families – a need of \$225 million that far exceeds the Mayor's conservative \$12 million proposal. We are calling for new spending on School Allocation Memorandums (SAMs) that enable school communities to creatively pursue the implementation of whole-school restorative practice, including distributing stipends to students and families to lead restorative practices similar to the new "[wellness ambassadors](#)" initiative.

+ **RESTORE & EXPAND THE SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SYEP)**

In 2020, the City supported just 35,00 SYEP slots after [137,000 applications](#). Further, given there are typically [150,000+ applications](#) to SYEP each cycle, and as DYCD has [confirmed](#) the receipt of 150,000 applications this year, we are calling on the City to pursue universal access to SYEP.

+ **NURTURE HEALING-CENTERED SCHOOLS**

The Mayor's initial \$35 million proposal for the "[2021 Student Achievement Plan](#)" was woefully inadequate and delayed. What's more, the newly [announced](#) hiring of 500 social workers raises the question of one-year contracted positions with temporary relief funds as compared to a promise of sustained spending. For example, to bring every school to a ratio of 1 social worker per every 250 students, the industry-recommended standard, the City would need to hire for [2,423 positions](#). The City must fully fund any return to school plan inclusive of non-clinical care, such as school counselors (and lifting the DOE's hiring freeze on counselors), student advocates, and healing practitioners.

+ **GUARANTEE SCHOOL NURSES**

Rather than continuing school nurse placement through temporary contracts, or only committing to one nurse per school building –

where buildings can sustain thousands of students across multiple schools, including schools with limited freedom of movement from floor to floor – the City must develop a plan to baseline school nurses for the long-term. Further, as we have framed [policing as a public health crisis](#), there is a [role](#) for school nurses in dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline.

+ RETURN FULL FUNDING TO THE YOUNG WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

The economic impact of the pandemic led to the reduction of funding to the Council's groundbreaking investment in *The Young Women's Initiative*. Support for women and girls, including through resourcing organizations on the frontlines of ending gender-based violence, must be protected as part of the City's recovery effort.

- POLICE-FREE SCHOOLS NOW

With great urgency, the City must creatively disband and phase-out school police through multiple off-ramps while also rejecting a wholesale transfer of the existing 5,000+ school police to DOE school-based careers. The City must cease any attempt to recruit, train, or hire new school police now in Fiscal Year 2021 and the fiscal years to come.

- SHRINK THE NYPD'S BUDGET & SUSTAIN BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Despite political messaging alleging otherwise, the NYPD's operating budget changes in FY21

were "[modest and largely non-recurring](#)" according to the Independent Budget Office. Since the July 2020 adopted budget to the modified budget released in April 2021, we already see a \$150 million increase to the NYPD's expense budget. We demand a bold, sustained reduction in the NYPD's funding, and as personnel represents 92% of the NYPD's budget, this means a permanent reduction in the number of people employed by the NYPD.

- DISCONTINUE THE NYPD'S YOUTH STRATEGIES DIVISION

We staunchly reject the NYPD's "[Youth Initiative](#)" and the creation of the Youth Coordination Officer (YCO) position, "YouthStat," and "Activate Spaces." We further reject any expansion or evolution of police-led youth-outreach and programming – including as described in the [Patrol Guide](#), like for YCOs to "coordinate, guide, and develop youth programs to foster positive relationships with youth and families" – and call on the City to end the direction of public funding to youth/police initiatives.

- DECOUPLE THE NYPD FROM DYCD

We demand full transparency about all current relationships, with their budgetary impact, between DYCD and the NYPD – and ultimately their decoupling. When we demand universal SYEP we are not endorsing the continuation of NYPD worksites where youth are placed at local precincts, 1 Police Plaza, and other NYPD units/commands. It was brought to light during DYCD's budget oversight [hearing](#) that the agency

collaborated with the training of YCOs at the Police Academy, encouraging officers to harass young people outside in public space in order to coerce them into DYCD programming. The NYPD's intelligence-driven policing model, its information-sharing practices across City agencies, its omnipresence and surveillance infrastructure, makes it clear, apparent, and imperative that DYCD must be free from the NYPD.

- CANCEL THE HIRING OF NYPD COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS & ASSISTANTS

We wholesale reject the proposed hiring of 188 new "[community assistants and ambassadors](#)" and housing any employee titled as such within the NYPD. This [\\$14.9 million](#) proposal delegates community building to a violent institution instead of creating the infrastructure to support strong, healthy relationships that respect the autonomy and self-determination of communities.

- CUT NYPD PUBLIC RELATIONS SPENDING

From the Mayor's Preliminary Budget to the Executive, the FY21 budget has been adjusted to include an additional \$700,000 on the Community Affairs Division – reaching nearly \$15 million. The NYPD has [yet again](#) launched a "listening tour" with young people – a venture that expands harmful propaganda to disguise what police actually do. We condemn city spending on aggressive public relations

schemes that legitimize police, enable police to enter community institutions, and create new contact points with young people and families. Public relations spending is part of a self-fulfilling need for the police to garner more resources and more authority, offering up so-called "solutions" that almost always require more staffing and more funding – we demand the opposite. Reducing the violence of policing means reducing young people's contact with police.

- DISSOLVE VICE

The NYPD's Vice Enforcement Division, still categorized as the "Public Morals Division" in City budget documents, amounts to \$18 million per year for what is listed as an obscure three full-time positions. Especially in light of an [investigative report by ProPublica](#) exposing alleged corruption and sexual misconduct, we join with organizations in calling for the division's dissolution.

- END CITY FUNDING OF SECURITY GUARDS AT NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

Due to misguided [legislation](#), the City is directing millions of dollars ([\\$14 million in SY18-19](#)) to nonpublic schools to cover the cost of private security. Our police-free schools demand includes ending the outsourcing of school policing as this practice sets a dangerous precedent.

PART IV – CONCLUSION

With the FY21 adopted budget the City Council included a “[term and condition](#)” requiring the NYPD to submit a report on private funding sources and expenditures. [The report](#) does not list any funding from the Police Foundation. The Police Foundation, known to direct millions of dollars for surveillance technologies and public relations initiatives like dystopian virtual reality programming for young people, is not subject to public oversight. In response to this, the [NYPD testified](#) that the funding does not “flow through the NYPD’s budget,” “there are no budget lines relating to expenditures from the foundation because the NYPD isn’t making those expenditures.” **Year after year the totality of public funding directed to youth criminalization remains riddled with secrecy.**

With police as gatekeepers to incarceration, often out of the spotlight is the continuing imprisonment of young people in New York City. The Executive Commitment Plan funds [\\$215 million](#) for capital construction and renovation projects related to the two youth jails: Horizon in the Mott Haven neighborhood of the Bronx, and Crossroads in the Brownsville neighborhood of Brooklyn. The most recent [Mayor’s Management Report](#) (MMR) specifies the average daily cost per youth per day in

Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) detention at \$2,064 – up from \$1,651 in the prior fiscal year reported (amounting to a 25% growth).

Weekly for the last year, GGE has been tracking the shifting population of young people incarcerated in the youth jail system, with the total population returning to pre-pandemic levels:

YOUTH IMPRISONED IN ACS SECURE DETENTION



ACS [testified](#) before Council in early May that with an average of 33 days spent in secure detention per young person, it adds up to an average of \$71,000 spent to imprison one young person per stay.

However, calculations such as these fail to consider the real and rippling costs of youth imprisonment – costs to health, to relationships, to friends, to families, to communities. While we can use these numbers to estimate that the total cost of incarcerating girls in secure detention during the pandemic has reached nearly two million dollars for the year, this falls far short as it does not measure the extensive, life-long harm of incarcerating young people.

As girls of color are persistently disproportionately represented in the population of incarcerated young women as compared to their representation in New York City, decision makers are disproportionately harming young girls of color by neglecting to expedite their release from the city's jail systems and neglecting to fund their care.

In the wake of devastating pandemic-related job losses, particularly within sectors that employ large numbers of young people, and unprecedented disruptions to educational access, New York can reduce police power, presence, and scope even as

we continue to build community safety without the involvement of police. Safety does not come from surveillance, arrests, or incarceration. Safety can only happen when communities have abundant resources; housing, food, quality healthcare, accessible job opportunities, and healing-centered schools.

We are demanding that for the first time in history, care is funded. By investing in communities of care, New York City can transform to being a place of true, and lasting safety and wellness for all people.

ABOUT GGE

Girls for Gender Equity (GGE) is a Brooklyn-based intergenerational advocacy organization, engaging cisgender and transgender girls of color and gender non-conforming youth of color. GGE centers Black girls in the movement to achieve gender and racial equity. Since 2001, GGE has committed to the development of our communities through a combination of direct service, policy change, community organizing, and culture change work.



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