

# Let's Talk It Out

**Reframing the  
Narrative Around the  
Juvenile Justice System**

# My Brother's Keeper Long Beach

## MY BROTHER'S KEEPER LOCAL ACTION PLAN

In February 2014, President Obama launched the My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color. The MBK Community Challenge is a call to action to cities, towns, counties and tribal nations to build and execute "cradle to college and career" plans around six crucial milestones for success:

1. Enter School Ready to Learn
2. Read at Grade Level by Third Grade
3. Graduate From High School Ready for College and Career
4. Complete Post-Secondary Education or Training
5. Successfully Enter the Workforce
6. **Safe From Violence and Provided Second Chances**



LONG BEACH  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
AND HUMAN SERVICES



## POLYTECHNIC HIGH SCHOOL

**A Fight Broke  
Out by Poly  
High School**

Incidents In  
and outside  
Schools

**Increase In  
Gang Fights &  
Shootouts**

# PODCAST: KEEPING LONG BEACH YOUTH OUT OF THE PRISON SYSTEM (WAVEGANG PODCAST – MY BROTHER’S KEEPER)

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APR. 25, 2019 / BY M. SMITH AND MICHAEL LOZANO



*Podcast hosted & produced by M. Smith. Edited by Michael Lozano and M. Smith.*

# SURVEY EFFORTS

**Youth-led action research project to investigate mental health access for youth before and during being justice involved.**

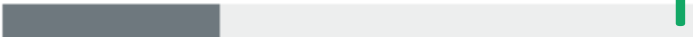
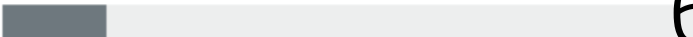
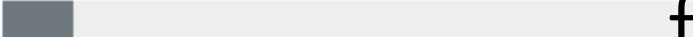

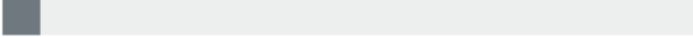
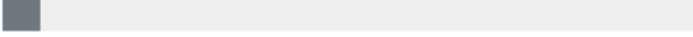
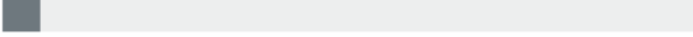
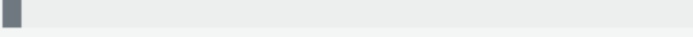
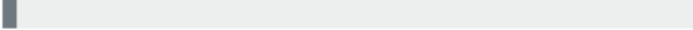
**Youth developed survey and gathered 197 responses.**



# FINDINGS: Demographics

Race: Open ended question  
 Gender: Open ended question  
 Age

Income:

▼	Hispanic		31.25%	50
▼	Mexican		15%	24
▼	White		10.63%	17
▼	Black		9.38%	15
▼	African American		5.63%	9
▼	Latino		5.63%	9
▼	Asian		5.63%	9
▼	Cambodian		3.13%	5
▼	American		2.50%	4

64% on free/reduced lunch

# FINDINGS: Criminal Justice Background

**35.38%** have people in their personal lives who are/have been involved in the criminal justice system.

**42%** of youth participants *know of someone* who has been caught by school officials or law enforcement for committing a crime, missing school, disruptive behavior, or drugs etc.

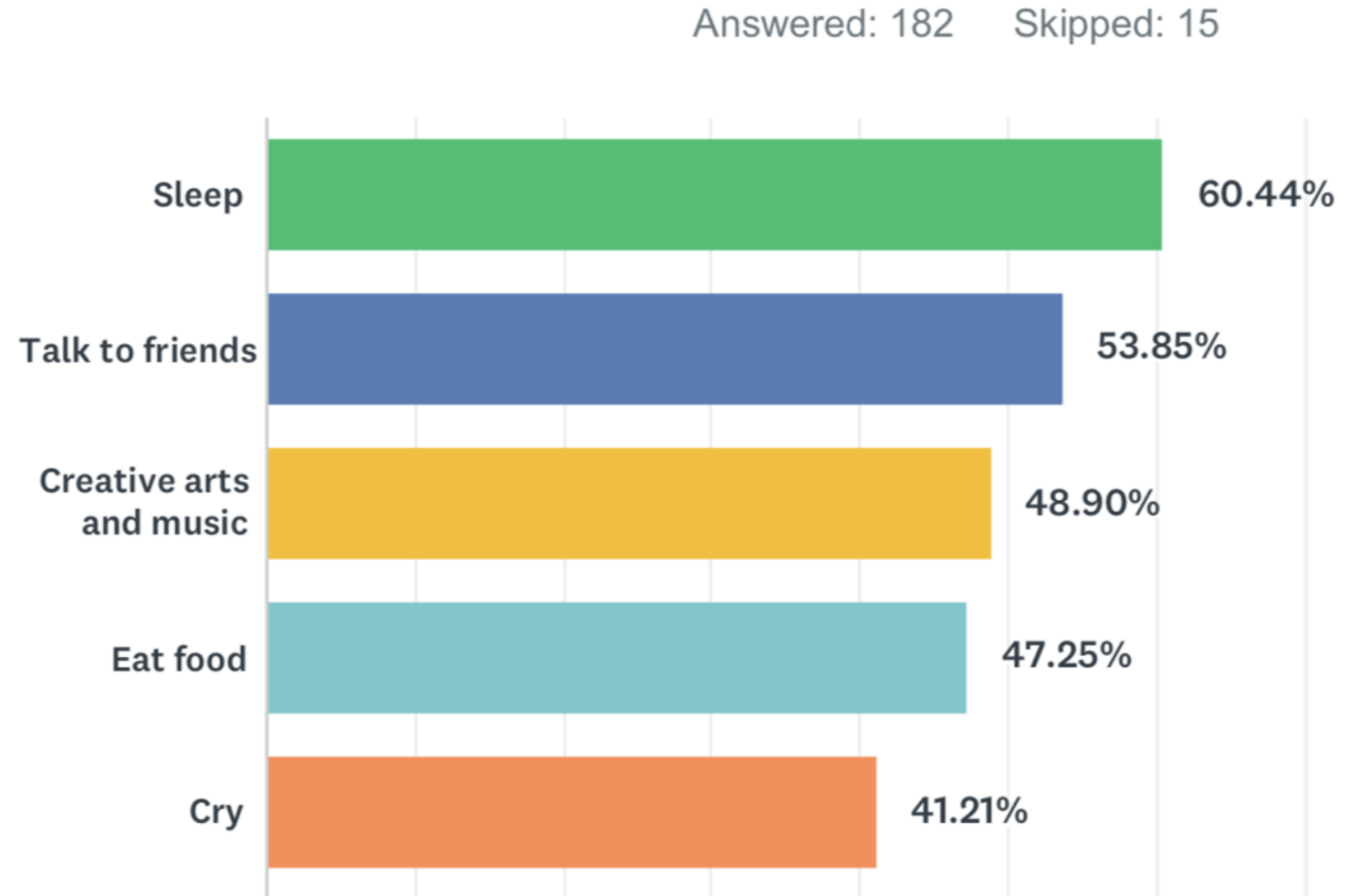
**25%** of survey participants have been caught by school officials or law enforcement...

Mostly for “disruptive behavior”, “fighting,” “ditching/ missing school,” “drug-related incident,” or “stealing” ...

**Which has resulted in school detention and suspensions as disciplinary actions.**

# FINDINGS: Coping Mechanisms

**5 Most Common Coping Mechanisms when feeling angry, sad, anxious, or stressed.**





## FINDINGS: Coping Mechanisms Pt 2

*Which coping method do youth think is most effective?*

Youth participants rated “**talking,**” as the most *effective* coping mechanism, HOWEVER...

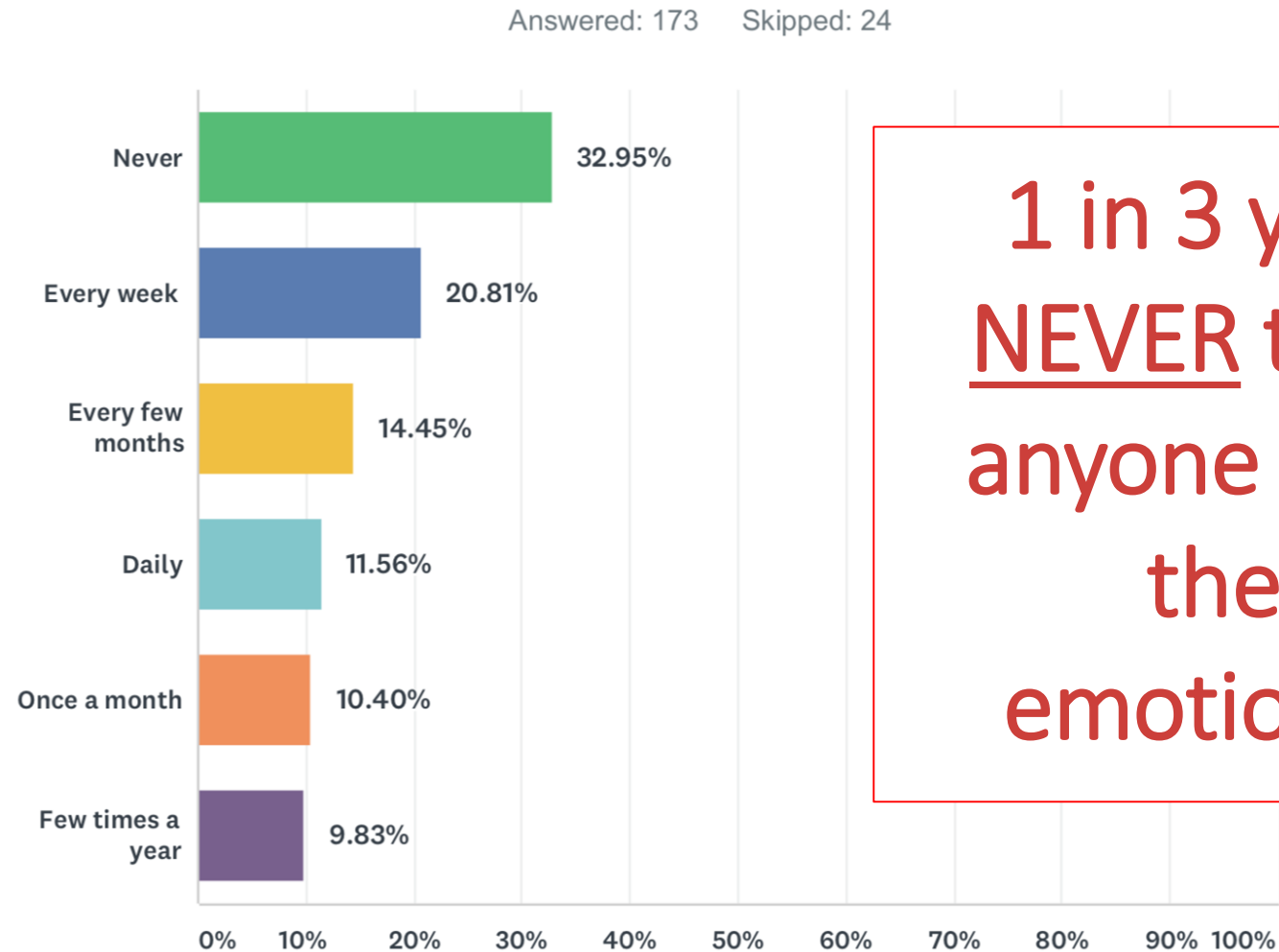
*very few survey participants resort to the following coping mechanisms:*

- **17%** *Talk to parents/family*
- **9%** *Talk to a trusted community members*
- **2%** *Talk to a teacher or counselor*

# FINDINGS: Coping Mechanisms Pt 3

Examining frequency...

Q: How often do youth talk to others about their negative emotions (anger, sadness, anxiety) & life problems)?



1 in 3 youth NEVER talk to anyone about their emotions!!!

# FINDINGS: Access to Resources



Q: "...When you share your problems or emotions with **family, friends, school staff** or **significant other**, which of the following best describes their general reaction?"

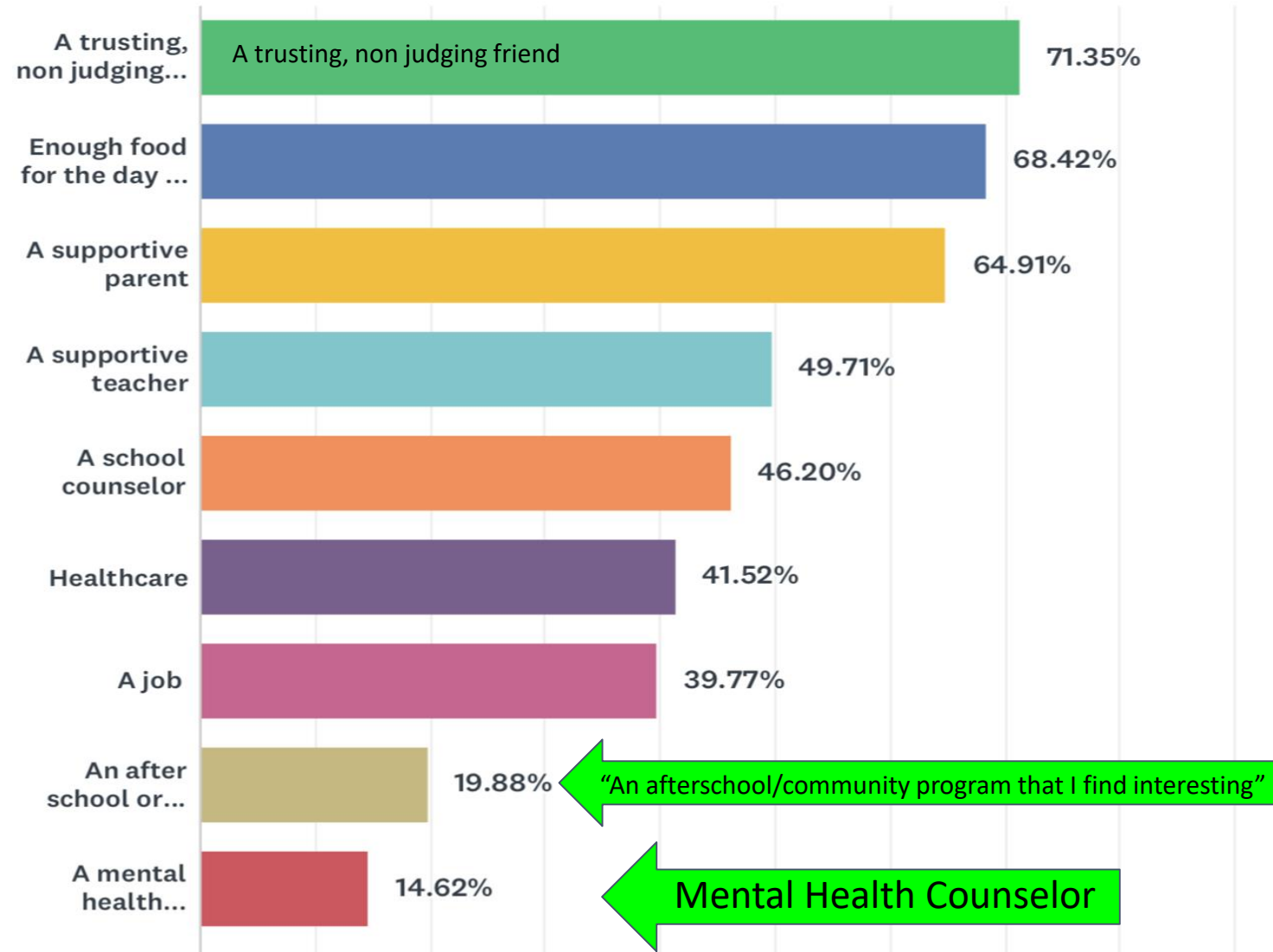
The responses are largely **POSITIVE**:  
"they are supportive"  
"they encourage me"  
"they are good listeners"

# FINDINGS: Access to Resources Pt 2

Youth survey participants share that they currently have access to...



Answered: 171 Skipped: 26



	Mostly Effective	Absolutely Effective	Choice
1	30.3%	56.36%	Having a supportive family
2	31.87%	46.88%	Athletics
3	42.19%	37.95%	Access to Jobs for Youth
4	43.11%	36.53%	Music, art, and creative media programs
5	39.18%	38.04%	Career path, goal setting opportunities
6	38.18%	35.76%	Supportive teachers/school administrations
7	32.12%	37.58%	Mental Health Counselors in School
8	41.36%	31.58%	Receiving Awards/ Recognition at school
9	50.30%	24.24%	Youth Leadership Programs
10	36.75%	32.53%	Mentorship Opportunities

## Top 10 Ways To Prevent Youth From Getting Involved in the Criminal Justice System

# FINDINGS: Least Effective Methods

	<b>Mostly Effective</b>	<b>Absolutely Effective</b>	<b>Choice</b>
3	36.65%	14.91%	Youth Probation
2	31.95%	10.06%	Youth Prisons
1	19.64%	5.36%	School Detention

## Recommendation #1

Increase restorative justice resources and programs' visibility and availability in Long Beach.

*Shifts Solutions:*

*Punitive → Conversation*  
*Resourceless → Engagement*

## Recommendation #2

Increase **mental health** opportunities at schools for individual students and family counseling.

*Shifts Habits:*

Silence → Conversation



## Recommendation #3

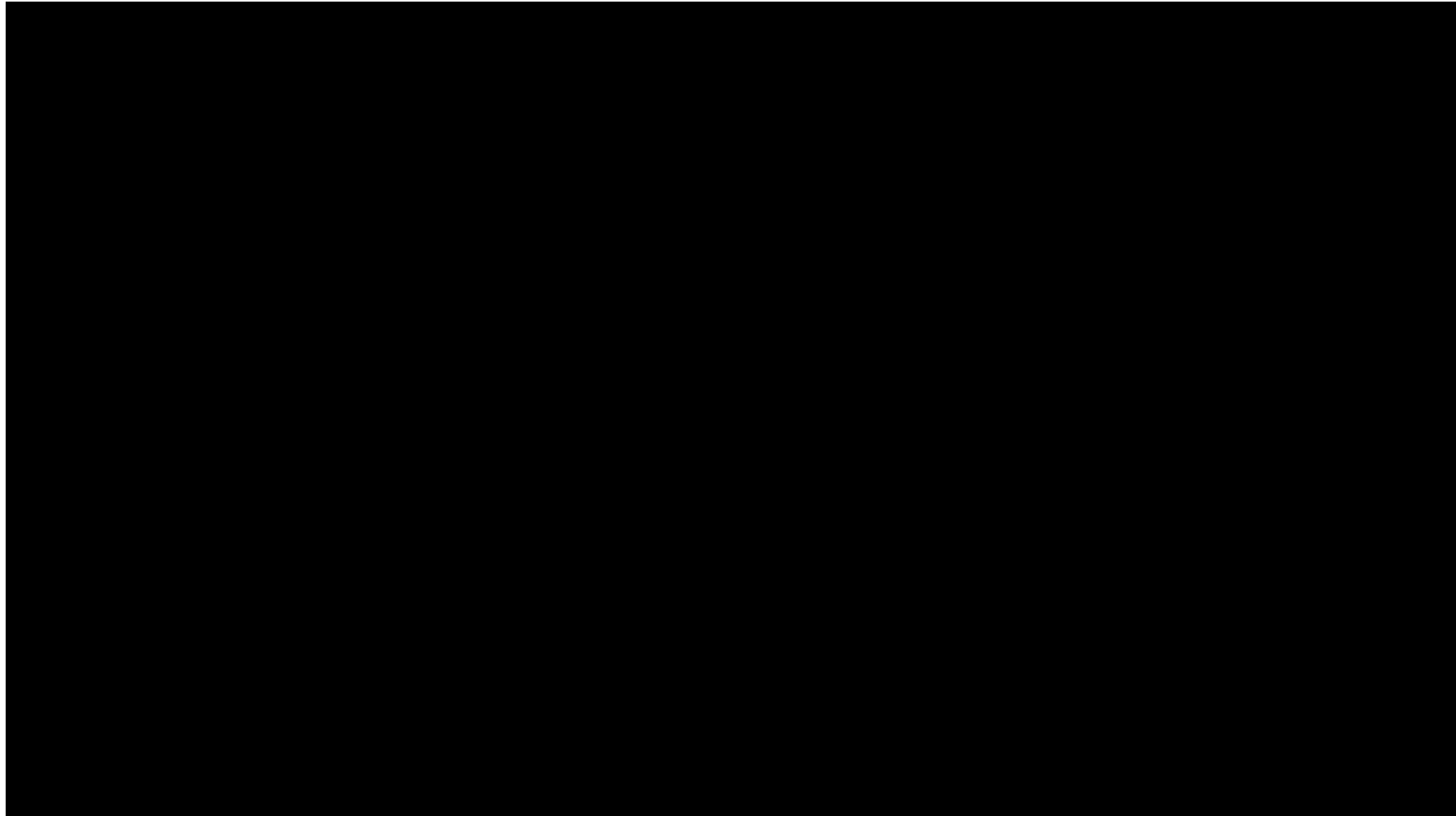
Support policy efforts aimed to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline.

Shifts Policy:

Punitive → Preventive

# Mini-Documentary Preview

- English
- Spanish
- Khmer



[tinyurl.com/YouthJusticeDoc](https://tinyurl.com/YouthJusticeDoc)