
Quit Shoving! (Part 1)

Objective:	SWBAT critique the term "drop out" SWBAT explore group disparities in graduation rates.	
Time:	75 minutes	How Many: 6-35 MS /HS
Materials:	Box or basket for paper. ball-toss paper (paper with three sections - or paper folded into thirds), "Dropped Out? Pushed Out?" Rates Posters (enough for each group), Number sets on post-its or cards (enough for each group), Drop Out/Push Out Handouts, Reflection Sheet	
Note:	We have used some of the statistics for demonstration, but you should create your Dropped Out? Pushed Out? boards based on information you feel is most relevant for your youth.	
Source:	Sarah Brant, Raina Meyers, all statistics referenced on "Drop Out/Push Out" handouts, www.kidscount.org , www.all4ed.org	

Do Now: When you hear the term "drop out," describe the first image that comes to your mind. Brainstorm what participants imagined/drew/wrote about and label it "Drop Out" Stereotypes
Explain that today, we are going to be focusing on what stops people from graduating from high school and how that impacts you as peer helpers.

Enroll: **Directions for Snowball Toss**
Pass out a Ball-Toss paper (blank or lined paper)
Have students label the three sections 1, 2, and 3.
In this activity, participants will write their answers in sections 1, 2 and 3.
They are to write legibly. They are NOT to write their names.
When everyone is finished with the first question, they will crumple up the papers into balls. On the count of 3 they are to throw them into the box at the center (or front) of the room. After the chaos everyone will pick up a "snowball."
If they get their own, they are to pretend they didn't!
They are to QUIETLY read what is written on their paper.
They are to avoid pointing out grammar or spelling errors, but they may ask you for clarification if they don't understand something.
Ask for a volunteer to raise their hand to read what is on their paper. Once called on they will share what's on the paper.

Repeat the process for a second question and then a third

Variations for Snowball Toss: Have people throw their snowballs at you or pass them clockwise until you say stop

Questions for Snowball Toss

Section 1. Are you nervous about graduating from high school? Why or why not?

Section 2. Does everyone have the same opportunity to graduate from high school? Explain!

Section 3. Why do you think people don't make it to graduation or they leave high school early?

Brainstorm their answers on board in a big jumble--all of the answers are reasons that people leave school or struggle to make it

Ask: What did you notice about what people wrote? Were there any themes or commonalities?
What was something you heard that was new or reminded you of something while doing this activity?
We never once used the term "drop out" in this activity. Why do you think that is?

Do/Experience: Board Activity

Facilitation Note: You should decide what statistics you want to use in this activity. All groups can have the same board, or groups can have different boards, if you want to include more information. But, for timing's sake, keep the total number of questions to not more than 10.

Who can guess the number of youth in the United States who graduate from High School? (Take some answers).

Answer: In 2008, just over 3 million out of 4 million who started in the 9th grade.

This next activity is going to involve a lot of guessing. It is o.k. to be wrong, because that just means you are learning more!

Get students into 4-5 groups.

Directions:

In your group, you will be given two boards and a bunch of numbers.

Your job as a group is to get the numbers into the correct boxes. Each number is used once.

Ready? Begin!

[See handout for correct numbers]

When their time is halfway through, go to each group and let them know how many numbers they currently have in the correct positions.

Do NOT tell them which ones are correct. The point is to spark conversation.

At the end, have each group put their completed posters at the front of the room and discuss answers. Do Dropped Out? or Pushed Out? Poster(s) first, then Related Effects of Not Completing High School Poster

Process: Go over answers. If you notice that there is a trend in incorrect or correct numbers, point it out and/or explore it with the participants.

On Dropped Out? or Pushed Out? poster, explore:

1. [for any Pushed Out rate by ethnicity] What might be some reasons that this percentage of _____ youth might not graduate from high school?

[Issues to cover might include US-born versus immigrant, documentation status, language, stereotyping/racism/xenophobia/classism, finances, family responsibilities, previous schooling, etc.]

2. What might be some reasons that this percentage of youth with disabilities might not graduate from high school?

[Issues to cover might include the range of disabilities under that term - physical, mental, and learning, stereotyping/ableism, physical or verbal harassment or isolation, No Child Left Behind and the CAHSEE, previous schooling, etc. - on top of issues like classism and/or racism, of course]

3. What might some reasons that this percentage of LGBTQQITP youth might not graduate from high school?

[Issues to cover might include that this is based on people who SELF-IDENTIFIED, so it doesn't include those who did not disclose their sexual or gender orientation,

stereotyping/homophobia or transphobia, institutional heterosexism, school policy and enforcement issues, physical or verbal harassment or isolation, previous schooling, etc. - on top of issues like possibly classism and/or racism

4. Why is this poster labeled this way? What are some differences between "dropping out" and being "pushed out"?

[Explore the individualization of systemic issues. Revisit the results of the earlier brainstorm to examine what reasons might be "choosing" to leave versus being "pushed out." Find out which terms seem to fit better than labeling everything "drop out."]

On Related Effects of Not Completing High School, ask additional questions to explore what is behind the actual answers
(E.G: Why might that be? What is this statistic appearing to tell us? What could you spend \$200 a week on? etc.)

After reflection, give out handouts with correct statistics (include SFUSD ones on the back)

Label: If it has not already been discussed, make sure students understand the difference between dropout and pushout and how this relates to systemic issues.

Demonstrate: Each participant should do a written reflection on at least one of the following questions (assign them to questions, if needed)

1. Which of these statistics is most surprising or "eye-opening" to you? Which sticks with you the most? Why?

2. Despite these statistics, some youth facing these odds stay in school. Why do you think that is? What does it take to keep from leaving school before graduating?

3. These statistics fail to cover a number of groups. A large percentage of many schools in SFUSD consist of English Language Learners, low-income families, or youth in foster care yet no statistics are readily available for these populations. What do you make of these "silences" or lack of statistics? What do they say about these groups? What groups are missing?

4. What did this activity mean to you? How does it relate to your life personally? How does the information and discussion about this activity mean for your work as a peer helper?

Review: After the written reflection is done, each Board Group should split apart and find one other person who was NOT in their group. Each pair will have one person be a LUNG, and one person be a MUSCLE.

Each lung-muscle pair discusses reflection question #1 (making sure both members get a chance to talk), then get some answers in the big group.

Have the Lungs stand up and rotate around the room to a new Muscle. Repeat process with Question #2.

Have Muscles stand up and rotate the OPPOSITE WAY around the room to a new Lung. Repeat process with Question #3.

Continue like this through Question #4.

Celebrate: Find your original group again. Each person will come up with one obstacle they are facing to graduate and one reason that graduating is important to them/one thing that motivates them to stay in school. They will share this with their group.

SAMPLE BOARD #1:

TITLE: DROPPED OUT? OR PUSHED OUT?

70% of youth in the United States graduate from U.S. high schools these days... meaning 30% of youth in the U.S. do not complete high school.

In the United States,

- _____% of youth with disabilities do not complete high school,
- _____% of LGBTQQITP-identified youth do not complete high school.

In California

- _____% of Latino youth do not complete high school,
- _____% of African- American youth do not complete high school,
- _____% of Pacific Islander youth do not complete high school,

*LGBTQQITP = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Two-Spirited, Pansexual

BOARD #2:

TITLE: Related Effects of Not Completing High School

- People who don't complete high school are _____% more likely to be unemployed than people who received a high school diploma.
- _____% of youth involved with the Juvenile Justice System did not graduate from high school.
- _____% of federal prisoners in the United States have not completed high school.
- Young adults who don't complete high school earn an average of \$_____ less in a week than high school graduates.

Reflection Questions

1. Which of these statistics is most surprising or “eye-opening” to you? Which sticks with you the most? Why?

2. Despite these statistics, some youth facing these odds stay in school. Why do you think that is? What does it take to keep from leaving school before graduating?

3. These statistics fail to cover a number of groups. A large percentage of many schools in SFUSD consist of English Language Learners, low-income families, or youth in foster care yet no statistics are readily available for these populations. What do you make of these “silences” or lack of statistics? What do they say about these groups? What groups are missing?

4. What did this activity mean to you? How does it relate to your life personally? How does the information and discussion about this activity mean for your work as a peer helper?

Who Drops Out... Who Gets Pushed Out?

* 70% of youth in the United States graduate from U.S. high schools today, meaning 30% of U.S. youth in general do not complete high school.

More than 3 million youth graduate from high school each year, and 1.23 million stop going to school

However, drop out/push out rates are disproportionately high for some youth.

In the United States (2006):

- 21% of Asian youth do not complete high school,
- 24% of White youth do not complete high school,
- 45% of Latino youth do not complete high school,
- 49% of African American youth do not complete high school,
- 37% of youth with disabilities do not complete high school,
- 33% of LGBTQQITP** -identified youth do not complete high school.

In California (2008)

- 8% of Asian youth do not complete high school,
- 9% of Filipino youth do not complete high school,
- 12 % of Caucasian/White youth do not complete high school,
- 22% of Pacific Islander youth do not complete high school,
- 25% of Native American or Alaska native youth do not complete high school,
- 25% of Latino youth do not complete high school,
- 25% of Multiple ethnicity/"no response" (ethnicity unknown) do not complete high school,
- 35% of African American youth do not complete high school.
- It is estimated that nearly 162,000 youth will not complete high school in this year. California does not have the lowest graduation rate, but we have the greatest number of students who are no longer in high school.

* Related Effects:

- Unemployment Rates for people who don't complete high school are 40% higher than for youth who have completed high school.
- 75% of youth involved with the Juvenile Justice System did not graduate from high school.
- 4 out of every 5 (or 80%) of federal prisoners in the United States have not completed high school.
- Students who don't complete high school earn an average of \$200 a week less than high school graduates.
- During a lifetime, folks who didn't complete high school will earn approximately \$400,000 less than those who have completed high school.

* What factors contribute to students not completing school?

- Problems getting along with teachers
- Problems with other students
- Getting suspended or expelled
- Unfair/targeted discipline policies
- Bad grades
- Not liking school/ don't see the point
- Peers stop attending school
- Inability to get into desired programs
- Pregnancy and/ or teenage parenthood
- Need to support family by working or providing day care to younger siblings
- Problems getting to or from school
- Other reasons: _____

**LGBTQQITP = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Two-Spirited, Pansexual

In San Francisco (2008)

- 10% of Asian youth do not complete high school,
- 17% of Filipino youth do not complete high school,
- 26% of Caucasian/White youth do not complete high school,
- 35% of Pacific Islander youth do not complete high school,
- 15% of Native American or Alaska native youth do not complete high school,
- 26% of Latino youth do not complete high school,
- 41% of Multiple ethnicity/"no response" (ethnicity unknown) do not complete high school,
- 45% of African American youth do not complete high school.
- During the 2007-2008 school year, 1052 youth in San Francisco did not complete high school.

These are the projected numbers by school:

School	% did not complete high school
Leadership	46
ISA	30
Mission	25
John O'Connell	23
Balboa	23
Thurgood Marshall	19
Wallenberg	19
Galileo	18
Burton	17
Lincoln	15
June Jordan	13
Washington	13
SOTA	11
Gateway	4
Lowell	1

Alternative schools are excluded from this list because enrollment is transient.

Here's how these numbers were calculated:

In 2006-2007, SFUSD could tell how many students stopping attending without showing up at any other school in California. From these numbers, they projected what the Did Not Complete rate would be.

(References: Alliance for Excellent Education (www.all4ed.org), Kidscount.org (<http://www.kidsdata.org/data/topic/table.aspx?ind=106&ch=a>) Project Dove, Georgia State; Lambda Legal; Peer Facilitator Quarterly; SF Peer Resources Evaluation)