



For Immediate Release  
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### **Pushout Update 2008**

#### **School Pushout: Where Are We Now?**

*New Issue Brief Documents That Schools Must Do More  
To End Illegal School Exclusion*

New York City. Students who were pushed out of school illegally had little guidance or information on their educational rights and options, according to an issue brief released today by Advocates for Children (AFC).

Last year, AFC surveyed 145 New York City youth to explore what factors cause students to leave school. The findings are being published today in an issue brief entitled, *School Pushout: Where Are We Now*.

The brief provides insight into the educational experiences and aspirations of out-of-school youth in New York City. The majority of students surveyed were told to leave school for reasons, such as cutting class or having bad grades, that do not legally justify excluding a student from school. More than a third never met with a high school guidance counselor, and almost half did not know they had a legal right to remain in school until age 21. One hundred and twenty-six of the 145 youth surveyed want to continue their education and go to college.

“This paper illustrates that the City’s Department of Education needs to make significant improvements in guidance and advising, and also to track and enforce compliance with rules against illegal school exclusion,” said Kim Sweet, Executive Director of AFC.

“Some students still tell us they cannot attend school because they have bad grades or do not have enough credits, and these reasons are illegal,” said Benita Miller, Executive Director of the Brooklyn Young Mothers’ Collective.

Nohel Marte was pushed out of school at age 18. He remembers feeling that school officials were not invested in his success. Nohel recalled, “The school offered no options to me before I left and they convinced me to sign out.”

Magalli Rivera also felt that she was forced to leave school and said she was “pushed out of the system without any help.” Magalli and Nohel worked with other youth, some who had also been pushed out of school, to create a public service announcement about students’ right to an education. This PSA can be viewed at [www.advocatesforchildren.org](http://www.advocatesforchildren.org).

“The Department of Education must be held accountable to all students and needs to ensure that every child in New York City is provided with the guidance, information and support that is needed to obtain a quality public education,” said Ms. Sweet. “The stakes are too high to do anything else.”



## Advocates for Children of New York

To download the full issue brief and/or view the PSA please visit:  
[www.advocatesforchildren.org](http://www.advocatesforchildren.org).

For additional information, the following persons are available to talk to the press:

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Nohel Marte, Former Student

Magalli Rivera, Former Student