HEAR FROM HER

Meme Styles

System-Impacted Women Speak Series
Brought to you by the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition

Yes, we need to march in the streets, we need our voices heard, but we also need the data. We need a great platform to be able to critique what's happening, but first we need the numbers. All that qualitative data that we collect on our community data gatherings matters, and it feeds into these different solutions.

For 450 years, Black girls have had their innocence stolen or disregarded. This may be the first time that a community is taking the first steps towards addressing adultification bias and healing this part of our history.

MEASURE's mission is to use data and education to empower communities to eliminate social disparities. We address justice in education, health, economic, and criminal systems, and we do this through community, advocacy, resilience, and evidence. We exist so Black people can reclaim their narrative.

Note: Jameila "Meme" Styles founded MEASURE in 2015, when she challenged the Austin Police Department to "show me the numbers" they were using to report the results of agency performance measures. Today the organization has grown to not only address community policing but health, education, and economic disparities.

What is adultification bias, and how are you working to address it?

The Innocence Initiative responds to the "Girlhood Interrupted" study, which showed that adults view Black girls as more adult-like, less innocent, and in less need of protection and nurturing than white girls. This is called adultification bias.

Adultification bias is linked to harsher treatment and unfair standards for Black girls. Black girls are suspended five times more often than white girls and are nearly three times more likely to be referred to the juvenile justice system. And it doesn't stop there. Educators and other authorities often treat Black girls in developmentally inappropriate ways.

For more information about women in Texas' justice system, visit TexasCJC.org/Womens-Justice