



Reasons to Raise the Age of Juvenile Jurisdiction

Prosecuting youth as adults is harmful to children, threatens public safety, and is expensive.

- Youth incarcerated in adult prisons and jails are more likely to be physically attacked, sexually assaulted and attempt suicide than youth in the juvenile justice system.
- Youth incarceration actually increases violent crime. National research found that youth exiting the adult system are 34% more likely to reoffend, reoffend sooner, and escalate to more violent offenses than their counterparts in the juvenile justice system.
- Incarcerating youth is expensive. The average cost of housing a prisoner in Michigan is about \$34,000 a year, with an average sentence served of 4.3 years. A young person convicted in the adult system can expect to earn 40% less over their lifetime, which translates to a loss of state tax revenue.
- An adult conviction has lifelong consequences, including significant barriers to housing, employment, and education.

Most 17-year-olds entering the criminal justice system were charged with non-violent offenses.

- Nearly 60% of 17-year-olds were charged with non-violent offenses that did not include a weapon.
- 58% of those entering the system at age 17 had no prior juvenile record.

Raising the age allows 17-year-olds to access rehabilitative age-appropriate services.

- Michigan is one of only 5 states that automatically prosecute 17-year-olds as adults.
- **Juvenile courts and facilities *already* serve 17-year-olds.** Youth who enter the juvenile justice system prior to their 17th birthday, and in certain cases, can remain in the system until age 21.
- Juvenile courts offer highly effective diversion and community-based programs not accessible in adult court that are designed to keep kids in school, address underlying treatment needs, and engage the whole family.

It's time for Michigan to get "smart on crime" and raise the age!