

Dear Children's Advocate,

Thank you for downloading this Raise the Age Advocacy Toolkit. Children, families and communities across New York State need our justice system to treat youth and young adults in age-appropriate ways. New York State cannot remain one of two states to automatically charge 16 and 17 year olds as adults in the criminal justice system.

Governor Cuomo's FY2015 Budget Proposal to Raise the Age represents a bold step in favor of New York's youth and communities. The proposal provides new protections to children by mitigating entry into the system and providing age-appropriate processing and services to those who enter. It is economically smart and will serve to enhance public safety by reducing recidivism. *It is our job to tell the legislature in Albany that we support these changes and want to Raise the Age of Criminal Responsibility this session!*

By downloading and using this toolkit YOU are helping New York State step forward for children! The toolkit includes the following materials to help you spread the word, educate your community and demonstrate your support of Raise the Age to legislators in Albany:

- A facilitator's guide for a community workshop on Raising the Age of Criminal Responsibility, specifically designed for youth and community members.
- Key talking points regarding the Governor's Proposal for conversations with state legislators.
- Info-graphics and fact sheets to pass out to community members and friends.
- Sample Twitter or Facebook posts demonstrating your support of Raising the Age!
- A sample letter in support of the Governor's Proposal to send to your local senators and assembly people in Albany.
- Links to new stories and online media regarding Raise the Age to share with your friends.

Thank you for your work supporting Raise the Age. Please contact us with questions or concerns if we can assist your advocacy in any way.

Sincerely,

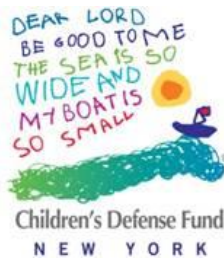
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Raise the Age Workshop Facilitator's Guide



Children's Defense Fund – New York

Raise the Age Workshop Facilitator's Guide

Total time: 1.5 hour

Instructions: Highlighted lines indicate information to be shared verbally with the group. Non-highlighted lines provide background or directions. Time checks are provided throughout in red.

Objective: To inform participants of the current landscape for justice system involved youth, the need to raise the age, and the current proposal being considered to raise the age in New York State.

Materials: Chart Paper; markers

Opening Activity (10 minutes):

- Have three pieces of chart paper. On each paper will have one of the following ages: 7,13,16 *Participants can wander around the room and begin to fill these in as they arrive*
- Facilitator prompts:
 - *There are three ages posted around the room. At each of these ages*
 - *Think of your favorite toys/game/activity at each of these ages and write them on the corresponding chart*
 - Give group time to write responses on the three charts if they have not
 - Have group return to their seats
 - Ask volunteers to share the responses on each chart
- Next, have participants think (silently and to themselves) about something they did at one of these ages, that got them into trouble

Questions from facilitator:

- *Were you punished or disciplined (again, have the participants think silently/to themselves)? Did the response help you learn? What would have helped you more?*

Ask for a definition of each from the group. Give definition prompt if needed:

Punishment: Retributive suffering, pain or loss

Discipline: To train or develop by instruction and exercise especially in self control

We will come back to this idea of discipline vs. punishment a little later in the presentation

Time check – At 10 minutes

Factual Background for Opening Activity (10 minutes)

- Staff Intros
- Select 3 volunteers to read responses on the charts. Once responses have been read, have facilitator identify the significance of these ages for RTA

Seven: In New York children can be arrested at age 7 and charged with act of juvenile delinquency in the Family Court system. Youth charged with acts of juvenile delinquency face many consequences which can include being removed from their homes and placed in locked facilities.

Thirteen: At age 13 youth in New York can be charged as adults in the criminal justice system. Youth age 13-15 charged with certain offenses are automatically charged as adults. These young people are not kept in adult jails in prisons but are subject to all other elements of the adult criminal justice system, including the possibility of having lifelong adult criminal records.

Sixteen: New York is one of only two states in the country where youth are automatically charged as adults, regardless of the severity of the crime, at age 16. Young people age 16 and up are kept in adult jails and prisons and are subject to all aspects of adult criminal proceedings.

How Youth are Different than Adults?

- *Brain development (can ask for suggestions from audience)*

Brain development continues into the mid 20's. The areas of the brain most affected by continuing development are areas responsible for:

- *impulse control*
- *planning,*
- *thinking ahead.*

This means that youth can have more impulsive behavior and less ability to focus on consequences of behavior. Also areas responsible for sensation seeking and valuing benefit over risk are effected. Youth however are also receptive to intervention and highly capable of change.

Time check: At 20 minutes

Main Activity (15 minutes):

Ask for four volunteers, divide the volunteers into pairs. Each pair will be given two roles, one student, one teacher. Take volunteers aside and explain role.

- Scenario- Pair 1: Student walks in 25 minutes late to Biology class. The final exam for the class is 3 days away.
 - Student: You walk in late, don't offer an explanation for your tardiness unless you are asked. Accept any answer that allows you to catch up on the material you missed.
 - Teacher:
 - You show discontent with the tardiness of the student.
 - Explain that in your class, you do not allow anyone in after 10 minutes from the start of class.
 - Tell the student they must go to the Dean's Office, but they will not be permitted into class.
 - You also remind them that their attendance grade will be impacted by their lateness today.

Do not offer an option to make up what they missed.

- Scenario – Pair 2: Student walks in 25 minutes late to Biology class. The final exam for the class is 3 days away.
 - Student: You walk in late, don't offer an explanation for your tardiness unless you are asked. Accept any answer that allows you to go over the material you missed.
 - Teacher:
 - You show discontent with the tardiness of the student.
 - You ask them to take their seat and come talk with you after class. You ask the student what happened to make them 25 minutes late to class. Listen with compassion, but reinforce the expectation. Remind the student that the class is well underway within the first 10 minutes, distractions at this time make it difficult to keep the group focused on the lecture or lab session taking place.
 - Offer to the student an opportunity to make up what they missed after school on their own time.
 - You also remind them that their attendance grade will be impacted by their lateness today.

Return to the group and ask:

- *What was the difference between the approaches by the teachers?*
- *Which student is more likely to get a passing grade on the final? Why?*

Facilitator:

*In this example, we can see that **punishment** (scenario 1) does not offer a chance to learn anything other than, "showing up late to class means I won't be let in". This punishment creates a society where the punisher (teacher) is responsible for monitoring the expectation (being on time).*

When we shift to discipline, we still offer a consequence, but we also offer the chance to understand and learn from the experience. When we treat young people as adults, are they being held accountable and given the opportunity to understand the consequences of their actions? Is exposing children to harmful conditions because of a poor decision an appropriate response to their behavior? As supporters of the RTA Campaign, we know that treating young people with age

appropriate interventions and services that meet their needs is what is best for kids but also what's best for public safety. Kids are exposed to harmful conditions in the adult criminal justice system including lifelong consequences. Research shows us that kids who are treated in age appropriate ways are less likely to commit crimes in the future than kids punished in the adult system. But first, let's go the history of the Raise the Age Campaign.

Time check: At 35 minutes

Campaign and Issue Background (15 minutes)

Why Raise the Age?

Treating youth in the adult criminal justice system, including detaining them in adult jails and prisons, is harmful to youth and to public safety.

Disproportionately impacts youth of color: Youth of color are disproportionately affected by New York's criminal justice system from arrest through incarceration. Treating youth as adults within the criminal justice system is an ineffectual policy, the harms of which are disproportionately carried by youth of color

-70% of children arrested are Black and Latino and 80% sentenced to incarceration are youth of color.

Harm to kids:

-Lack of appropriate services and interventions (relate to discipline/punishment exercise)

-Adult jails and prisons:

- Youth in adult prisons face the highest risk of sexual assault of all inmate populations.

-Youth in adult jails and prisons do not have access to the same age-appropriate rehabilitative services that are available in juvenile facilities.

-Solitary confinement severely damages the mental health, physical health, and development of youth, sometimes irreparably. While some progress has been made in limiting the use of solitary confinement for children, young

people continue to be exposed to solitary confinement and prolonged isolation.

-Youth are 36 times more likely to commit suicide in an adult facility than in a juvenile facility.

-Studies show that youth in adult prisons are twice as likely to report being beaten by staff, and 50% more likely to be attacked with a weapon, than children placed in youth facilities.

-Life Long Consequences:

- Youth treated in the adult criminal justice system are often left with life-long criminal records that can greatly impact their housing, ability to get a job, ability to access higher education, and immigration status.

Harm to Public Safety:

-Youth treated in the adult criminal justice system have higher rates of recidivism than youth treated in systems intended for juveniles.

- Studies have found that young people prosecuted in the adult criminal justice system have approximately 34% more re-arrests for felony crimes than youth retained in the youth justice system

-Around 80% of youth released from adult prisons reoffend often going on to commit more serious crimes.

- A study comparing New York youth to young people in New Jersey who had committed similar felonies but were treated in different systems, found that the New York youth were more likely to recidivate. New York youth had higher re-arrest rates, higher re-incarceration rates, and a shorter time period to re-arrest than their New Jersey peers.

-A second study of 2,000 youth charged with robbery, burglary and assault in New York and New Jersey found that youth in New York were 85% more likely to be re-arrested for a violent crime.

History of RTA Campaign: Raise the Age New York is a public awareness campaign that includes national and local advocates, youth, parents, law

enforcement and legal representative groups, faith leaders, and unions that have come together to increase public awareness of the need to implement a comprehensive approach to raise the age of criminal responsibility in NYS so that the legal process responds to all children as children and services and placement options better meet the rehabilitative needs of all children and youth.

Key moments to date:

- July 2013: RTA-NY launched in with press events in New York City, Albany, Long Island, Westchester, Syracuse, Buffalo, and Rochester. Advocates for raising the age worked hard to educate the public and gain the attention of Governor Cuomo.
- January 2014: Governor Cuomo acknowledged the need for New York to raise the age, citing that New York was one of only 2 states to set the age of criminal responsibility at age 16. He announced a Commission on Youth, Public Safety and Justice tasked with creating a blueprint to raise the age by the end of 2014.
- January 2015: the Governor accepted ALL the recommendations of the Commission!

Where we are today: Governor Cuomo's proposal to Raise the Age

Under the Governor's proposal:

- **Raise the age!** The age of criminal responsibility would be raised to 18 and the lower age at which a child could be arrested and charged with juvenile delinquency would be raised to 12 (with the exception of homicide charges for which youth could be arrested at age 10).

But the proposal doesn't simply make this change in law, it addresses how kids are treated at every stage from the moment of arrest through re-entry home.

Arrest: All youth, regardless of the charge would have their parents notified that they were arrested.

Diverting kids away from court at the front door: The proposal expands on current opportunities for young people to have services put in place instead of having their cases go before a judge, when appropriate.

Decreasing current use of detention and placement: restrictions on cases that can lead to detention/placement such as technical probation violations and low risk/non-violent charges. Also create Family Support Centers to offer services to families seeking PINS petitions to prevent these youth from being placed in juvenile detention.

Courts:

Under the proposal all misdemeanor and many non-violent felonies would go directly to Family Court, where juvenile delinquency cases are currently heard. This means youth would have their cases heard under the Family Court Act and would NOT be subject to adult criminal convictions. 86% of kids would fall into this category.

Young people with Juvenile Offender crimes or other violent felonies would have their cases heard in criminal court in new Youth Parts with specially trained judges who have the ability to use either tradition adult criminal laws or the Family Court Act and access to age appropriate services, such as juvenile probation and post release supervision.

Sentencing:

Of those youth who continue to be tried under adult laws, many would have access to more age appropriate sentences currently available to Juvenile Offender cases and Youthful Offender cases.

Youthful Offender Status would be expanded up to age 21

Placement/Incarceration:

No youth would be kept in an adult jail or prisons. All detained youth would be kept in youth facilities up to age 21 using current best practices for youth facilities (small facilities, Missouri Model, mental health services, considerations for LGBTQ youth)

Long Term Consequences:

Most youth would have their cases heard under the Family Court Act and thus would not have criminal convictions. Many youth who are subject to criminal

records would have opportunities to have their records sealed - which currently does not exist.

Time check: 50 minutes

Cooperative Group Activity (15 minute planning, 10 min report back):

- *Given what you now know about RTA, identify one element that resonates with you the most.* Have volunteers offer up ideas. If group has trouble identifying issues, offer a few options. Facilitator can reframe identified issues under major headers such as those below as well.
 - kids in adult jails and prisons
 - New York being one of only two states to automatically treat kids as adults at age 16
 - Arresting kids at age 7
 - High recidivism for youth in adult system (Spending money to send kids to costly incarceration that yields poor results)
 - Lack of parental notification
 - Lifelong collateral consequences due to criminal record (jobs, education, immigration, housing, etc)

Facilitator Note: Based on suggestions, break into small groups.

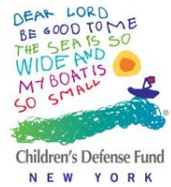
- *As a group decide why the current practice is problematic.* Facilitator can walk around room and offer prompts if group is having difficulty identifying problems. Example of prompts: is it harmful to kids? Does it increase the chance that kids we stay in the criminal justice system?
- *As a group come up with a solution.* Facilitator can walk around room and offer prompts if group is having difficulty identifying solutions. Example of solutions: youth under X age should be able to have their records sealed, kids under X age shouldn't be arrested but should instead have family intervention support, etc)
- *Come up with a creative way to explain the issue and your proposed solution to the group (PSA, mock interview, mock newscast, rap, etc).* Groups can also make flyers and posters for the event.

Time check: 75 minutes

Closing Activity (10 minutes): Thank group for their participation. Reiterate that we are on the cusp of coming into line with the rest of the county in how we treat young people charged with breaking the law. Offer the below ways that people can offer support for the campaign. Answer questions.

- Send a letter to your legislator - visit raisetheagency.com and select “take action”.
- Connect with local affiliate to participate in local meetings with legislators.
- CDF-NY would love for you to share videos, pictures and feedback with us. Email epowers@childrensdefense.org
- Follow us and Raise the Age New York on Facebook and Twitter.
- Perform the workshop yourself! Email epowers@childrensdefense.org

Key Talking Points Regarding the Governor's Proposal

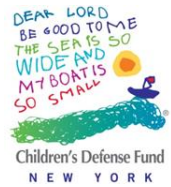


Now is the time to Raise the Age of Criminal Responsibility in New York!

Advocacy Talking Points

Governor Cuomo's Raise the Age Budget Proposal represents a bold step in favor of New York's youth and communities. New York cannot remain one of two states to automatically charge 16 and 17 year olds as adults in the criminal justice system. The comprehensive recommendations below, made by the Commission on Youth, Public Safety and Justice, were incorporated into the Governor's Proposal to provide new protections to children by mitigating entry into the system and providing age-appropriate services to those who enter. They are also economically smart and enhance public safety by reducing triggers of recidivism. *Please support the realization of these recommendations by Raising the Age of Criminal Responsibility in New York this session!*

- ❖ **Raising the age of criminal responsibility is necessary to protect children:** New York's current laws expose youth to extreme harm. Nearly 34,000 16 and 17 year olds are automatically charged as adults every year in New York. Youth of color are disproportionately affected by the ineffectual policy of treating youth as adults within the criminal justice system with Black and Hispanic youth representing 70% of 16 and 17 year olds arrested in New York State and 80% of youth sentenced to incarceration. The Governor's Budget Proposal to Raise the Age would protect youth by ensuring the following:
 - *Parental Notification of Arrest:* Currently police are not required to contact the parents of 16 and 17 year olds upon arrest. The proposal would require parental notification for all youth.
 - *Remove youth from adult facilities:* Youth have been found to be the victims of 21 percent of sexual violence and are 5 times more likely to be sexually assaulted in adult facilities - often within the first 48 hours of incarceration. Youth are twice as likely to be beaten by staff and 50 percent more likely to be attacked with a weapon. The proposal would ensure that no youth under 18 is placed in an adult jail or prison and would encourage juvenile facilities to maintain jurisdiction of youth until their 21st birthday.
 - *Age-appropriate legal interventions:* Currently all 16 and 17 year olds are charged under adult Criminal Procedural law, regardless of the severity of their offense. Under the proposal, 86% of 16 and 17 year olds would automatically have their cases heard in Family Court. Remaining youth, though still automatically subject to the criminal procedure law, would have their cases heard in special Youth Parts within the adult criminal court and have access to services and judges specially trained in youth development.
 - *Age-appropriate services:* In adult corrections youth have *poor access to mental health services*, are subject to *solitary confinement*, and have *limited access to quality education*. In DOCCS adolescents are housed with older inmates and there are long waits for vocational and therapeutic programming. The proposal would ensure that youth have access to age appropriate services, such as juvenile diversion, adjustment and probation, and wouldn't allow youth to be housed in adult facilities.
 - *Protection from permanent criminal records:* Criminal records cause youth lifelong barriers to education, employment, housing, and public benefits. The proposal broadens categories for Youthful Offender Status and allows some opportunities for youth to have their records sealed if conviction free for specified periods of time, mitigating long term collateral consequences as children pass into adulthood.
 - *Protection of very young children:* Currently 7 year olds can be arrested and charged with acts of juvenile delinquency. The proposal would raise the minimum age to 12 with the exception of homicide, for which youth can be charged at age 10.



- ❖ **Raising the age of criminal responsibility strengthens public safety:** New York's current laws are harmful to public safety. Research has shown that youth treated in adult criminal justice systems have higher rates of recidivism than youth treated within the juvenile system. In their final report, the Commission on Youth, Public Safety and Justice projected "Implementation of a range of evidence-based services for New York's population of 16- and 17-year-old offenders would eliminate between 1,500 and 2,400 crime victimizations every five years". Connecticut and Illinois have both raised the age in recent years and have found that doing so had the effect of lowering recidivism and juvenile crime rates overall. Such accomplishments are attributable to the utilization of evidence-based interventions that appropriately address the needs of youth, often guiding them away from the justice system at the front door and preventing deep entry into the justice system. The Governor's Budget legislation proposes addressing the needs of youth and decreasing future criminal activity through:
- *Diversion:* Intervening and diverting appropriate cases before they reach the courts both improves outcomes for youth and better protects public safety. Low risk children pulled deeply into the system are actually more likely to re-offend. The proposal mandates diversion attempts for certain low risk cases and broadens categories of cases able to be considered for diversion.
 - *Best practices for residential facility:* Two-thirds of youth discharged from Missouri facilities, seen as a gold standard in juvenile facilities, remain law-abiding post discharge. The majority are engaged in school or employment at discharge. In New York, youth served at August Aichorn mental health youth justice facility have been found to have lower recidivism rates. The proposal supports expanded use of both models.
 - *Expand educational opportunities for 18-21 year olds:* Incarcerated youth with access to education and vocational programs show significant reduced recidivism among high risk prison population. The proposal increases the provision of such programs for youth.
 - *Re-entry:* The proposal recommends replicating the Monroe County Juvenile Reentry Task Force. The model offers a wide range of reentry services, substance abuse, mental health, housing, literacy, employment skills, education, and family supports. In the first 19 months participants had 20% recidivism rates compared to 63% of a control group.
- ❖ **Raising the age is economically smart:** In addition to protecting youth and increasing public safety, the Commission's proposal fosters economic opportunity in the following ways:
- *Record Sealing:* The proposal offers a number of ways for young people to access Youthful Offender Status or have records sealed if certain conditions are met. For those youth who meet these conditions, this opportunity to seal records represents a first in New York, as record sealing is otherwise unavailable. The opportunity eliminates barriers to successful contribution to the community by allowing access to higher education, job opportunities, and immigration status otherwise unavailable due to a public criminal history.
 - *Diversion:* Community-based interventions are cost effective compared to detention and out of home placement. Diversion can be provided for an average cost of \$3,000 per case while the cost of out of home placement can reach over \$200,000 a year per child.
 - *Decrease unnecessary detention:* The proposal addresses the need to ensure that youth are not unnecessarily detained in any facility such as for low risk non-violent offenses, technical probation violations, and PINS placements. By decreasing the number of youth in detention the overall costs associated with detention will be reduced significantly.

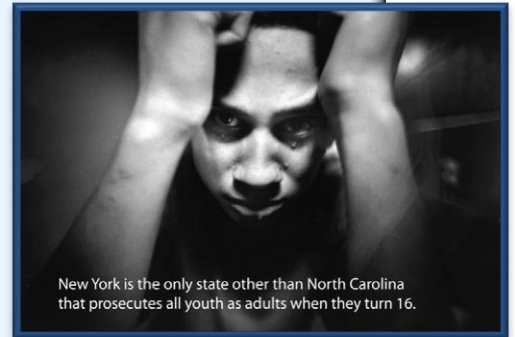
Info-Graphics and Fact Sheets

FactSheet



Raise the Age – New York

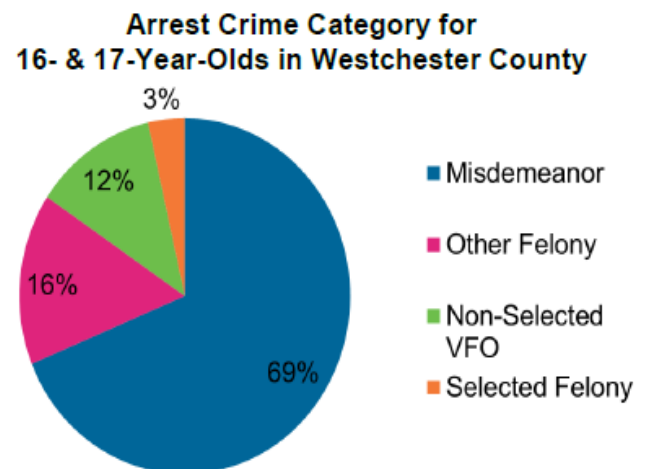
New York is one of only two states in the country that have failed to recognize what research and science have confirmed – adolescents are children, and prosecuting and placing them in the adult criminal justice system doesn't work for them and doesn't work for public safety. However, New York continues to be the only state other than North Carolina that prosecutes ALL youth as adults when they turn 16 years of age. Research into brain development underscores that adolescents are in fact children and that the human brain is not fully formed until the age of 25¹.



By raising the age of criminal responsibility in NY, we keep young people who commit crimes out of the criminal justice system and give them a better chance for a positive future, as well as making our communities safer.

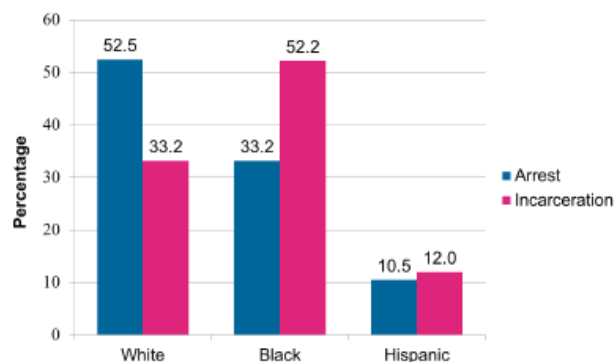
Key Facts

- 75% of criminal acts committed by children and adolescents in New York are misdemeanors².
- Of the 1,236 sixteen and seventeen year olds that were arrested in 2010 in Westchester County, approximately 70% were misdemeanors².
- Young people transferred to the adult criminal justice system are approximately 34% more likely to be re-arrested for a violent crime than youth retained in the juvenile justice system³.
- Youth in adult prisons can be placed in solitary confinement. The isolation young people face in adult facilities is destructive to their mental health. Youth in adult facilities are 36 times more likely to commit suicide than those in juvenile facilities⁴.



Criminal Justice Case Processing of 16-17 Year Olds. Prepared by New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services, Office of Justice Research and Performance, January 4, 2013.

Arrest & Incarceration Rates by Race/Ethnicity in the Rest of State (not New York City)



Criminal Justice Case Processing of 16-17 Year Olds. Prepared by New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services, Office of Justice Research and Performance, January 4, 2013.

Comparison of the Youth Justice System and Adult Justice System in New York State

	Youth Justice System	Adult Justice System
Parents notified of arrest or court proceedings	YES	NO
Parents' consent and presence required during police questioning	YES	NO
Parents involved in court proceedings, improving outcomes	YES	NO
Age-appropriate substance abuse, mental health, and other services consistently provided where needed, reducing recidivism	YES	NO
Special education services consistently provided, improving outcomes	YES	NO
Court and police records are confidential and not released to the public or to the press.	YES	NO
Youth held in the same facilities as adults, and sometimes sleep in same rooms, increasing their risk of being subjected to violence and sexual assault	NO	YES
Youth can be put in solitary confinement, locked up alone in small cell for 23 hours per day, causing serious mental and physical health problems	NO	YES
Youth's court records can be used to evict their families from subsidized housing and cause lifetime barriers to employment and education	NO	YES

For more information:

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Telephone: 914.946.7676/Fax: 914.946.7677

www.wca4kids.org

We Can Do Better

- New York State needs to raise the age of criminal responsibility in a comprehensive manner including ensuring that youth are not housed in adult jails and that funding is provided for community-based developmentally appropriate alternatives to incarceration.
- The legal process must respond to all children as children; services and placement options must meet the rehabilitative needs of all children and youth.
- New York should become a national leader in juvenile justice practices by doing more than raising the age to 18.
- A permanent criminal record can cause lifetime barriers to higher education, housing and employment.

Join the campaign to Raise the Age at
www.raisetheagency.com
or on Twitter and Facebook
@RaiseTheAgeNY

Sources:

¹ MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice. Issue Brief #3: Less Guilty by Reason of Adolescence. Retrieved from: www.adjj.org/downloads/6093issue_brief_3.pdf

² Criminal Justice Case Processing of 16-17 Year Olds. Prepared by DCJS OJRP January 4, 2013

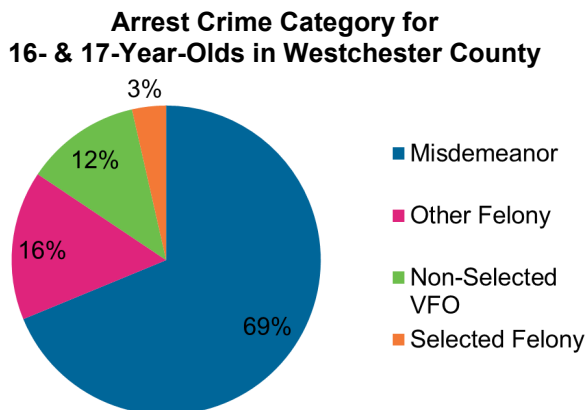
³ National Campaign to Reform State Juvenile Justice Systems. *The Fourth Wave: Juvenile Justice Reforms for the Twenty-First Century* (Winter 2013) <http://www.publicinterestprojects.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/The-Fourth-Wave-Long.pdf>

⁴ National Juvenile Justice Network. *Juvenile Justice Reform: A Blueprint* (2012) http://www.njjn.org/uploads/digital-library/A-Blueprint-for-Juvenile-Justice-Reform_Third-Edition_YTFC.pdf

Did you know?

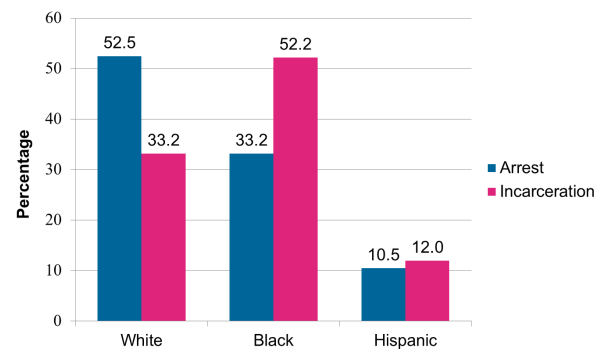
If your 16- or 17-year-old is arrested...
**the police don't have to call you
even though you're the parent?**

New York is one of only 2 states where 16- & 17-year-olds are automatically prosecuted as adults.



Criminal Justice Case Processing of 16-17 Year Olds. Prepared by New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services, Office of Justice Research and Performance, January 4, 2013.

**Arrest & Incarceration Rates by Race/Ethnicity
in the Rest of State (not New York City)**



Criminal Justice Case Processing of 16-17 Year Olds. Prepared by New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services, Office of Justice Research and Performance, January 4, 2013.

**Which justice system 16- & 17-year-olds
are processed in makes all the difference...**

**Youth that are tried and
incarcerated with adults
are more likely to re-
offend — and to commit
more serious crimes.**

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy. Policy Brief: New York: It Is Time to Raise the Age (October 2013). Retrieved from: http://www.scaany.org/documents/ny_timetoraisetheage_oct2013.pdf

Juvenile System

Age-appropriate services

Parental involvement

Records are confidential

Adult System

Limited rehabilitative services

Can be put in solitary
confinement

Permanent Criminal Record

Raise the Age New York Comparison of the Youth Justice System and Adult Justice System in New York State. Retrieved from: <http://raisetheagency.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Comparison-of-NYS-Juvenile-and-Adult-Justice-Systems.pdf>

Learn more at: raisetheagency.com

On January 19, 2015, the **Commission on Youth, Public Safety & Justice**, a task force created by NY Governor Andrew Cuomo, **released its recommendations** on how to **improve the treatment of young people** in the NY State justice system.

RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDE

- Raising the age of adult criminal responsibility to 18.
- Keeping youth out of adult jails and prisons.
- Diverting youth cases before they reach the courts.
- Modifying how 16 & 17 year olds are handled in the court system, depending on the type of crime committed.
- Reducing the lifetime obstacles faced by youth with a criminal record.
- Making upfront investments in intensive interventions.

Youth in adult jails & state prisons

2X

More likely to be physically harmed by staff.
(Source: American Youth Policy Forum)

5X

More likely to be sexually assaulted than youth in juvenile facilities.
(Source: US Department of Justice)

8X

More likely to commit suicide.
(Source: Campaign for Youth Justice)

An estimated
1,500
to
2,400

crime victimizations
**WOULD BE
ELIMINATED**
if the commission
recommendations
are implemented.

Why bother?

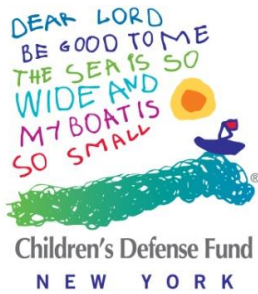
We're behind the times: NY State is only one of two states in the nation that has no capacity to treat 16-17 year olds as juveniles.

Make our community safer and avoid relapse into crime: Evidence shows that raising the age of criminal responsibility can LOWER recidivism and juvenile crime rates.

Protect our youth: Research shows that adolescents that are incarcerated in adult jails and prisons have higher suicide rates, victimization, and re-arrest rates than similar adolescents who are treated as juvenile offenders.

Learn more at: raisetheagency.com

Sample Twitter and Facebook Posts



Raise the Age Twitter and Facebook Posts

Tweet the facts below & include hashtag: #RaiseTheAge or #RaiseTheAgeNY

Direct your tweets to the NY State Elected Officials and the Raise the Age - NY Campaign:

@RaiseTheAgeNY; @SenatorSkelos; @JeffKleinNY; @CarlHeastie; @NYGovCuomo;
@SenatorNozzolio; @NYSenate; @NYSA_Majority; @SenMartyGolden

- Treat children as children!
- Raising the age makes communities safer!
- Brain science is clear. Adolescents are not adults.
- NY is 1 of 2 states to automatically charge 16 yr olds as adults.
- 34,000 16 & 17 yr olds were arrested in 2013. 74% were misdemeanors.
- Youth housed in adult jails are more likely to be abused and recidivate.
- @NYGovCuomo's proposal removes youth from adult jails and prisons.
- 16,432 7-15 yr olds were arrested in 2013.
- @NYGovCuomo's proposal raises the minimum age for juvenile jx to 12 (10 for homicide).
- 70%+ of 16 & 17 yr olds arrested in 2013 were Black or Latino.
- 80% of 16 & 17 yr olds sentenced to prison in 2013 were Black or Latino.
- Stop the #CradleToPrisonPipeline.
- Youth in the system are 34% more likely to be re-arrested.
- @NYGovCuomo's proposal could eliminate 1,500-2,400 crimes every 5 years.
- Juvenile system provides rehab services. Adult parole only provides surveillance.
- Youth are 36 times more likely to commit suicide in an adult facility than a juvenile facility.
- Incarcerated youth are more likely to go back to prison than finish HS.
- "It is easier to prepare strong children than to repair broken men." – Fredrick Douglass
- @SenatorSkelos @CarlHeastie it's time to treat kids as kids & #RaiseTheAge in New York!
- Support @NYGovCuomo's proposal to #RaiseTheAgeNY.

Sample Letter to Legislators in Support of Governor Cuomo's Raise the Age Proposal

Send the attached letter to your local legislators today!

Contact info for New York State Assembly Members can be found here:

<http://assembly.state.ny.us/>

Contact info for New York State Senators can be found here:

<http://www.nysenate.gov/>

Date: _____

Re: Raising the Age of Criminal Responsibility in New York

Dear Elected Official,

Did you know that New York is one of two states (the other is North Carolina) that automatically treats all 16 and 17 year olds as adults? Last year, Governor Cuomo appointed a Commission to develop a comprehensive plan to make New York a leader in juvenile justice and now we need you to make this plan into law! It's time to treat children as children and stop the pipeline to prison that all too often results in marginalized lives, incarceration and long-term collateral consequences.

The Governor's proposed legislation includes a number of critical reforms that will reduce recidivism and ensure that children receive age-appropriate services, including:

- Parental notification of arrests for 16 and 17 year olds.
- No youth ages 16 or 17 years old in adult prisons or jails where they are more susceptible to abuse and suicide than adults.
- Expanded diversion, adjustment and other age-appropriate services, including alternatives to detention and incarceration, to provide youth with alternatives to the justice system and services proven to reduce their likelihood of re-offending;
- Broadened eligibility for conditional sealing of records for certain crimes, to better address the collateral consequences of court involvement and help youth become more successful adults.

Raising the age will not only produce better outcomes for New York's youth but has also been proven to better protect public safety with multiple studies showing that youth who receive age-appropriate services are less likely to re-offend.

Now we need YOU to help make this a reality. Please support Raise the Age in upcoming budget negotiations and help ensure your colleagues vote yes too!

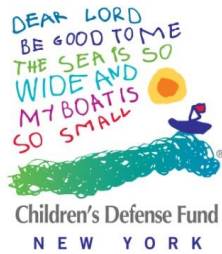
Sincerely,

Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Links to News Stories and Online Media



Raise the Age News, Media and Websites

Click the hyperlinks below to check out online media and websites with more information on Raising the Age of Criminal Responsibility in New York.

Online Media

Westchester Children's Association Video Series on Raise the Age

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mA5KvwCFK6Q&list=PLOfZioC4RHtEjzHFABHczwXgDZHSMYyBm>

Correctional Association Raise the Age Video

<http://www.correctionalassociation.org/cmp/watch-the-video>

New York Center for Juvenile Justice "Because I'm 16" Video

<https://vimeo.com/80939323>

Websites

Executive Summary of Recommendations by the Commission on Youth, Public Safety and Justice to Raise the Age

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/ExecutiveSummaryofCommissiononYouthPublicSafetyandJusticeRecommendations.pdf>

Report by the Commission on Youth, Public Safety and Justice to Raise the Age

https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/ReportofCommissiononYouthPublicSafetyandJustice_0.pdf

Raise the Age – New York Campaign Website

www.raisetheageny.org

Raise the Age Newsfeed

<http://raisetheageny.com/newitem>

Twitter #RaisetheAgeNY

www.twitter.com/raisetheageny

Questions? Contact:

Children's Defense Fund – New York, (212)697-2323; Westchester Children's Association, (914)946-7676; or the Raise the Age – NY Campaign, NYRaiseTheAge@gmail.com.