



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.

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

- **Michigan is one of only 4 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 fall under juvenile court jurisdiction, 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.
- **In order to successfully incorporate 17 year olds, there must be adequate funding and support for our county-based juvenile justice system.** Juvenile justice funding must increase when 17 year olds are incorporated to ensure that the juvenile courts have the capacity to effectively serve *all youth* under their jurisdiction.

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