

“Is the Criminal Justice System Failing our Youth”:

An analysis of juvenile jurisdiction transfer laws for youth charged with serious crimes  
and effective alternatives

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An analysis of juvenile jurisdiction transfer laws for youth charged with serious crimes  
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## Abstract

Whether juveniles shall be treated as adults has been up for debate for decades. Since the early 1800's there has been a lot of changes including the implementation of the first juvenile justice court system. Over the years research has been provided that argues how ineffective juvenile transfer laws have been. This paper will provide an overview of the development of the juvenile justice system, examine the different between the adult criminal justice and the juvenile justice system, and assess how ineffective the current transfer laws are. Recommendations for alternative and best practice programs to deter juvenile recidivism will also be provided.

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## Introduction

Currently in the United States, once a youth reaches the age of 18, they are legally considered an adult, and therefore can purchase a gun, get a tattoo, and even vote. However, based on scientific research pertaining to brain development and adulthood, an individual's brain is not fully developed well until their 20's. This is ironic as youth at the young age of 16 can be tried within the adult criminal justice system in Wisconsin, one of the four states that allows for jurisdiction transfer for juveniles (Johnson et al., 2009; Teigen, 2021). Studies have shown that due to the underdevelopment of a youth's brain, youth do not have the brain capacity of mature judgment. In the late 1980's, due to juveniles' delinquency being on a rise and states legislators feeling like they were not being harsh enough in addressing the current trends, jurisdiction transfer laws were implemented which made it easier for youth to be tried within the adult criminal justice system within 44 states (Griffin et al., 2011). Currently, more 250,000 youth are tried as adults within the US yearly (Griffin et al., 2011). While there is not a lot of research that explores whether imposing these transfer laws has decreased juvenile recidivism, there is a lot of research and studies that reflect how ineffective these transfer laws just have been (Luna & Wright, 2016). In fact, studies have shown that youth tried within the adult criminal justice system were 34% more likely to re-offend and committed more serious crimes at a faster rate than those youth that remained within the juvenile system and were provided with preventative and diversionary programming (Bishop, 2000; Ross, 2016). This information alone provides understanding why transfer laws remain such a controversial issue.

Studies suggest that youth tried within the adult criminal justice system are more likely to commit suicide, face physical and sexual abuse, and re-offend, while racial

disparity remains a large issue within the waiver and sentencing process. Studies indicate that black youth are 88 percent more likely to be tried as an adult than white youth, despite them committing the same serious crimes (Bishop, 2000). While the juvenile justice system's purpose is to provide, community protection and rehabilitation, trying youth within the adult criminal justice system, promotes punishment, undermining the system's main purpose.

Since the implementation of the current transfer laws, many states have taken the initiative to expand their juvenile justice systems to provide alternative programming in addressing the increase of juvenile being tried as adults. These alternatives have been determined to decrease juvenile incarceration costs and have, overall, provided youth with the appropriate rehabilitative services. Based on these findings alone, state legislators should take more of an initiative to explore these alternatives and expand the juvenile justice system in Wisconsin.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This research explores current trends and studies that have been conducted on how ineffective juvenile transfer laws have been in decreasing juvenile recidivism rates. In addition, research will provide additional insight into the impact the under-development of a youth's brain has on their maturity and decision-making abilities at it relates to committing a crime. Research will be presented that outlines the ineffectiveness of trying juveniles within adult court system and how these laws go against the purpose of the criminal justice system, which is to provide community protection and rehabilitation rather than punishment. In fact, research will be presented that outlines how it is more detrimental for youth to be transferred and tried within the adult criminal justice system.

## **Significance of the Study**

This research paper will provide an argument that youth charged with serious crimes should remain within the juvenile justice system rather than being transferred to the adult justice system. This argument will be supported by statistics, studies, information provided from a theoretical standpoint which outline just how ineffective current transfers laws are in reducing recidivism. In addition, the provided research will be supported by current implemented alternative programs (e.g., community-based initiative programs that offer diversion opportunities for those that have committed serious crimes, and community focused therapeutic services, including residential programs) that have been implemented in other states to reduce juvenile jurisdiction transfers.

## **Contribution in the Field**

The main contribution of this research will be a call to action - promoting the expansion of the juvenile justice system to implement early interventions to decrease the occurrence of juvenile jurisdictional transfer. Another contribution to the research will be recommendations for best practice interventions or alternatives to trying juveniles within adult courts. Studies and collateral information regarding effective programs that have been implemented across the U.S. to address juvenile recidivism rates. In addition, effective alternatives that been implemented, rather than juveniles being transferred to the adult criminal justice system.

## **Literature Review**

### **History of the Juvenile Court System**



Between the 1800-1900's youth were viewed as adults and therefore treated as such, being punished within the adult court system and confined to jails and penitentiaries (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, 2022). Due to their not being many other options, criminal youth were housed in overcrowded facilities with harshly criminal adults and the mentally ill (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, 2022). To stop youth from being housed in the same facilities as adults and address the social issue for the rise of child poverty and neglect, penal reformers Thomas Eddy and John Griscom developed the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism which fought against housing youth within adult jails (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, 2022). This reform led to the 1825 establishment of the first refuge house referred to as the New York House of Refuge. This institution was designed to house poor youth and those youth classified as delinquent (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, 2022). Over the next three years, similar institutions were developed in Boston and Philadelphia, and by the 1840's, 25 additional facilities had been established throughout the country. However, things quickly turned for the worst and many refuges begun facing issues of overcrowding (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, 2022). As a result, social reformers begun arguing for the establishment of a new institution that had a larger focus on addressing the educational needs of youth, leading to the establishment of the first industrial school, the San Francisco Industrial School (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, 2022).

Through the efforts made by social reformers, to really focus on separating the needs of youth from adults, the first juvenile court system was established on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1899, in Cook County Illinois (Lawrence,2008). The first juvenile court system was founded under the legal doctrine of *parens patriae*, known as the state of parent. The legal doctrine

established the right for the court to intervene on the behalf of youth who were deemed to be in need due to their delinquent acts or current circumstance (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, 2022). The juvenile court system was established on the basis that youth would be treated as an individual who needed assistance/rehabilitation rather than being a system utilized only to obtain justice for a crime committed (Lawrence, 2008). By 1945, all states had developed a juvenile court system (Lawrence, 2008).

Despite the differences in terms of jurisdiction and minimum age of waived youth amongst all states, the common goal for the court system was to aid and rehabilitate rather than seek justice alone (Lawrence, 2008). For the 60 plus years to follow, each state ran their juvenile court proceedings with that common goal and the maximum sanction for youth was placement at a residential facility for no more than a year (Lawrence, 2008). However as more and more time passed and there not being any due process protection for youth, many were beginning to be sentenced to facilities that resembled adult prisons, which was brought to light in several Supreme Court cases (Lawrence, 2008).

One of the initial Supreme Court cases which involved the juvenile court system was *Kent v. United States*. This case involved 16-year-old. Morris Kent, who was on probation at the time, he was charged for committing a robbery and raping a woman (Lawrence, 2008). Kent's attorney filed a motion for jurisdiction as he believed that the District of Columbia juvenile court would waive his case to criminal court. However, the judge never ruled on the motion but instead waived Kent's case to criminal court without providing substantial reasoning to Kent's attorney and providing him any information determining his ruling (Lawrence, 2008). The U.S. Supreme Court overruled the waiver

arguing that waiver was invalid as Kent's attorney was not provided with appropriate reasoning for the waiver determination by the judge (Lawrence, 2008).

*In re Winship* was another important ruling from the Supreme Court. This case involved 12-year-old Samuel Winship who was accused of stealing money from a woman's purse (Lawrence, 2008). While the store employee argued that Samuel was observed fleeing from the store prior to the report being made by the woman, other customers denied the claim, reporting the employee was not in eyesight to observe the money being stolen (Lawrence, 2008). Despite the lack of evidence, Winship was found to be delinquent and placed at a New York training school under the standard of "preponderance of evidence" of New York's juvenile court system. Winship's attorney filed a motion and ultimately his case was overturned by the US Supreme Court because the initial judicial ruling shall be determined based on evidence for adjudication of delinquency being "proof without any reasonable doubt" (Lawrence, 2008).

*In re Gault*, Supreme court case involved 15-year-old Gerald who at the time was on probation for a minor offense when he and friend made what was considered to be a "obscene" comment during a phone call with a neighbor woman (Lawrence, 2008).. As a result, Gerald was arrested, without notification given to his parents. He was not provided with counsel, nor was any evidence provided to justify his adjudication of delinquency and he was sentenced to a training school (Lawrence, 2008). It should be noted, an adult would have been charging a \$50 fine, for making an obscene comment, however in this case, due to the limited legal protective provided to youth, Gerald's punishment was much harsher. The Supreme court made a ruling that Gerald's due process rights had been violated, as he

should have had access to counsel, the ability to question witnesses, and protection against self-incrimination (Lawrence, 2008).

*Breed vs. Jones* was another Supreme Court case which involved 17-year-old Gary Jones who was charged with armed robbery and was adjudicated as delinquent in Los Angeles, California (Lawrence, 2008). At the dispositional hearing, the court judge waived Jones' case jurisdiction to criminal court and Jones' attorney filed a habeas corpus writ, arguing that the waiver to criminal court following an adjudication of delinquency ruling violated the fifth amendment double jeopardy clause (Lawrence, 2008).

These cases are prime examples of the way youth were treated because of the limited legal protection provided to them. They also outline the court's responses to these limited legal protections.

### **Adult Court Proceedings vs Juvenile Court Proceedings**

There are several differences between the adult court system and the juvenile court system. While ultimately the purpose for both systems is to promote rehabilitation, the adult court system focuses more on punishment. Within the juvenile court system, the goal is rehabilitation, and the youth is alleged of committing a delinquent act, rather than committing a crime (*Difference between juvenile and adult justice systems, 2022*). In the adult court system, an offender has the right to have a jury trial whereas in the juvenile court system, the judge makes the decision to find adjudicate or not (*Difference between juvenile and adult justice systems 2022*).

The sentencing process differs in both systems as well. In the adult court system, an offender can receive whatever the court determines to be the harshest punishment, which

could include several years in prison, or even the death penalty (*Difference between juvenile and adult justice systems 2022*). Within the juvenile court system, typically services are implemented to address the needs of the juvenile focusing on changing their behavior rather than punishing them for the behavior (*Difference between juvenile and adult justice systems 2022*).

### **The Wavier Process**

In the early 1980's, with an effort to crack down on the increasing rate of crimes being committed by juveniles, many states passed legal reforms which made it legal for juveniles to be waived to adult criminal court for prosecution (Redding, 2008). According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), by 1995 more than 21 states implemented transfer laws permitting juveniles as young as 15 to be tried within the adult criminal justice system (Redding, 2008). This number increased in 2005 to 31 states (Redding, 2008). As a result, more than 4,100 youth between 1980 and 1999 had been detained or transferred to adult prisons (Redding, 2008).

The waiver process, "is a process in which a judge can waive the protections provided by the juvenile court system, allowing for a youth to be transferred to the adult court system for sentencing" (Redding, 2008). It shall be noted, in these cases the crimes the youth has committed has been deemed as "serious" or the youth has a prior criminal record (Redding, 2008). There are three different types of juvenile transfer laws: (automatic, judicial, and prosecutorial direct file) (Redding, 2008). An automatic transfer requires that a youth has met the statutory criteria for example, is 14 and older and accused of committing a violent felony classified crime (Redding, 2008). Judicial transfer can occur at the discretion of the juvenile court judge belief that the youth shall be tried within the

adult criminal court system (Redding, 2008). Lastly, the prosecutorial transfer also known as direct file can occur at the discretion of the prosecutor determining whether to file criminal charges within the adult or juvenile court system (Redding, 2008). In addition to these three different types of juvenile transfer laws, many states have what is referred to “reverse jurisdiction” which allows for the criminal court judge to transfer a youth back to the juvenile court system for sentencing at his/her discretion (Redding, 2008).

In collaboration with these different transfer laws there are also other factors that are considered when determining whether a youth should be tried within the adult court system or juvenile court system. The following factors include:

- Youth is being charged with a considerable serious crime
  - Youth has a lengthy past criminal record
  - Youth is of a certain age
  - Prior rehabilitative services were deemed not be effective, and
  - Length of time services would need to be implemented for the youth
- (Michon, 2016)

Since the juvenile transfer laws have been established there has been somewhat of a decline in juvenile crime rates since 1995, however, these numbers have once again begun to rise (Hockenberry, 2021). In fact, in 2018, juvenile courts waived approximately 3,800 delinquency cases to criminal court for handling (Hockenberry, 2021). In addition to these increasing trends, between 2006 and 2018, trends show that of youth who commit serious crimes, black youth were more likely to be waived to the adult court system than any other

race (Hockenberry, 2021). By a substantial margin, black male youth were more likely to be waived than black female youth (Hockenberry, 2021).

### **Brain Development and Juvenile Delinquency**

It is troubling to know even though research shows that brain development continues well into adulthood, that a youth as young as the age of 14 and younger in other states, could be tried as an adult in some states. According to Gruber and Yurgelum-Todd (2005), human behavior is determined by biology and experience. Therefore, in hindsight throughout childhood, a child must meet developmental and biological milestones, before behaviors will be presented and can be corrected, making the correlation between “wrong from right”. (Gruber & Yurgelum-Todd, 2005). For example, a child cannot learn to walk before developing the appropriate muscle mass to crawl (Gruber & Yurgelum-Todd, 2005). Therefore, without the appropriate brain development, a youth does not have the maturity level to control for peer pressure, appropriate decision-making, or impulsivity. Based on this information alone, these factors should be taken in account when waiver decisions are made (Gruber & Yurgelum-Todd, 2005).

According to Kinscherff (2015), one of the main differences between the brain of an adult and a brain of an adolescent in the underdevelopment of the prefrontal cortex and limbic system (Tyler, 2015). The prefrontal cortex is known as the part of the brain associated with decision-making and emotional intelligence; therefore, a youth would not have the brain capacity to make mature decisions, control their impulsivity, or make determining decisions “right from wrong” (Tyler, 2015). The limbic system is the part of the brain that regulates emotions and cognitive control. The prefrontal cortex develops after the limbic system which is why youth make judgment based on emotions and impulses

rather than logic and reasoning (Dhaliwal, 2018). In addition, these other two brain systems are punitive in brain development for youth: social emotional system and cognitive control (Dhaliwal,2018). The social-emotional system is the emotional control of the brain (Tyler, 2015). With the appropriate development of this system, a youth has increased sensation seeking, is more reactive to emotional response (negative and positive), and is more aware of social cues (Tyler, 2015). The cognitive control system, as it matures through a youth adolescence, has the ability to help inhibit their impulses more effectively, promote better emotional regulation, make an individual more capable of ignoring peer pressures/ potential stressors, and allows for better decision making by weighing out the impact their choice may have on the potential outcome (Tyler, 2015).

Despite what research indicates about brain development and juvenile delinquency, youth are still be tried within the adult court system at an increasing rate. As a result, the U.S. Supreme Court has had to overturn several different court cases, where brain development played a key factor.

*Roper v Simmons* involved a 17-year youth who was sentenced to the death penalty in Missouri. Ultimately, the court ruled that sentencing a youth under the age of 18 violated the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment (cruel and unusual punishment) arguing that youth have less impulse control, are more susceptible to peer pressure, and lack the maturity to make a sound and appropriate decision compared an adult (Tyler, 2015).

*Graham v. Florida* involved a 16-year-old teen who was charged with attempted armed robbery. Upon his release the teen failed to comply with his probation and was therefore sentenced to life in prison without committing a life sentence worthy crime. In this court case, many factors outlined in the *Roper v Simmons* were considered in addition



to argument of moral character and the likelihood that a teen is more likely to demonstrate a negative moral character than an adult (Tyler, 2015).

### **Racial Disparity in Waiver/Sentencing Process**

It is not a secret that there is racial disproportionality within the criminal justice system. There are several studies and findings that support the hypotheses that is seen within the adult and juvenile justice system. Researchers Bryson and Peck (2019) conducted a study that aligns directly with the trends seen involving the racial disproportionality seen in the juvenile waiver process. The study consisted of data collected between 2004 and 2014 about juveniles who were involved within the juvenile justice system who were age 14 and older (Bryson & Peck, 2019). Ultimately, the study affirmed that racial disparity within the waiver and sentencing process is present. In fact, the study found that black youth were more likely to waived to adult court through the judicial process than their white peers (Bryson & Peck, 2019). In addition, the data proved that trends associated with the wavier process suggest that black male juveniles were 72% percent more likely than their white peers to be waived to the adult court for serious crimes (Bryson & Peck, 2019). White juveniles were more likely to have their case heard within the juvenile court system (Bryson & Peck, 2019). Ironically, a black female juvenile was even more likely to be waived to adult court than white male and female juveniles (Bryson & Peck, 2019).

### **Ineffectiveness of the Wavier Process**

Researchers have known for many years that the waiver process has not been effective in decreasing juvenile crime rates. In fact, several studies have been conducted

that align with this hypothesis (Redding, 2008). Jensen and Metzger (1994) conducted a study examining the crimes ratings of youth tried within the adult criminal justice system over the span of ten years, 1976-1986 (Redding, 2008). The study concluded that there was a 13 percent increase in arrests for youth that had been previously tried within the adult court system (Redding, 2008).

Between the years of 1975 and 2000, Steiner and Wright examined the impact of waiver laws and juvenile recidivism within 14 states where it was legal for juveniles to be tried within the adult criminal court system (Redding, 2008). The study focused on prosecution for more serious crimes such as robbery, murder, rape and aggravated assault. As predicted, the study concluded that transfer laws had no direct deterrent on juvenile delinquency ratings (Redding, 2008).

While this is just some of the research present that concludes just how ineffective transfer laws are, there is years of research that has been conducted which aligns with the ineffectiveness of transfer laws.

### **Issues Youth Face While Incarcerated With Adults**

Research provided thus far has examined the ineffectiveness transfer laws are in reducing recidivism. Youth are also more likely to be at risk of being exposed to unsafe conditions while also housed within adult facilities. In fact, youth are more likely to commit suicide, be sexually abused, and assaulted (Traila, 2018). In fact, studies have concluded that youth sentenced to adult facilities are five times more likely to be sexually abused and two times more likely to be assaulted by adult than a youth placed in a juvenile facility

(Traila, 2018). In addition, youth are 36% more likely to commit suicide when housed in facilities with adults (Traila, 2018).

There are federal statutes such as *The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act of 1974* and the *Prison and Rape Elimination Act (PREA)* in place to put limits in place for prisons housing youth that have been sentenced as adults, in some cases, states do not adhere to them. *The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act of 1974* was implemented in the attempt to force states to provide alternative programming to youth offenders housed in adult prisons as they were being victimized at higher rates than youth housed in juvenile facilities. Ironically, once youth are sentenced to adult facilities, many states do not follow these statutes (Lahey, 2016). In fact, states, like Utah, Alaska, and Arkansas refuse to comply with the PREA standard, which had led to under reporting of sexual abuse incidents involving youth in those states (Lahey, 2016). Despite the efforts made by the federal government, states such as Michigan, New York, Texas, and Florida continue to house juveniles sentenced to adult facility together with adults (Lahey, 2016). According to a survey that was conducted by the United States Department of Justice, 1.8 percent of 16- and 17-year-old that are sentenced to adult prisons reported being sexually abused by adult inmates and prison personnel (Lahey, 2016).

### **Lack of Access to Programming**

Juveniles sentenced to adult prison also face other risks such as the decreased access to educational or rehabilitation focused programming (Simmonds, 2021). Due to the adult criminal justice system focus is the protect the community, often once youth are sentenced to adult facilities, they are deprived of continuing their education. They are also deprived of obtaining services and programs that will provide them the appropriate opportunities to

prepare them for integration back into the community (Simmonds, 2021). According to a report from Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), education provided to youth within adult prison, is either very limited or nonexistent. Furthermore, due to the restriction's youth face in adult prisons, other times, youth are unable to consistently attend school if they are housed in smaller facilities due to the possibility of their being kept in solitary confinement (Simmonds, 2021).

### **Methodology**

This research was conducted based on the utilization of government data bases such as the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and criminal law databases. Current statistics were gathered and outlined in order to address and affirm how ineffective the current juvenile transfer laws are. Additionally, research was obtained from secondary resources including peer-reviewed literature that outlined the effectiveness of alternative planning for juveniles for the purpose of decreasing recidivism and the number of juveniles being transferred to the adult court system. Qualitative and quantitative research was obtained and provided to support the research problem as well and is illustrated in the literature review section, aligning with the research problem.

### **Results**

#### **Diversion Programs**

Within the recent years, many states have begun to take a different approach in addressing juveniles transfer laws. To keep youth within the juvenile justice system, several states have developed diversions programs (*Diversion programs*, 2021). These programs are centered around providing youth with supervision, programming, and

supports, but more importantly they allow the youth to remain within their own community (*Diversion programs, 2021*). While diversion programs are not always effective in meeting the needs of youth and decreasing juvenile delinquency, they are less costly and serve a purpose which aligns with the juvenile justice system - providing rehabilitation (*Diversion programs, 2021*).

Through the implementation of the *Juvenile Justice Delinquency Act of 1974* and “the raise the age” reforms, states have been forced to seek alternatives to addressing and decreasing juvenile recidivism. The “raise the age” reform has been implemented in more than eleven states since 2007 (Mistrett et al., 2021). Under this reform, youth under the age of 18 who have been adjudicated of committing a misdemeanor and some felony classified crimes remained within the juvenile court system, rather than being transferred (Mistrett et al., 2021).

Community Connections for Youth is an organization within the Bronx area of New York City who developed a diversionary program called, “South Bronx Community Connections”, these programs focused the “grassroots” of youth and their communities (Miller, 2021). Youth who participate in the program are required to participate for a minimum of 60 days (Miller, 2021). They are teamed with a mentor, who previously was involved within the criminal justice system and overcame the struggles that sent them there (Miller, 2021). Youth are given the opportunity to take on the lead of developing different activities and programs within their community for the sole goal of strengthening the relationships between youth and the adults (Miller, 2021). The conclusion was that youth that participated in the program, only 15 percent of participants were rearrested, while only 5 percent were charged with new crimes (Miller, 2021).

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Upon examining alternatives programming and the development of the “raise the age” reform, it is evident that these changes have been effective in decreasing recidivism but also keeping our youth out of the adult criminal court system. It would be within state legislators’ best interest to seek and implement these programs through the expansion of the juvenile justice system. Implementing programming like the South Bronx Community Connections program could be effective in to strengthen the support of youth from the community. While implementing these alternatives may not be effective in drastically decreasing recidivism, these alternatives can be effective in ensuring all youth are being provided with rehabilitative program to address their delinquent behavior rather than punishing them for committing a crime, developmentally they don’t even understand the impact of their actions.

Within recent years many states have begun implementing alternative programming and reforms which allows for youthful offenders to obtain necessary rehabilitation rather than being sentenced to an adult prison. Despite the efforts made under this reform to keep youth within the juvenile justice system, it has yet to address and protect youth from being transferred through the judicial transfer process or automatic transfer process (Mistrett et al., 2021). In addition, this reform does not provide protection to youth who are convicted or adjudicated for committing more serious crimes (Mistrett et al., 2021). Aside from these shortcomings, “the raise the age” reform, research has shown that since the implementation of the reform in several states juvenile recidivism has decreased (Watson, 2022). In fact, a study was conducted in New York City, examining the effectiveness of the reform (Watson, 2022). The data obtained, showed a decreased in

youth arrest within the first year after the reform was developed, which was the lowest it had been in many years (Watson, 2022). In addition, arrest rates for youth between the years of 16 and 17 decreased by 54 percent between 2010-2017 (Watson, 2022).

Since the 1800's the way juveniles have been treated within the criminal justice system has consistently changed. Research has been presented that outlines the difference between the adult criminal justice system and the juvenile justice system. What initially was an initiative to "become harsher" in the punishment of juveniles quickly transitioned to essentially setting our youth up to fail or at worst become institutionalized. There has been research presented that has outlined the ineffectiveness of the current transfer laws. Research has shown that youth do not have the same brain capacity as adults which means in turn that they do not possess the ability to make more appropriate choices surrounding the pressures from their peers or their impulses. In fact, based on the research and statistical information that has been provided, transferring our youth to the adult criminal justice system does not decrease the likelihood of them recommitting crimes but ultimately increases the likelihood that upon release they may commit even more crimes. While housed in adult prisons, our youth's education is neglected, and worst of all, they are placed at a higher risk of being physically and sexually abused. Youth housed in adult prisons are more likely to commit suicide and develop more trauma which also puts them at a higher risk of recommitting crime.

While state legislators have begun taking a different approach to addressing juvenile crime rates through the implementation of alternative programming, there is still more that must be done to address this issue. Based on the information that has been presented examining different current programs, these alternatives have been proven to be

effective. It would be beneficial for state legislators to turn towards the implementation of these current programs/reforms for best practice in addressing current jurisdiction transfer laws.



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