

Human Rights for Kids

Children's Rights

<https://humanrightsforkids.org/child-justice-reform/minimum-age-for-juvenile-court/>

Policy Issue Resources

In the U.S., twenty-eight states do not set a minimum age for when a child can be adjudicated delinquent in the juvenile justice system. This is a violation of Article 40 of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Sixteen states have a minimum age of at least 10 which is what we view as minimally necessary for compliance with human rights standards. We advocate for states to set a minimum age of at least 12 for juvenile court to be more consistent with human rights standards around the world.

In addition, states must at a minimum ensure that the juvenile justice system applies to all children under 18 years of age; though states would be well served to consider making the protections of the juvenile system available to older youth as well.

Human Rights for Kids is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights for children. Our team focuses on advancing critical issues through research and education, coalition building, policy advocacy, and strategic litigation.

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