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Should Juvenile Criminal Be Punished Same as Adult

On August 13th 2021, one boy murdered his mother with kitchen knife just because he was scolded by his mother. One more year ago, few teenager teens killed youth who was doing delivery to earn his living expenses while they were running away from the police. Even though they committed a terrible crime, they posted a photo shot of smoking a cigarette with a text of “Ready to have fun with Police”. That they are young is the only reason why they are not afraid of their crime. In Korea, there is a youth law that protects teenager under the age of 14 that they are not old enough to reckon their behavior. Teenager over 14 whom cause sexual assault, robbery, even a murder is not punished as adult, but as a youth law and under the age of 14 teenager is not even punished and get protection disposal. The purpose of this law has been weakening over time as the internet is advanced and teenager is being vicious. Juvenile crimials are responsible for their crime and to prevent more crime, they should be punished same as adult criminal.

First of all, the quality of the crime of juvenile is being collective and brutal. In the past in which the youth law was made at the first time, the purpose of the law was to give a chance to young teenager who accidently made a trivial mistake such as hitting their friends or robbing candies. These days, due to provocative exposure of numerous media, teenager has far more opportunity to contact with wicked stimulation. They abuse their schoolmates physically, mentally and even sexually with group being protected by a law. World Health Organization announced that many more sustain injuries require hospital treatment for each young person killed [WHO] (2020). They added that when it is not fatal, youth violence has a serious, often lifelong, impact on a person’s physical, psychological and social functioning. Even if the victim suicide, they are just sent reformatory for a couple month or just took discipline from teachers or police. Giving a chance to immature teenager is good intention, but considering the result they make they should be punished strongly and prevent these incidents occurring again.

In addition, juvenile criminals commit a crime again much more often than adult criminals. The rate of the youthful offenders who were caught committing a crime again was three time higher than the rate of adult criminal recidivism (Christopher A. Mallet, 2013, 3). This situation would have many reasons, yet weak punishment is the strongest factor. In spite of the fact that the seriousness of the crime is same on both youth and elders, youthful criminals are punished fare less than elder criminals and are protected by youth law. Christopher says that there is a tendency for youthful criminals to justify their crime as they are no punishment for their doing and commit a crime again. Because they are not fully grown in mental issue, they do not recognize that low punishment is a meaning of opportunity, but interpret it as a righteousness of their behavior. Then letting juvenile criminals slide will cause them make an another evil crime and give unsuitable precedent to other juvenile. Therefore, juvenile criminal should be punished identical to adult.

As teenager is a pillar who will manage country’s future, they should be protected and encouraged by society. Nevertheless, they should only be protected in the range of maintaining society and when they cross the line, they must be punished as same as adult. Because their crime is growing cruel and dense, blindly defending them will bring about bigger problem to society. In addition, statistics that recidivism rate of teenager is three times higher than that of adult means weak punishment don’t give them a chance to be good nor warn them that the crime is wrong. Youth law should be changed to prevent teenager criminal repeating a crime and grow up as a normal citizen. It is already controversial whether to lower the age of the youth law or just eliminate it at all. [The Korea Herald] (2022) A policy that was made to give juvenile a chance actually brought about juvenile being vicious so it should be revised and juvenile criminals must pay their crime equal to adult.