



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY | JUSTICE LAB

Emerging Adult Justice Policy Reforms

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JUSTICE
RAISE THE AGE WORKGROUP
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**Emerging
Adult
Justice
Project**

eajustice.org

3 POLICY APPROACHES

- Reform/improve the (adult) criminal legal system
 - Specialized parole, expungement, etc.
- Adopt/expand a hybrid system
 - e.g., Michigan, Vermont, & Washington DC
- Raise the Age/expand the juvenile justice system
 - e.g., VT to the 20th Implementation

Raise the Age (RtA) v. Hybrid Systems

Age Ranges

RtA: 18 – 21 (rightsizing the juvenile justice system)

Hybrid: <18 – 26

Scope/Application

RtA: Automatic/Default

Hybrid: Discretionary

Record Protection

RtA: Automatic/Default (“adjudication”)

Hybrid: Discretionary/less protective

“Ideal World” from the perspective of researchers

- All youth who allegedly commit a crime before age 21 are prosecuted as juveniles (RtA)
- All youth who allegedly commit a crime between the ages of 21 and 26 are prosecuted in a hybrid system that uses the expertise of the juvenile justice system whenever possible, provides effective and developmentally appropriate responses to the emerging adults, and supports the healthy transition to adulthood. (Hybrid)

Emerging Adult Justice

Positive youth outcomes = PUBLIC SAFETY

Questions & Discussion

Thank you!