

Debate arguing that minors should be tried as adults for murder, rape arson and o...

[Sociology](#)



Juveniles in the Adult Court According to law, a juvenile is anyone who is below 18 years old who cannot be held liable for his criminal action but instead, he is just considered to be delinquent. Thus, when he has committed a crime, he would be tried by the juvenile justice system which has the aim to rehabilitate rather than to punish him for his crime. A juvenile can be tried in an adult court if the juvenile court waives its jurisdiction on a case or individual (Michon, 2012).

I just fucking killed someone. I strangled them and slit their throat and stabbed them now theyre dead. I dont know how to feel atm (at the moment). It was ahmazing. As soon as you get over the " ohmygawd I cant do this" feeling, its pretty enjoyable. Im kinda nervous and shaky though right now. Kay, I gotta go to church now... lol. This is the shocking quotation from the diary of Alyssa Bustamante. This evidence was presented during her court hearing when she was 18. This were her words after killing 9-year-old Elizabeth Olten in October 2009, Bustamante was 15 when she committed the crime (Newcomb, 2012). This was not a random crime that a minor committed, it was carefully planned. Bustamante waited for the right moment to kill. She killed an innocent girl just for the thrill of it. This is one perfect example of why juveniles should be tried in an adult court for serious crimes.

A 15-years-old committing such a horrific act will raise the questions on the maturity of a juvenile and on whether or not he is accountable for his crime. According to the research conducted by the NCAP (National Crime Analysis Project) conducted by the North-eastern University in Massachusetts, the number of juveniles ages 15-17 arrested to murder has soared all over the

country in the late 1980's and so is the number of juvenile arrests done related to violent crimes (Bogira, 1993). This crimes committed by underage individuals have cost the society so much. Aside from the suffering and pain they bring to the victims due to loose of property, injuries and death, it also costs money not only to the government but also to the individuals and societies they have wronged. This result may continue to occur if a destructive juvenile is not stopped in doing a crime or accordingly punished for it. The leniency given by the juvenile courts to minor aged criminals for their serious crimes are so unbelievable. A perfect example of this would be the murderous acts or Mitchell Johnson, 11, and Andrew Golden, 13, who murdered four children, one teacher and wounded 10 others in Jonesboro, Arizona (Brinson, 1998). The juvenile court found them " delinquent" rather than guilty for their acts. When you kill someone, you cannot bring him back to life. When you rape someone, you cannot bring back the dignity of the victim. A criminal should be punished accordingly. Age must be disregarded and the severity of the action should be strongly considered. Historically, in the 18th century, children as young as seven could be tried and if found guilty could be put to prison or executed (Bilchik, 1999).

There would be no crime left unpunished in an adult court. The adult criminal justice system is more effective in putting criminals in prison. Thus, juveniles have a higher chance of being convicted and imprisoned for a longer period of time (LaMance, 2012). It would be a fulfilment of justice for the victims and their families when a juvenile gets punished for his wrongdoing, for them, the punishment is justifiable even if he gets to be imprisoned for life. Adult jurisdiction for juveniles provides all the rights an adult gets when he is

tried which the juvenile justice system cannot provide, a competitive judge, counsel and most importantly a jury (LaMance, 2012). Having a jury can be beneficial. Juveniles may gain sympathy from the jury and get a lesser punishment for their crime or even get acquitted for it.

Adult court also acts as a deterrent for the commitment of crimes in the future. It prevents them from committing crimes for fear of harsh punishments (Redding, 2010) . And because dangerous under aged delinquents are locked up for a longer period of time it may increase their chances of reformation and even if this period would not change them at least we can say that our society is one less criminal safer. The following reasons on why juveniles should be tried in an adult court should be considered. Every criminal should be accountable for his crime as Gina Savini, as assistant state's attorney prosecutor for the Cook Country's juvenile court: " If they are old enough to pick up a gun and shoot it, they're old enough to take responsibility for their actions.

Juvenile in Adult Court Outline

I. Definition of Juveniles

- a. Anyone who committed a crime below 18 years old.
- b. They cannot be held liable for their crimes but are just considered delinquent.
- c. The juvenile court system is in charge of trying their cases.

A research conducted by the NCAP (National Crime Analysis Project) conducted by the North-eastern University in Massachusetts, the number of juveniles ages 15-17 arrested for murder and other violent crimes has soared all over the country in the late 1980's. These crimes committed by juveniles

have greatly impacted the society in various way. Violent juveniles pose a great threat to the safety of society. If nothing is done to do these individuals, our well-being is in danger.

II. Reasons for Juveniles to be tried in the Adult Court System.

a. The juvenile court system is too lenient

In dealing with juveniles who have committed horrific crimes. A criminal should be tried for the severity of his offense and not by age.

b. Being tried as an adult can at least give the victim and his family a sense of justice

c. A juvenile will be given a judge, counsel and will be tried by a jury

Having a jury can be beneficial for the defendant.

- The defendant can gain sympathy from the jury.

- The jury might acquit him from his crimes.

- Provides certainty, no retrial

d. Trial by an adult court can serve as a deterrent of criminal actions.

More severe punishments.

Life imprisonment of even death penalty is a possibility.

e. Juvenile committing horrendous crimes, when locked up by an adult justice system can somehow give us a sense of safety in our society.

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