

JUVENILE JUSTICE IN NEW YORK STATE

NYS PTA believes that a juvenile justice system is the appropriate setting for youth to be accused and adjudicated.

- Support the current law that raises the age of criminal responsibility to 18 and provides rehabilitation including behavioral health care and educational/vocational opportunities.
- Broaden eligible offenses under Raise the Age.
- Support the conditional sealing of records for certain offenses.
- Ensure juveniles under age 18 are not placed in adult correctional facilities. If accommodations are not available and juveniles must be placed in an adult correctional facility, they should be protected by “Sight and Sound” separation from incarcerated adults. Housing juveniles with adults is dangerous. Research shows that children who are housed in adult facilities are more likely to commit suicide, be sexually assaulted, be assaulted by staff, or be attacked with a weapon.
- Keep all cases in Family Court, and create a new Youth Part for juveniles alleged to have committed more violent offenses. Expand services, including alternatives to detention and incarceration as well as services proven to reduce the likelihood of re-offending.
- Use validated risk assessment tools when dealing with juveniles in the justice system to tailor services for individual needs and combat racial and ethnic disparities. Support funding to aid juvenile justice and expand prevention services, support and expand reentry and discharge planning, assist the reintegration of youth leaving the juvenile justice system into their communities, expand rehabilitation and treatment services, and create support networks to decrease recidivism.
- Educate parents, guardians, families, and the community about advocacy efforts regarding issues, concerns, and alternatives for youth in the juvenile justice system. Create and promote initiatives to address equity and support for all disenfranchised groups, including but not limited to racial, ethnic, neurodiverse, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and the needs of those with disabilities in the juvenile justice system.

All children deserve a high-quality, 21st century education - no matter their zip code, their ethnicity or race, their ability or disability, their immigration status, their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, **and importantly, no matter their juvenile justice status** – that gives them the supports, tools and resources they need to succeed in college or career, civic readiness, and life.

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