

PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGING ADULTS IN CONNECTICUT: Providing Effective and Developmentally Appropriate Responses for Youth Under Age 21

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METHODOLOGY of Action Research Project

- **Conducted literature reviews** in the fields of neurobiology, developmental psychology and life course criminology.
- **Examined a growing body of research** on best and emerging practices that target court-involved emerging adults in U.S. and abroad.
- **Facilitated a series of meetings** to discuss the proposal and to seek feedback about both the opportunities and the challenges presented.
- **Analyzed data** from Connecticut.
 - Some data was publicly available (e.g., arrest data from the Uniform Crime Report).
 - But PCJ also submitted specific requests for non-identified data to the Department of Children and Families, the Judiciary and the Department of Correction.

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WHAT THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL SEEKS TO CHANGE

Most 18, 19 and 20-year-olds would...

- be included in the juvenile system.
- have an opportunity to participate in pre-arraignment diversion.
- if detained, be held in a juvenile facility (operated by Court Support Services Division).
- if committed, sentenced to the custody of the Department of Children and Families.

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WHAT THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL DOES NOT CURRENTLY SEEK TO CHANGE

If current waiver provisions stay as is, all 15 to 20-year-olds charged with serious offenses would...

- be prosecuted in the adult session.
- have proceedings open to the public (unless designated as a Youthful Offender).
- be detained in a Department of Correction (DOC) facility (not a juvenile facility) and sentenced to a Department of Correction prison.

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IS 21 THE NEW 18?

Ages of note in Connecticut:

- Connecticut raised the age of juvenile jurisdiction from 16 to 18 (fully implemented in July 2012).
- Legal driving age is 16.
- Voting age is 18.
- Purchasing alcohol is 21.
- Most rental car companies rent at 25.
- Affordable Care Act allows “dependent child” on health plan to 26.

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“IN-BETWEEN STAGE”

- Recent research on neurobiology and developmental psychology found that youth are:
 - More volatile in emotionally charged settings;
 - Susceptible to peer and other outside influences;
 - Risk takers and impulsive;
 - Less future-oriented; and
 - Above factors are worse for youth who have experienced trauma.
- Sociological data tells us that youth must cross developmental “bridges” to mature out of delinquency.
 - Transition to adulthood has been prolonged.
 - E.g., 1960, 45% of 18-25’s were married; in 2010, only 9% were married.

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AGE CRIME CURVE



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INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Established Standards/Rules:
 - Beijing Rules, Int'l Association of Penal Law, Council of Europe
- Experience (3 countries highlighted in report)
 - Germany: 21 
 - Japan: 21 
 - The Netherlands: 23 

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NATIONAL EXPERIENCE

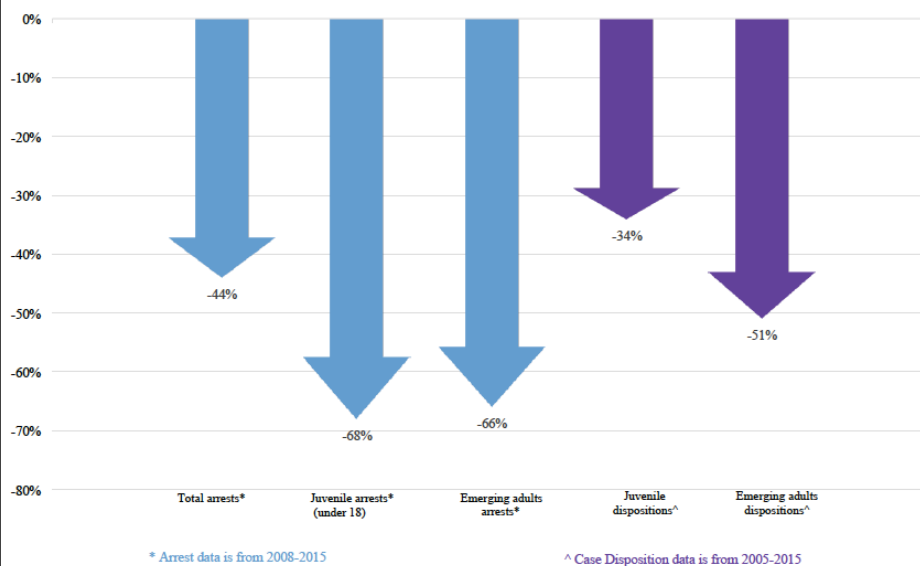
Recent developments of new approaches to emerging adults throughout the U.S.:

- Raise the Age to 21 Legislation: IL & VT (MA soon)
- Expansion of Youthful Offender Act to 22: VT
- Specialty Courts: IL
- Special caseloads: San Francisco
- Special correction facilities or units: ME and CT

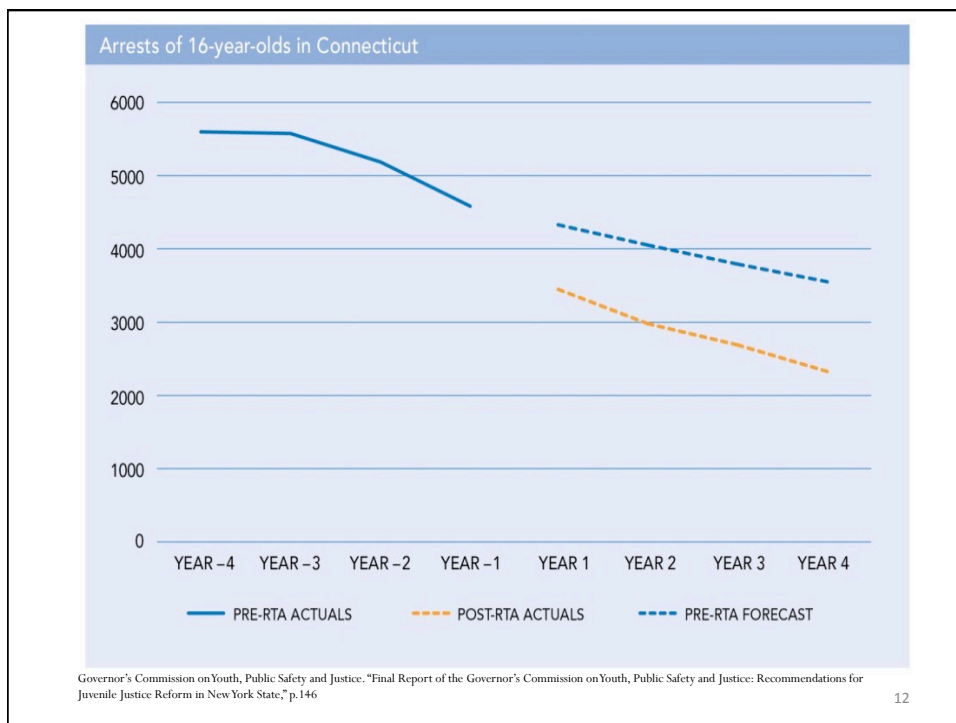
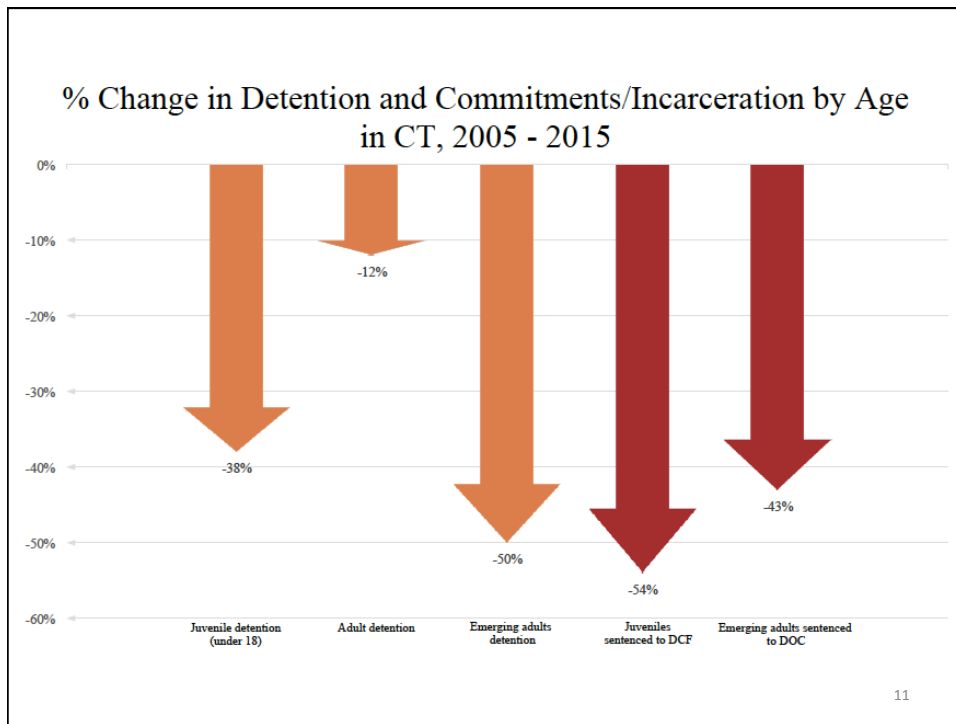
July 2016: National Institute of Justice identified **over 50** different local initiatives for emerging adults in the U.S.

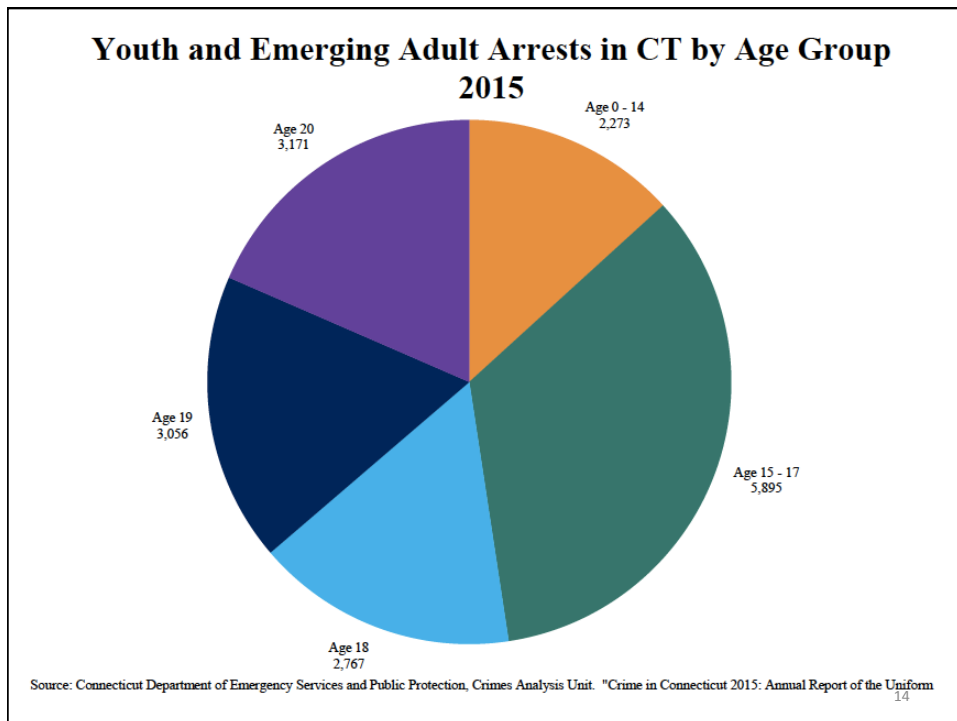
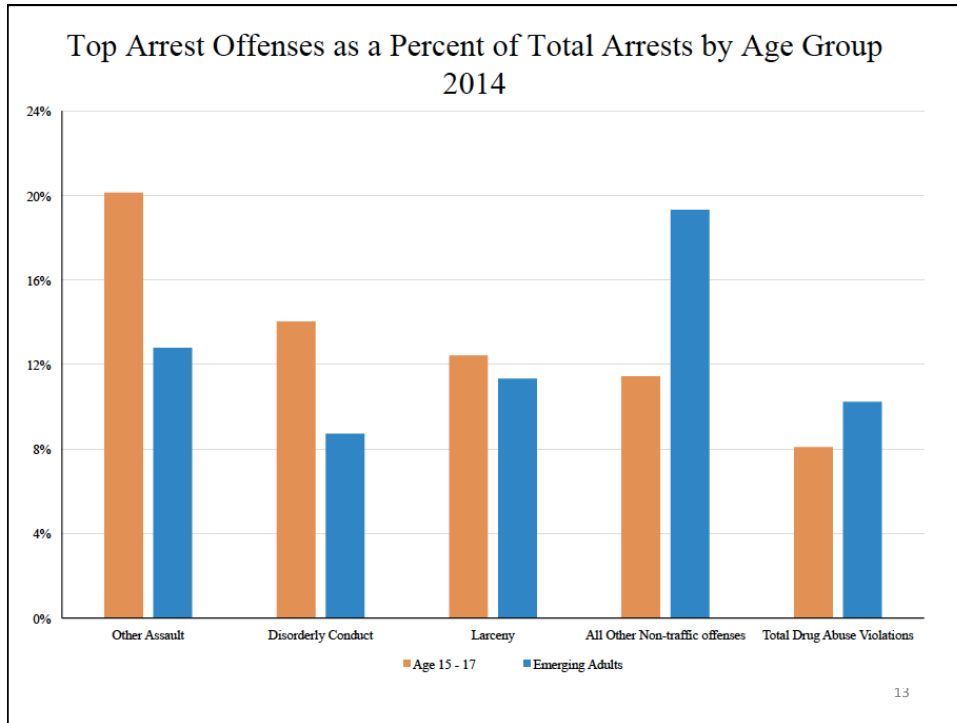
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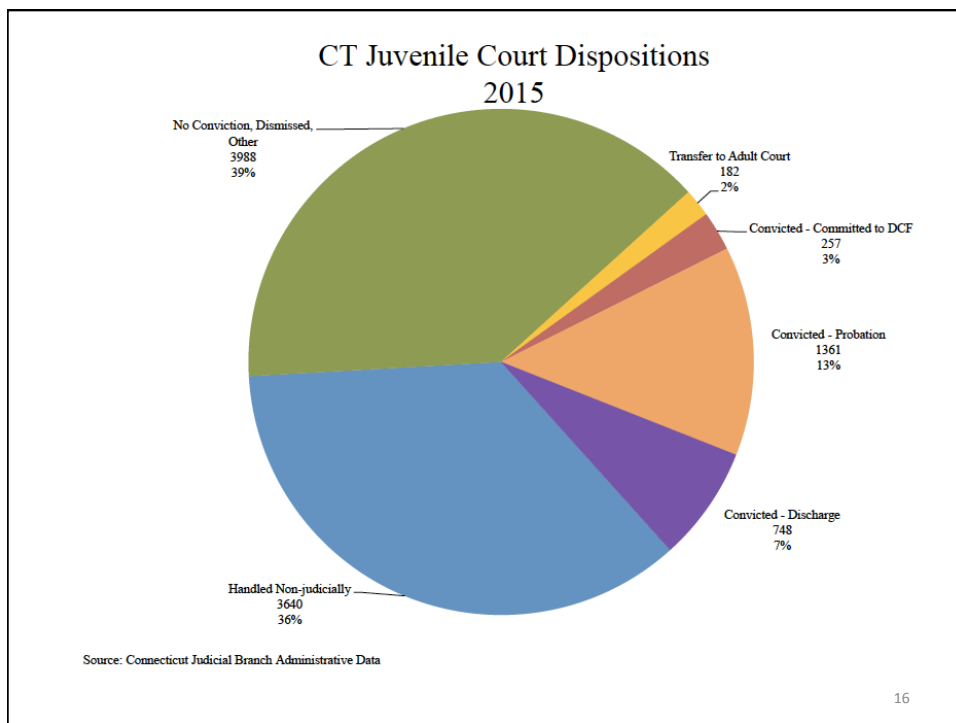
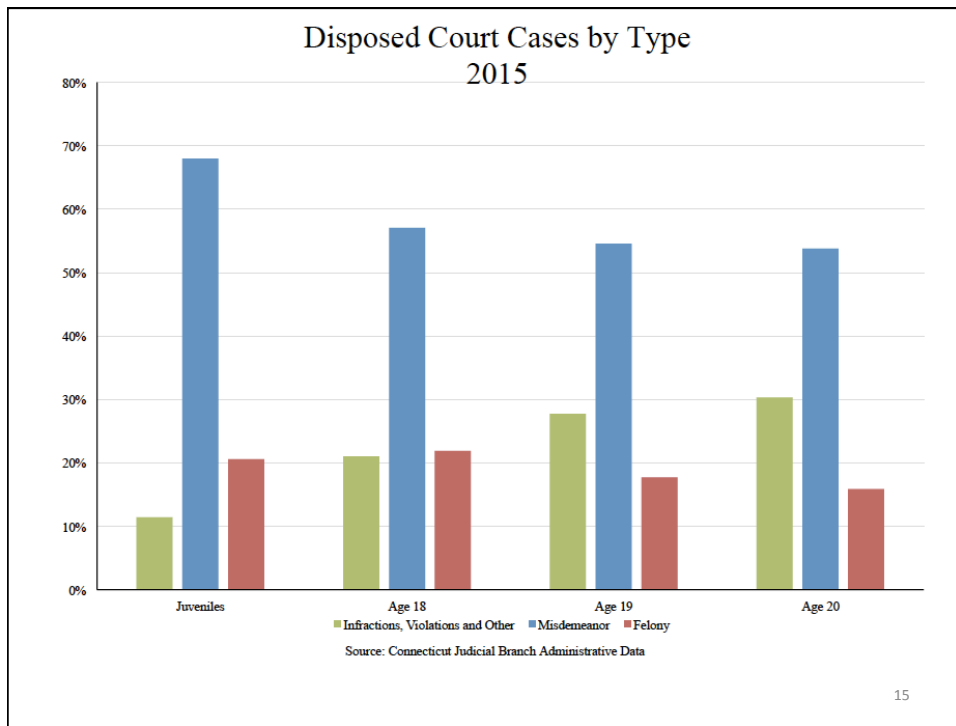
% Change in Arrests and Judicial Cases by Age in CT

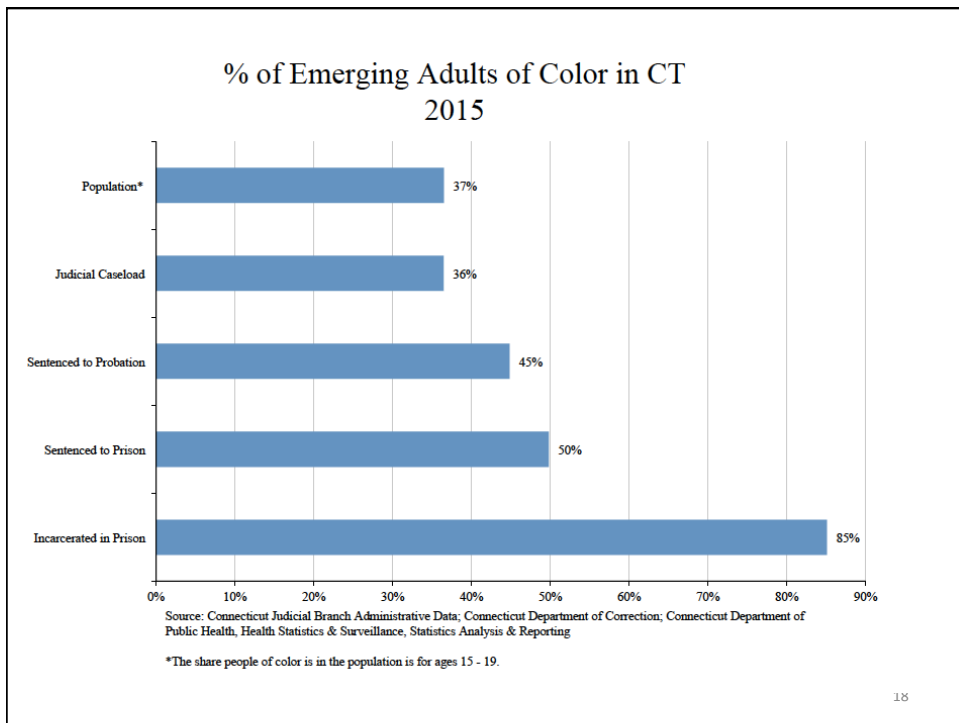
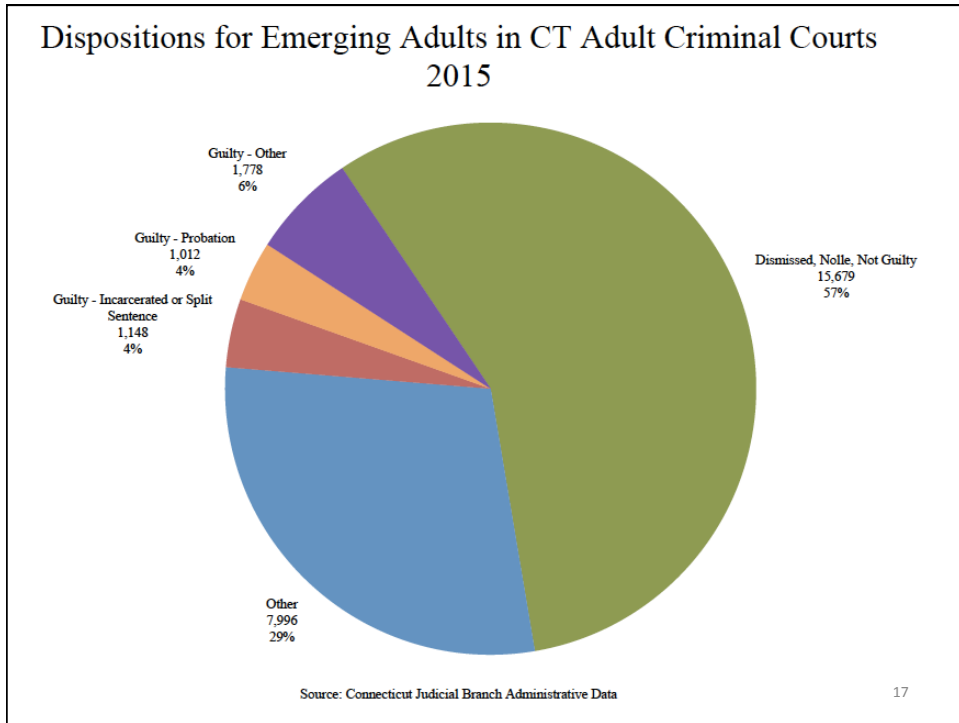


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INTERSECTION WITH FEDERAL LAWS & RULES

- JJDPA
 - PREA
 - Pell Grants
- Important to use specific language in legislation:
- “Juvenile” docket
 - “Juvenile” system
 - Facilities “primarily” designed for rehabilitation of juveniles

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DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO EMERGING ADULTS

- Vocational and educational services
- Mental health and substance abuse
- Housing stability
- Family involvement/parenting

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PROPOSAL'S IMPACT ON DCF

Projected increase in caseload (with emerging adults) and closure of CJTS provides CT with an opportunity to **redirect resources** and **redesign the system**:

- Create statewide network of small treatment facilities (e.g., 15-40 beds each, with the youngest youth housed in the smallest facilities) with full range of placement options;
- Create/expand range of community-based options;
- Use both public and private providers (all licensed by independent agency to ensure standards of care); and
- Unify/consolidate responsibility for detention and commitments of youth and emerging adults in the juvenile system.

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FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Reallocation of resources.
- Short-term costs (e.g., additional services for emerging adults and professional training).
- Long-term savings (factoring in lost wages, unpaid taxes, harm to victims, and criminal justice expenditures, the estimated cost for one person's chronic involvement in the justice system is \$3.8 million).
- Salutory effect of prior "Raise the Age".

Key: Combining expansion with other reforms.

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“...we have not paid enough attention to the later teenage and early adult years as a **discrete period** of social and behavioral development... If we hope to gain a complete understanding of what works to prevent delinquency from evolving into persistent criminal behavior, we need to look more closely at this **critical stage of life** and develop our sense of effective interventions and categories of appropriate sanctions.”

- Former Assistant Attorney General Laurie O. Robinson