Most states have failed to set a minimum age of juvenile court jurisdiction or have set the minimum age far too low.

- Only 2 states have a minimum age of prosecution set at 12 years old: California and Massachusetts
- 1 state has a minimum age of 11 years old: Nebraska
- 14 states have a minimum age of 10: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, and Wisconsin
- 1 state has a minimum age of 8: Washington
- 2 states have a minimum age of 7: Connecticut and New York
- 1 state has a minimum age of 6: North Carolina

In the past several years, some states have raised their minimum age of juvenile court jurisdiction and prosecuted fewer children under 14. In 2005, delinquency courts handled over 313,000 cases where the respondent was under 14 years old. In 2017, that number fell to just over 138,000 cases.

Furthermore, by removing children under 14 years old from juvenile court jurisdiction, states will save money and more effectively utilize the limited resources allocated for delinquency matters.

Among countries that set the minimum age of criminal responsibility at 14 or higher are Argentina, China, Congo, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Somalia, Sweden, Russia, and Ukraine, to name a few. Child Rights Int’l, Network, The Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility, https://home.crin.org/issues/deprivation-of-liberty/minimum-age-of-criminal-responsibility (last visited Sept. 3, 2019).

Thomas Grisso et al., Juveniles’ Competence to Stand Trial: A Comparison of Adolescents’ and Adults’ Capacities as Trial Defendants, 27 Law & Hum. Behav. 333 (2003) (noting the vulnerability of youth in legal contexts as study demonstrates that youth 15 and younger are more likely than older adolescents and adults to lack competence-related capacities, and that developmental immaturity may impact youth’s legal decision-making in other contexts such as confessing to the police or the decision to take a plea agreement). See also Laurence Steinberg et al., Age Differences in Future Orientation and Delay Discounting, 80 Child Dev. 28 (2009) (indicating the vulnerability of youth through research on mechanisms underlying developmental immaturity in adolescents, with results demonstrating that age is related to future orientation with younger youth less likely to plan ahead and think about the future consequences of their actions).


Id.