



2018-02

NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION RESOLUTION ON YOUTH TRIED AS ADULTS

WHEREAS, the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) is dedicated to evidence-based juvenile and criminal justice reform measures that improve public safety and reduce recidivism.

WHEREAS, decades of research and the U.S. Supreme Court have confirmed that youth are neurologically, socially, and developmentally different from adults, and therefore are more likely to be rehabilitated by developmentally appropriate treatment and intervention.

WHEREAS, the juvenile justice system was developed to address the specific behavioral, developmental, and mental health needs of youth and are therefore better equipped to hold and treat them after an offense has been committed.

WHEREAS, 45 states and the District of Columbia either treat 17-year-olds as juveniles or have passed legislation to treat them as juveniles in the near future.

WHEREAS, every state has a legal mechanism to prosecute youth who have committed the most serious and violent crimes as adults.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Sheriffs' Association supports efforts that grant juvenile courts original and exclusive jurisdiction over cases involving youth under the age of 18, unless there is evidence, reviewed by a judge, that rebuts the presumption that a youth can be safely rehabilitated in the juvenile system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the National Sheriffs' Association supports efforts that to the extent possible under the law, keep youth under age 18 in juvenile justice facilities instead of adult facilities, unless evidence to the contrary is presented to the court that the youth is a serious and imminent threat to others in the juvenile facility.

Approved by the Board of Directors of the National Sheriffs' Association on June 18, 2018, at the Annual Conference of the National Sheriffs' Association, New Orleans, Louisiana. This resolution to remain in effect until June 24, 2022, in accordance with Article XIII, Section 6 of the Constitution and Bylaws of the National Sheriffs' Association.