

RAISE the AGE | NY

Three Ways to Take Action to #RaisetheAgeNY in 2017

Did you know that New York is one of only two states where all young people ages 16 and 17 are automatically treated as adults in the criminal justice system, regardless of the offense?

There's a reason most states no longer do this: Research proves that it jeopardizes public safety and has long-term negative consequences on the outcomes for youth, as compared to those in the juvenile justice system.

Last year, nearly **30,000** 16- and 17-year-olds were arrested in New York State and processed in the adult justice system – over 70% were arrested for misdemeanors. There is no requirement that police notify their parents, or that a parent or guardian be present during questioning. Young people are held in adult jails, and if convicted, they face barriers resulting from their criminal conviction for the rest of their lives.

You can help us change this antiquated law!

Our elected officials need to hear from us. Here are some easy ways to reach them:

1. Use our e-mail alert: You can easily send letters to key New York leaders, including Governor Cuomo, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Senate Majority Leader John J. Flanagan, and Independent Democratic Caucus Leader Jeff Klein. Here's how: Visit RaisetheAgeNY.com and click on [Take Action](#) or scan the box on the right with a QR reader on your phone (you can download a reader from your app store). Or, use and share this link: bit.ly/RTA-act.

2. Join our monthly Call-In Days for Justice: Call your elected officials on the 16th of every month in 2017 and urge them to raise the age. It's easy: [Click here](#) to enter your address and get the number for your representatives and a script you can use for your calls. You can also call Senate Majority Leader Flanagan at (518) 426-6904 and Assembly Speaker Heastie at (518) 455-3791 and urge them to pass legislation to raise the age. Use and share this link: bit.ly/rta2017.

3. Take Action on Social Media: Tweet at key New York decision-makers, urging them to #RaisetheAgeNY:

@NYGovCuomo	@AssemblymanCarlHeastie	@SenatorJeffKlein
@LeaderFlanagan	@NYSenate	@NYSMA_Majority

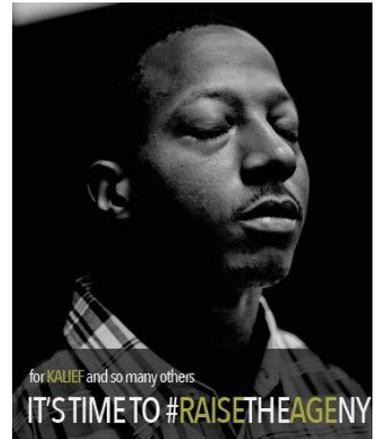
 **Sample:** Now is the time to #RaisetheAgeNY @NYGovCuomo, @AssemblymanCarlHeastie, @SenatorJeffKlein, & @LeaderFlanagan.

Connect with the Statewide Campaign

To share your story or join the Raise the Age New York campaign, email us at NYRaiseTheAge@gmail.com.

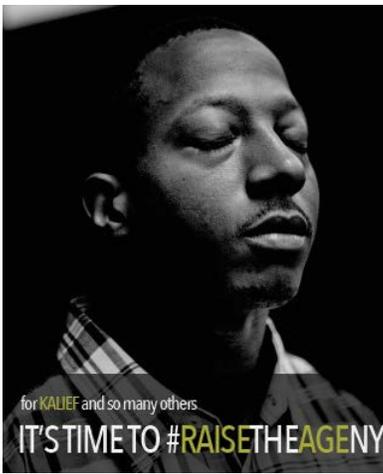
Twitter: [@RaiseTheAgeNY](#) and hashtag [#RaisetheAgeNY](#)

Website: RaisetheAgeNY.com | Facebook: [RaisetheAgeNY](#)



Let's make 2017 the year we pass comprehensive legislation to raise the age.

RaisetheAgeNY.com | [#RaisetheAgeNY](#)



Kalief Browder was arrested at age 16 and spent three years on Rikers Island without being convicted of a crime. He endured about two years in solitary confinement, where he attempted to end his life several times, and was abused repeatedly by prison guards. Once released, Kalief spoke publicly about his experience at Rikers. He was in and out of psych wards but soon began a new step as he enrolled in Bronx Community College. Despite medication, treatment, and family supports, Kalief succumbed to his psychosis and committed suicide in his NYC home in June 2015.



Ben was arrested at 17. He was sentenced to four to 12 years in prison and placed in an adult facility. Over the next few years, Ben was moved from facility to facility, given inconsistent access to treatment for his depression and psychosis, and sexually assaulted. In 2014, he was sent to solitary confinement. He committed suicide shortly after.



“I was sent to Rikers for a very long time. I had just turned 16, I was very, very scared. I’ve seen people get raped in there. Is that going to be me? Am I going to have to fight for my life in here? Am I going to die in here? Am I ever going to go home?” - Vanessa



“I was 17 when I was charged. I wanted to go back to school, and I wanted to do nursing, they told me I couldn’t, because I have drug charges. So, I can never be a primary care giver to a patient, because it’s always going to be the mark ... When you go in young, when you come out, what do you have? They have no skills or anything. All they learn how to do is be a better criminal when they leave.” - Anjie



“I had to grow up faster than the average 16-year-old kid. Feeling lonely, afraid, away from home, surviving and returning home was all I wanted. During the years that I was incarcerated, I had no opportunity for rehabilitation and I had to learn how to live in a cruel world. Much of the abuse I witnessed was from the people we are supposed to trust the most. But they pepper sprayed, made extra tight handcuffs until your thumbs were numb, and did horrible things. This was making me hard and angry and sometimes hopeless. The treatment I received was aggressive and inhumane at the faraway prison. I was not encouraged to be a better person — and forget about getting an education.” - Jahppy



“Why put a young person through the torture of the box? It breaks you down mentally. I went to the box: the big, solitary confinement, the hoosegow, the SHU. I went to solitary in 2005 with a tobacco possession; they gave me 15 days. That was my first time in the box.” - Ismael

Sources: [Kalief Browder, 1993-2015, The New Yorker](#)
[Facing Time, Facing Future](#), The Correctional Association of New York
 “The Mothers Who Lost Their Children to Prisons,” *Refinery 29* (May 5, 2016)
[Mothers at the Gate: How a Powerful Family Movement is Transforming the Juvenile Justice System](#) – Institute for Policy Studies