

# NORTH CAROLINA YOUTH

## IN THE ADULT CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

When children go to prison, no one wins. Research shows that prosecuting youth charged with minor crimes in the adult criminal justice system wastes young lives, fosters crime and does not increase public safety.



North Carolina is one of only two states that continue to prosecute all 16- and 17-year olds as adults with no exceptions.

### Most are accused of minor crimes.



The percent of youth accused of non-violent crimes.<sup>1</sup>

Misdemeanors and low-level felonies account for 97 percent of youth crimes.<sup>2</sup>



### Most are first-time offenders.

For every 10 youth convicted :<sup>3</sup>

8 are convicted of a misdemeanor



Nearly 7 have no prior convictions



Just 2 have a prior conviction, most commonly for a misdemeanor



Overall, about 9 have either no prior criminal record or only a minor one.<sup>4</sup>

## Raise the Age North Carolina



Youth in the adult system who receive probation<sup>5</sup>



Youth in the adult system who receive a criminal record

Because of the minor crimes they commit, most 16- and 17-year olds in the adult system receive probation.<sup>6</sup> Yet, all will receive a lifelong criminal record which diminishes future opportunities and traps them in a revolving door to more serious crime.

Data Sources: 1. State Bureau of Investigation 2007/08 Arrest Data 2. Ibid. 3. North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission. Special Data Request May, 2011. 4. Ibid. 5. Action for Children North Carolina. Support HB 632/SB 506: Juvenile Age to 18. Raleigh, NC. 6. Ibid.