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NEW REPORT: Texas Criminal Justice Coalition Releases Youth Justice Report

*Newest report from TCJC highlights the direct impact of Texas' failure to
"raise the age" of criminal responsibility*

AUSTIN, TX – Today, the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition (TCJC) released its newest report, which shares the stories of youth, families, and justice practitioners impacted by Texas' failure to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 17 to 18. "Seventeen in the Adult Justice System," which is available online [here](#), comes after the fourth state legislative session in which TCJC and its allies have worked to "raise the age" to align with best practices in the 46 states where 17-year-olds are no longer automatically charged as adults.

"I often think back and wonder how things could have been different for me had I still been considered a juvenile at 17, rather than an adult," said Jose, one of the people who told TCJC his story for this report. "As a kid with no idea how to address my substance use and mental health disorders, it was inevitable that I would be arrested again."

"When it comes to 'raise the age,' facts and statistics are vital," said Lindsey Linder, TCJC's Senior Policy Attorney and the report's author, "but they don't tell the whole story. We wanted to present what we've always known about the consequences of putting kids into the adult justice system—a lower likelihood of needed rehabilitative services, the possibility of 17-year-olds being held in solitary confinement for up to 23 hours a day, higher risk factors for sexual abuse—but to show the human consequences as well. For people like Leon, Rhonda, Jill, Daniel, James, and Jeremiah, entering the adult justice system at 17 has meant a lifetime of collateral consequences instead of access to meaningful rehabilitative services. Texas' failure to meet the standard of nearly every other state in the country has negatively impacted these people through adulthood in ways that the youth justice system would not."

*"If I had been treated like a kid, instead of an adult," said Roy, who was put into the adult system at 17, "**someone would have helped me.**"*

The report release comes ahead of an event at the Texas Capitol this afternoon, where speakers featured in the report and active in the fight to pass a "raise the age" measure at the Texas Legislature will share their stories. The 2:00 event is open to the press; please email Madison at MKaigh@TexasCJC.org to RSVP.

The report release also coincides with Youth Justice Action Month (YJAM), an annual effort by the Campaign for Youth Justice to shed light on youth justice initiatives happening throughout the country.

You can view TCJC's report online at: <https://www.texascjc.org/seventeen-adult-justice-system>. The quick guide is available [here](#).

To learn more about the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition, visit www.TexasCJC.org.