

STATE OF MICHIGAN



CERTIFICATE OF PROCLAMATION

ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF MICHIGAN,
I, Gretchen Whitmer, governor of Michigan, do hereby proclaim

October 2019

as

YOUTH JUSTICE AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, the historical role of the juvenile court system is to provide rehabilitation and redirection to youth while holding them accountable and to maintain public safety, and therefore is better equipped to work with youth than the punitive nature of the adult criminal justice system; and,

WHEREAS, youth are developmentally different from adults, and these differences have been documented by research on the adolescent brain and acknowledged by the U.S. and State supreme courts, and many state and federal laws prohibit youth under the age of 18 from taking on major adult responsibilities such as voting, jury duty, and military service; and,

WHEREAS, youth who are placed under the commitment of the juvenile court system are able to access age-appropriate services and education, and remain closer to their families, all of which reduces the likelihood of future offending; and,

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention found that prosecuting youth in adult court actually decreases public safety as, on average, youth retained in adult courts are 34 percent more likely to commit future crimes than youth retained in the juvenile system; and,

WHEREAS, youth of color and youth with disabilities and mental health issues are disproportionately represented at all stages of the criminal justice system; and,

WHEREAS, it is harmful to public safety and to young offenders to confine youth in adult jails or prisons where they are significantly more likely to be physically and sexually assaulted and where they are often placed in solitary confinement; and,

WHEREAS, youth sentenced as adults receive an adult criminal record which deters future education or employment opportunities, and the collateral consequences normally applied in the adult justice system should not automatically apply to youth arrested for crimes before the age of 18; and,

WHEREAS, youth detained or involved in the juvenile or criminal justice system should be kept in the least restrictive setting possible with family inclusion and treatment-oriented services provided and;

WHEREAS, moving a youth from the adult criminal justice system into community-based services or to the juvenile justice system is more cost-effective; and,

WHEREAS, it is our shared responsibility to ensure all youth in our state can reach their full potential with a quality education and a pathway to a good job;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Gretchen Whitmer, governor of Michigan, do hereby proclaim October 2019 as Youth Justice Awareness Month.



Gretchen Whitmer

Gretchen Whitmer
Governor

