

Youth Justice

Criminal Justice

A separate system, built on the fact that most young people stop.

Distinct aims, distinct evidence base.

Distinctive features

Welfare and age weighed with the offence

Diversion away from formal processing

Restricted reporting of identity

Custody as a genuine last resort

Minimum age of responsibility varies widely

What the evidence says

Formal processing can raise reoffending

Diversion generally outperforms prosecution

Custody has poor reoffending outcomes

Deterrence-based scare programmes backfire

Family-based programmes show better results

Educational reference. The minimum age of criminal responsibility differs sharply between jurisdictions and is politically contested.