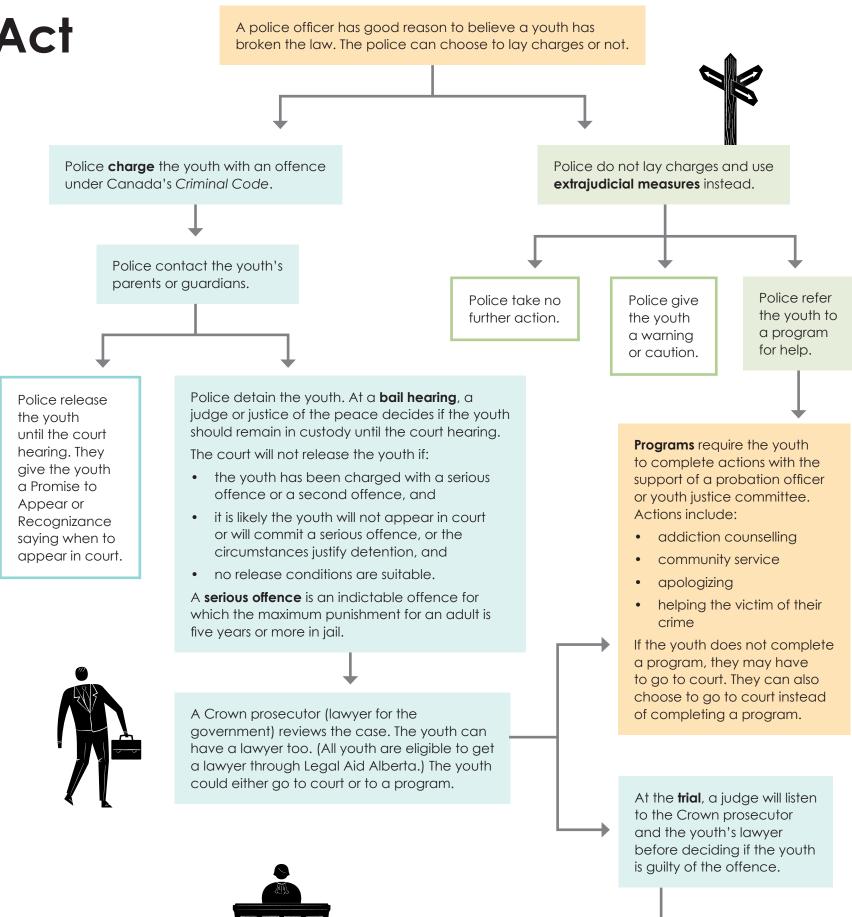
Youth Criminal Justice Act

The YCJA is a Canadian law setting out the justice system for youth aged 12 to 17 who are charged with an offence. It says youth should be accountable for their actions while also recognizing they are children who make mistakes. The Act gives youth an opportunity to mature, learn from their mistakes, accept the consequences of their actions and make amends. The YCJA also says how long youth criminal records last, depending on the outcome and the offence.

How does the youth criminal justice system work?



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If the judge finds the youth **guilty**, the judge will sentence the youth. The sentence will reflect the youth's maturity and the seriousness of the crime. Sentences can include:

- community service
- prison
- . criminal record
- payment for damaged property
- completion of a program

The Crown prosecutor can request an **adult sentence** for the youth if:

- the youth was at least 14 years old when the crime was committed,
- it is an offence for which an adult could be jailed more than two vears, and
- the Crown prosecutor proves the youth behaved like an adult such that a youth sentence would not be long enough to hold the youth accountable for their actions.

If the judge finds the youth not guilty, they are free to go. The case is over.



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