
A comparison between the juvenile delinquents act (JDA), young offenders act (POA) and now the youth criminal justice act (YCJA)

Evolution of legislation to promote youth justice in Canada can be traced from the mid-19th century when criminal laws specifically for young children were initiated. The first juvenile legislation act was the Juvenile Delinquents Act (JDA). Introduction of this was around 1908, and according to this act, the state was required to take care of children in need of guidance or neglected and act as a parent. This law around the 1960s failed, and several criticisms emerged leading it being replaced by the Young Offenders Act (YOA), though this was around 1984.

Regarding young people's civil rights, the Juvenile Delinquents act had failed. With society protection, the YOA tried to bring equity between the young people special needs and due process rights. The young offenders act also had some critiques that led to several amendments to replace it. Around 1997 the Young Criminal Justice act replaced YOA. My position is; however, the juvenile system has failed to solve the problem of youth criminal activities they have played a more prominent part in reforming and rehabilitating young criminals. All juvenile legislation acts have similar motives in one way or another which include promoting the welfare of young children and adolescents as well as fighting for their rights and their needs. Comparing these acts helps to understand my position in details.

These legislations are of importance in Canada and to the society in dealing with social issues. Adolescents and young children criminal activity regarding societal matters is the most substantial. It is hard to control young people criminal actions because of various reasons which include justice systems being harsh in handling adult's criminal activities than young children and adolescent's illegal activities. It arouses fear that it's hard to control youthful crime activities. The juvenile justice system becomes responsible for protecting the society from crime, and crime victims are held accountable. However, the young crime activity is a clear picture of some of the social problems that need to be put into consideration first and at least be solved. These social conditions are associated with youth crime, and they include unemployment, poverty, racial prejudice, family conflicts including others. Drafting solutions first to these social conditions should be the first action to solve youth crime. It becomes one of the reasons the acts have failed resulting in critiques.

The Juvenile Delinquents Act being the first legislation act it was formed to deal with crimes committed by young people. The action dictated that young offenders should be handled differently from ordinary citizens and they should not be classified as adult criminals. The act was not meant to punish but reform or rehabilitate the youth who committed crime activities. The young offenders according to this bill were not viewed as criminals but delinquents. They were understood as subjects of poverty, desertions, and abuse who were not raised well by their parents. They committed the offenses as they lacked some needs. Therefore, the state could not hold the children in custody. The juvenile courts rarely had lawyers. Formally they were no rules concerning young offender's crimes. Thus, probation officers, judges, and police imposed judgment on young children who committed crimes. Mostly the youths could be charged with minor offenses such as loitering, going home late and truancy. According to this act, the

juveniles could be reformed and rehabilitated by being sent to correctional and training institutions and later released. According to my argument though no punishment of offenders, the criminals are corrected and guided to change their behaviors. The young offenders are also equipped with several skills that help them take care of themselves and not away with thoughts related to crime.

Based on critiques of JDA the young offender's act was instituted in 1984. Juvenile delinquents experienced denial of individual rights such as rights of appeal, clear reason to counsel among others. The youthful offender's act emphasized the particular needs of the youths and vulnerability. Also Compared to JDA which appealed against children over seven years of age and under 16 and 18 the Young offenders act age bracket was 12 and 18 years. The YOA had clear guidelines to deal with criminal activities associated with the youth sentencing, unlike the JDA which did not have clear instructions. Unlike the JDA, the young offenders act which concentrated on young person's responsibility for the behavior and consequences. In this act, most laws for the young person are similar to those for adults, for example, most evidence laws and criminal procedures. According to YOA, as it applies to adults, young people sentencing must fit the crime. Referring to my argument YOA intended to correct the behaviors of the youth. The youths and young offenders are sentenced and rehabilitated as consequence of their actions.

The Youth Criminal Justice Act (YJCA) replaced the YOA which was the previous legislation

This act instituted noteworthy reforms which aimed at looking into details several concerns realized in the evolution of youth justice system in the last law (YOA). Some of this issue include how the courts were overused, unfairness in making judgment decisions among others. The YJCA aimed at providing of a judicial system which was more operative and fair. To achieve this introduction of ways to deal with repeated offenses and violent offenders was one of the concerns. Compared to the other acts the YJCA was unique as it proposed for non-court responses to the youth crimes. According to the law, some of the offenses were minor for court dealing. The act argued that the community would respond to some of these small crimes and still the young criminals be found accountable for their crimes. By holding them responsible for their offenses harm caused to the community and victims would be repaired. Referring to my arguments the YJCA act aimed at promoting justice and also concentrated on reforming the offenders. It is by initiating ways to help avoid repeating crimes by youths.

In conclusion, based on the comparison, all the three juvenile legislations acts have related motives. They all focus on promoting justice, promoting the rights of young children and ensuring fairness in judgment. They all aim at reducing criminal activities associated with the youths by guaranteeing correction of their behaviors and no repetition of the same offenses. Though there are several critiques, these juvenile legislations acts have tried to minimize the youth crime rates. All is needed is to look at the societal problems leading the youths into committing crimes. By considering this, the acts would be more efficient.