

Should 18-year old Eddy Fonseca be charged as a juvenile?

In late February, 18-year-old Eddy Fonseca attended a high school party in Raynham where police say he was **robbing a juvenile when he stabbed 19-year old Tyler Pascarelli for trying to intervene**. Police report Eddy violently gashed Tyler's throat before escaping in a Honda Civic with friends. If Massachusetts legislators get their way, 18-year olds like Eddy Fonseca will get charged as a juvenile for most of the crime that they commit. Murder would be the exception.

According to MassLive.com, Massachusetts lawmakers will consider raising the age of offenders sent to juvenile court from 18 to 21. This is a major consideration since juveniles tend to get their wrists slapped and records sealed when they become an adult. Advocates of raising the age state that the brain is not fully developed before 21. The U.S. government decides people can join the military and go off to war at 18 (17 with parental consent), but 20 year olds that commit crimes are children?

Raising the age would be a big mistake. A lot of juveniles that commit crimes know they can get away with a lot and their record is pretty much sealed once they become an adult. Adding three more years to the age of a juvenile would be great for juveniles that commit crime, but not so great for the victims of the crime. Teaching young criminals that they are less responsible for their actions because their brains aren't fully developed is simply an excuse.

"Kids" like Eddy Fonseca will continue to terrorize our streets knowing that their records are untouchable once they become an adult. We don't need to be more lenient on young

criminals, we need to be tougher. Let's stop making excuses for young people when they commit crime and fix the underlying problem as to why they commit crime; boredom, addiction, lack of parental guidance, bad influences and poverty. These issues cause young people to commit crime, not a still developing brain.