

Young offenders 'untouchable'

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called on the federal government to allow police to charge 11- and 12-year-olds for serious crimes. A former criminal lawyer, Fisch said children who don't fall under the act believe they are "untouchable."

"The police should have some ability to deal with them," he said. "They may be only one or two out of 1,000, but it causes such havoc in a school or community. Police have little ability to do anything."

But the Canadian Association of Police Boards has called for little change to the Young Offenders Act.

The association is against lowering the maximum age and is not in favor of increasing the maximum penalties.

Acting York police Chief Peter Scott called the association's position "seriously flawed."


"The general public boils it down to... you do serious crime, you do serious time," Scott said.

While the federal government hasn't proposed increased penalties, it is proposing to treat violent young offenders differently.

Under the proposed amendments, 14- and 15-year-olds will join 16- and 17-year-olds as being subjected to adult sentences.

The justice minister is also proposing special sentencing options for the "most violent, high-risk young offenders."

York's police board will review Alexander's report before determining its official position on the act, which will then be forwarded to the justice minister.



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