



# Your Age & the Law

## What youth need to know

When I have a birthday does the law change?

### 6 YEARS OLD

- SCHOOL:** You have to be in school when you turn 6.

### 12 YEARS OLD

- CHILD PROTECTION:** Is the Family Services (court order) taking you away from your parents? You have a right to know what is happening to you. You have a right to have a say in decisions about you.
- CRIMES:** Did you commit a crime? Crimes include stealing or vandalism. You will now have to go to Youth Court.
- CHANGING YOUR NAME:** Does someone want to change your name? They have to ask you first.

### 14 YEARS OLD

- DRIVING:** You are old enough to drive an ATV or a "quad".
- FAMILY ABUSE:** Are you dealing with family violence? You can now ask your local Community Justice Outreach Worker (CJOW) for legal help to deal with family abuse and violence. This includes asking the CJOW for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

### 15 YEARS OLD

- DRIVING:** You can get a driving permit (or Class 7 driver's license) to learn how to drive a car!

### 16 & 17 YEARS OLD

- DRIVING:** If you got your learning driver's permit when you were 15, you can now do the test for a Class 5 driver's license!

### 18 YEARS OLD

- ELECTIONS:** You can now vote in territorial and federal elections.
- CRIMES:** Did you get charged with a crime? You will now be charged as an adult. This means you go through regular court — not Youth Court.

### 19 YEARS OLD

- AGE OF MAJORITY:** You are now an adult under the law. You are no longer a minor.
- SMOKING & DRINKING:** You are old enough to buy cigarettes, cannabis or other kinds of tobacco products.
- CHANGING YOUR NAME:** You can now apply to legally change your name.

## Are you thinking of having sex?

### 12 YEARS OLD

- You can say yes to having sex with someone around your age, but they have to be less than 2 years older than you.
- This means that if you are 12 years old, they cannot be older than 14 years old.
- They cannot be someone who is in a position of trust or authority over you. Like your coach, teacher or babysitter.
- You cannot consent to sex if you are under 12 years old.

### 13 YEARS OLD

- You can say yes to having sex with someone around your age, but they have to be less than 2 years older than you.
- This means they cannot be older than 15 years old if you are 13 years old.
- They cannot be someone who is in a position of trust or authority over you. Like your coach, teacher or babysitter.

### 14 YEARS OLD

- You can say yes to having sex with someone as long as they are less than 5 years older than you.
- This means they cannot be older than 19 years old if you are 14.
- They cannot be someone who is in a position of trust or authority over you. Like your coach, teacher or babysitter.
- You cannot have sex with someone who is more than 2 years younger than you.
- This means you cannot have sex with someone who is younger than 12 years old.
- You cannot have sex with someone if you are in a position of trust or authority over them. Like you cannot have sex with someone if you are their babysitter or tutor.

### 15 YEARS OLD

- You can say yes to having sex with someone as long as they are less than 5 years older than you.
- This means that if you are 15 years old, they cannot be older than 20 years.
- They cannot be someone who is in a position of trust or authority over you. Like your coach, teacher or babysitter.
- You cannot have sex with someone who is more than two years younger than you.
- This means you cannot have sex with someone that is younger than 13 years old.
- You cannot be in a position of trust or authority over them. Like you cannot have sex with someone if you are their babysitter or tutor.

### 16 & 17 YEARS OLD

- You can say yes to having sex with someone who is older than you. But they cannot be someone who is in a position of trust or authority over you, like a coach, teacher or lawyer.
- You cannot have sex with someone who is more than 2 years younger than you.
- You cannot be in a position of trust or authority over them. Like you cannot have sex with someone if you are their babysitter or tutor.

### 18 YEARS OLD

- You cannot have sex with someone who is more than 5 years younger than you.
- This means if you are 18, you cannot have sex with someone who is 13 years old or younger.
- You cannot have sex with someone who is 17 years old or younger if you are in a position of trust or authority over them, like if you are their coach, camp counsellor, tutor or babysitter.

### 19 YEARS OLD

- You cannot have sex with someone who is more than 5 years younger than you.
- This means if you are 19, you cannot have sex with someone who is 14 years old or younger.
- You also cannot have sex with someone who is 17 years old or younger if you are in a position of trust or authority over them, like a coach or babysitter.

Learn more about sexual health and healthy relationship: I Respect Myself

Government of Nunavut: [www.irespectmyself.ca](http://www.irespectmyself.ca)

### DO YOU NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO?

**Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line**  
Iqaluit: 867-979-3333  
Anywhere in Canada: 1-800-265-3333

**Kids Help Phone**  
1-800-668-6868



## Young people have rights and responsibilities too!

Do you have questions about the law? These people can help.

Legal Aid can answer some questions about the law:

### Legal Aid

**Malliganik Tukisiiniakvik  
Legal Services**

Bldg 1104-B, Inuksugait Plaza  
P.O. Box 29  
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0  
Phone: (867) 975-6395  
Toll Free: 1 (866) 202-5593

### Kivalliq Legal Services

P.O. Box 420  
Rankin Inlet, NU X0C 0G0  
Phone: (867) 645-2536  
Toll Free: 1 (800) 606-9400

### Kitikmeot Law Centre

25 Mitik St  
Cambridge Bay, NU X0B 0C0  
Phone: (867) 983-2906  
Toll Free: 1 (866) 240-4006

### The Law Society of Nunavut

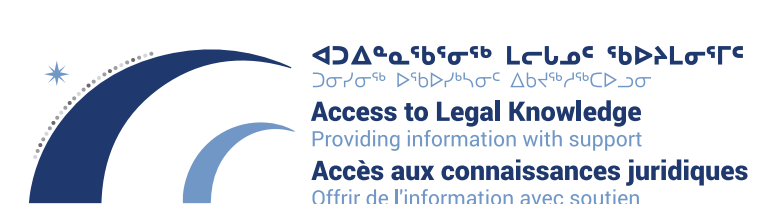
**Law Society of Nunavut**

Bldg 917, 3rd Floor, Unit B  
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0  
Phone: (867) 979-2330  
Toll Free: 1 (844) 979-2330  
Inuktitut Hotline: 1 (888) 990-4665  
[administrator@lawsociety.nu.ca](mailto:administrator@lawsociety.nu.ca)

Law Society of Nunavut also has an **Inuktitut hotline** where you can leave a message and get a response in Inuktitut within 3 business days.

**Community Justice Outreach Workers** can answer some questions about **youth criminal justice** and **family violence**. If you don't know who the Community Justice Outreach Worker in your community is, you can ask Community Justice at (867) 975-6363.

There is also the **Representative for Children and Youth** who helps young people in Nunavut know their rights and to make sure the government supports their rights. You can call them at 867-975-5090 in Iqaluit, or 1-855-449-8118 anywhere in Canada.



**The Law Foundation of Ontario**  
Advancing access to justice

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