

Matrix Showing legal status of sexual activity at Various Ages

Age of consent for sexual activity: 16 years

Age of legal commercial sex (prostitution) : 18 years

The **age of criminal responsibility** in New Zealand is 10. However “Children” (under the age of 14) cannot be prosecuted except for the offences of murder and manslaughter. In other cases where such children’s offending causes concern, they may be dealt with by warning, Police diversion or a Family Group Conference.

A young person who commits offences beyond the age of 16 is dealt with in the same manner as an adult.

AGE	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
11	SR/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np
12	SR/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np
13	SR/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np	illegal/ np
14	SR/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC
15	SR/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC	illegal/ YC
16	SR	illegal	illegal	illegal	illegal	legal	legal	legal	legal
17	SR	illegal	illegal	illegal	illegal	legal	legal	legal	legal
18	SR	illegal	illegal	illegal	illegal	legal	legal	legal	legal
19	SR	illegal	illegal	illegal	illegal	legal	legal	legal	legal

SR = Statutory Rape

np = no prosecution

YC = Youth Court