# What To Do Instead of Calling the Police
### A Guide, A Syllabus, A Conversation, A Process

**Hello wonderful humans –**

**Thank you all for your interest in and support of this document and the conversations has nourished since 2016. I am so inspired by the thousands of people who have shared, read, and contributed to this in the spirit of building a world where we all know true safety in our communities.**

**In the interest of having a more stable and secure permanent home for this (still living) document, I have moved it to my website at this address: http://www.aaronxrose.com/blog/alternatives-to-police.**

**There you will see that I have updated the links and added additional context and best practices for taking action.**

**As always, I welcome input and feedback on this evolving resource so that it best serves as many people as possible. You can reach me at hello@aaronxrose.com.**

**In solidarity and love,**
**Aaron Rose**

# *UPDATED VERSION AVAILABLE HERE*

http://www.aaronxrose.com/blog/alternatives-to-police

So, you understand that the police force in the U.S. upholds a system of racialized violence and white supremacy. You know that, when police get involved, black people, Latinx people, Native Americans, people of color, queer & trans people, sex workers, women, undocumented immigrants, and people living with disabilities and mental illness are usually in more danger, even if they are the victims of the crime being reported. You know that police violently escalate peaceful interactions and murder black people with impunity every single day in this country.

But, your neighbor is setting off fireworks at 3am, or there's intimate partner violence happening outside your window, or you see someone hit their child in public… What do you do? What do you do instead of calling the police? How do you keep yourself safe without seeking protection from a system that is predicated upon the surveillance and extermination of others?

We start by shifting our perspective. We start by learning about the racist history of the police. We start by saying, an alternative to this system should exist. We start by pausing before we dial 911. We start by making different choices where we can. We start by getting to know our neighbors and asking them to be a part of this process.

As **Taj James** writes, "White friends and family, I think we are better off without the police. I think we might be safer, happier, healthier if there were no police. In addition to fewer Black people being killed by those police our life would be much better. I am starting to think we are better off without them. That we don't need them. That if we shut them all down today and transferred all the resources they control to communities to set up systems of community safety and accountability we would all be much happier. My gut is that when white people are able to say 'Having no police is better than what we have now' that will reflect the willingness and courage needed to make a fundamental transition from an old system to a new one."

Below is an in-progress list of resources on alternatives to policing, which range from the theoretical to the practical.

If you'd like to add to or suggest a correction to this list, please email me (Aaron Rose) at aaronxrose at gmail dot com or alternativestopolice at gmail dot com. I'm currently taking responsibility for developing and managing this document, but if other people would like to help, or think I should be doing things differently, I'm happy to work with you and/or transfer ownership. [*Edit: Thank you to everyone who has contributed and reached out so far. I'm responding to emails as quickly as I can!*]

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**What To Do Instead of Calling the Police**

A New Year's Resolution: Don't Call the Police (Truthout)

Alternatives to Policing (Justice in Policing)

Alternatives to Police (Rose City CopWatch)

Alternatives to the Police (McGill Daily)

Audre Lorde Project's Safer Party Toolkit: How to run a safe party that doesn't need police presence to maintain safety. (Español | Zine version) (some content is NYC-specific)

Big Dreams and Bold Steps Toward a Police-Free Future (Truthout)

Calling Someone Other than the Cops (The Atlantic)

Chain Reaction: Alternatives to Policing (WeChargeGenocide.org)

Creative Interventions Toolkit: An incredible organization created by Black and Asian feminists that interviewed people about what they did to intervene in partner abuse and sexual assault without the state. This is one of the things they created - a huge guidebook with tons of concrete examples, stories and tools for how folks have done this work.

Critical Resistance Abolitionist Toolkit

Imagine Alternatives: Finding Ways Not to Call the Police (Caroline Loomis): An open letter, a resource list, and some great exercises for stretching your imagination to consider why you call the police and how you might make different choices and build alternatives in the future.

INCITE!'s Stop Law Enforcement Toolkit

INCITE!'s Community Accountability Best Practices

Policing is a Dirty Job and Nobody's Gotta Do it: 6 Ideas for a Cop-Free World (Rolling Stone)

Stop Violence Everyday: Another project of Critical Interventions, lots of stories of folks intervening in partner abuse and sexual assault.

Ten Lessons for Creating Safety Without Police: A Reflection on 10 Years of the SOS Collective

The Revolution Starts At Home: A book co-authored by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinh, Ching In Chen, and Jai Dulani about abuse inside activist communities and how folks have dealt with it without the cops (was out of print, is now back in print).

Transformative Justice Resource List (USPrisonCulture.com)

Vikki Law: Resisting Gender Violence Without Cops or Prisons

[What To Do When Someone is Having a Mental Health Crisis on the Street](#) (SF Bay Area specific)

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**Alternatives to Policing Projects / Organizations / Tools**

[Audre Lorde Project's Safe Outside the System](#) (SOS) seeks to empower community members to be proactive in preventing anti-LGBTQ violence, intervene when violent situations arise, and build stronger relationships between LGBTQ people of color, our allies and the community as a whole.

[BYP100 Case Study in Community Accountability](#)

[CAHOOTS](#) (Eugene, Oregon): "[Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets](#) provides mobile crisis intervention within the city limits of Eugene, dispatched through the Eugene police-fire-ambulance communications center. Each team consists of a medic (either a nurse or an EMT) & a crisis worker (who has at least several years experience in the mental health field). CAHOOTS provides immediate stabilization in case of urgent medical need or psychological crisis, assessment, information, referral, advocacy & (in some cases) transportation to the next step in treatment. Many, but not all, of our clients are homeless."

[Cure Violence](#) stops the spread of violence in communities by using the methods and strategies associated with disease control – detecting and interrupting conflicts, identifying and treating the highest risk individuals, and changing social norms – resulting in reductions in violence of 40% to 70%. Note: this program is now state-sponsored, which some people feel undermines its efficacy and sustainability.

[People's Community Medics](#): An organization created by Black women in East Oakland that is a community controlled alternative and/or addition to calling 911 for emergency medical care. They created it after the ambulances were just not showing up or cops were showing up first.

[Philly Stands Up](#): An organization that works with folks who have committed sexual assault or partner abuse who want to take accountability.  This is their document where they talk about how they work with perpetrators.

[Richmond, CA Case Study](#)

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**Apps for Coordinating Community Crisis Response** (instead of calling the police)

Buoy (mobile & desktop app): A community-based crisis response system.
(developers' chat room for troubleshooting set up | user-to-user support forum | github wiki | if you need additional help figuring out how to set up Buoy on your site, Maymay may be able to help: https://maymay.net/)

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**Resources on Racism & The Police**

Corinne Werder on the History of the Police

Curriculum for White Americans to Educate Themselves On Race and Racism