



ABOLITION MYTHS

MYTH: Individual officers are the problem, not the institution of policing itself.

REALITY: The problems with policing are systemic; militarization, unaccountability, and racial profiling are all part of police training. Slow, small reforms and punishing individual officers will not stop the abuse.

MYTH: Without police, no one will protect us from really bad people like murders and rapists.

REALITY: Police almost never prevent sexual assault or violent crime, they are called after the fact to arrest the offender so that the court system can levy legal consequences. In this way, they already fail to protect us from violent crimes.

MYTH: We need police because the U.S. population is so heavily armed.

REALITY: If guns are the problem, police only add to it. Police have access to military-grade weaponry and face almost no legal repercussions for using deadly force. Disarming and abolishing the police would likely decrease overall gun fatalities.



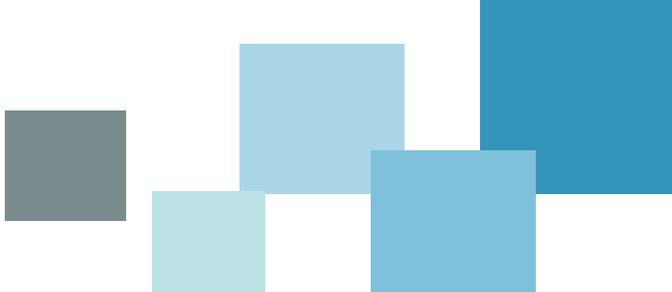
Coalition Against Police Crimes & Repression

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Stop Calling the Cops: Police Abolition is Possible!

First steps & conversation starters

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TALKING ABOUT ABOLITION

The institution of policing is deeply embedded within our society, which can make it difficult for people to imagine a functional world without police. Don't be discouraged if your ideas about abolition are dismissed by others as too radical or impractical - this common gut reaction says more about the troubling unquestionability of police power than the merits of your thoughts on the subject.

It's important to keep talking about abolition even if others aren't immediately persuaded. The more productive conversations people have, the more normalized and less extreme the proposition of police abolition becomes.

In preparation for engaging in these difficult and important discussions, you may want to familiarize yourself with some of the common myths and misconceptions about abolition. Having some answers and explanations handy will help you make the most of these conversations.

ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES

Instead of calling the police, try using other resources to address problems and emergencies. This list is specific to St. Louis, but similar directories could be compiled anywhere.

Non-Police Emergency Directory:

Mental Health:

Behavioral Health Response: 314-469-6644

Hopewell Center: 314-531-7335

NAMI St. Louis Helpline: 314-962-4670

Youth Connection Helpline:

314-628-2929 (city - 18 and younger)

314-485-4635 (county - 19 and younger)

Homeless Services:

Emergency Shelter Hotline: 314-802-5444

Epworth: 314-727-6294 (youths 11-19)

Domestic Violence:

ALIVE: 314-993-2777 (city)

Life Source Consultants: 314-524-0686 (county)

Conflict Resolution:

Conflict Resolution Center: 314-533-3550

Community Mediation Services of St. Louis:

314-884-8479

STRONG COMMUNITIES DON'T NEED THE POLICE

Forming stronger social relationships with people who live and work nearby is the first step to creating a community that can utilize alternatives to policing in an emergency. Below are some ideas you can use to strengthen your community ties.

Get to know your neighbors!

- Organize a family-friendly block party
- Arrange a monthly potluck for your block or apartment building
- Organize a bystander training event in your neighborhood
- If you see someone moving in nearby, introduce yourself and exchange contact information (and maybe offer to help carry boxes)
- Start a book club - consider reading more about policing and abolition by kicking off your new book club with one of the titles below!

FURTHER READING

If you want to learn more about police abolition, explore some of these books:

- The New Jim Crow*, Michelle Alexander
- Are Prisons Obsolete?*, Angela Davis
- The End of Policing*, Alex Vitale
- Rise of the Warrior Cop*, Radley Balko
- Our Enemies in Blue*, Kristian Williams
- Fire the Cops*, Kristian Williams
- Who Do You Protect, Who Do You Serve?*, ed. Maya Schenwar, Joe Macaré, and Alana Yu-lan Price

