

Start today:

just a few ideas to get you started:
the possibilities are endless...

- Talk to your neighbors and begin to build a network of trust within your community. If there is a neighborhood association, attend its meetings.
- Examine ways that your neighborhood might be able to resolve problems while also recognizing the diversity of its residents. Does your idea of your neighborhood actually include everyone who live there? How about the elderly, youth, or people experiencing mental illness or homelessness?
- Think of ways that your community can help its members address long term problems as well as resolve immediate disputes. A phone tree for emergencies? Regular neighborhood assemblies to discuss concerns and meet your neighbors? A community watch program? Arbitration or conflict resolution training? Programs to help the mentally ill, victims of sexual abuse, or the homeless? What resources and organizations already exist in your city?
- Ultimately, the shape of the alternatives we build to the police depends on us. There is no one set of guidelines that will work for every situation or for every group of people, but we can work together to create solutions that meet our needs as individuals and as communities.

Resources

Authoratron (news and resources related to police alternatives in PDX): authoratron10.wordpress.com
Rose City Copwatch: rosecitycopwatch.wordpress.com
Youth for Alternatives to the Police (email):
youthaltcops@gmail.com

youth for alternatives to the police presents...

why have community alternatives to POLICE?

“Because recent events in Portland show that brute force isn’t the solution to problems in our communities.”

The police do not serve our needs.

- When we appeal only to police instead of to our neighbors to resolve problems, we alienate ourselves from our communities.
- We can work with people around us to resolve conflicts and solve problems at the root.
- The police are ill-equipped to handle many sensitive situations, like those involving mental health or sexual abuse. The resources we give to the police could be used to find better solutions for these situations... and to help address their root causes.
- Though we may not have violent or threatening encounters with the police, we need to remember that the police interact with oppressed groups in a fundamentally different way.
- As long as groups of people are oppressed or marginalized, they will be the chief victims of police violence, and the police will serve to perpetuate this oppression.
- The police do not provide proactive solutions for our communities; they only create an atmosphere of fear and mistrust.

When you criticize the police, you aren't supporting murderers, rapists, or gang violence.

*You are acknowledging that we can find a **better way** to address our problems than the system we're **stuck with now**.*

Even if you think the police are necessary as an emergency last resort, building community-based alternatives can help make sure that conflicts don't reach that point.

Some real world alternatives to the police:

Freetown Christiania: an autonomous neighborhood in Copenhagen, Denmark founded in 1971 that has created its own laws and enjoyed a semi-legal status from the Danish government.

Youth shelters and homeless outreach programs: these organizations often use conflict resolution and arbitration strategies to solve disputes due to the risks involved for these individuals if the police are called.

International colleges and universities: many universities around the world do not allow the police to enter. In some cases, such as the National Autonomous University of Mexico (the largest single-campus university in the Americas), police are barred from campus by law.