

WHAT IS POLICE ABOLITION?

What To Do:

1. Read through these sheets
2. Look through the IMAGINE examples
3. Read the example scenarios at the end and imagine better alternatives to calling the police
4. Use your composition book OR paint pad and colored pencils to reimagine a police-free scenario! Write, draw or paint a better outcome that doesn't involve police.
5. If you would like to include any of your art or writing from this activity in #9's Collaborative Zine Activity make sure to add it into the #11 Return Envelope!

Maybe you've heard about demands from people protesting to **DEFUND AND ABOLISH THE POLICE.**

Defund means taking away their money and abolish means to get rid of them completely. Police Abolition means **FOLLOWING STEPS** that take money, weapons, and power away from police while at the same time putting that money and power into **SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES** that are being **HURT BY POVERTY** and police and need it the most.

Abolishing police means looking at how we can **CARE FOR EACH OTHER** instead of punishing people and communities for being poor. **WE WOULD ALL BE A LOT SAFER** if everyone had **ACCESS TO THE THINGS THEY NEEDED.** That could mean a lot of different things!

INSTEAD OF SENDING COPS into poor neighborhoods and communities, we could have access to **MORE RESOURCES** like mental health and social services, access to **SAFE HOUSING AND FOOD**, bigger and better **PARKS, COMMUNITY CENTERS** with free family programs, childcare, **ARTS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES...**

WHAT WAYS CAN YOU THINK OF THAT WOULD IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

WHY DO WE CALL THE POLICE?

Most problems people have aren't with armed robbers, murderers or supervillains. It's with noisy neighbors, **HOUSELESS PEOPLE** in their neighborhood, **TEENAGERS** hanging out in a park, **BLACK OR BROWN PEOPLE**, or people they are **IN A CONFLICT** with.

Most people who call the police end up **USING THEM AS A WEAPON** against other people that they **DON'T LIKE OR DON'T WANT TO TALK TO**. Often people do this instead of **THINKING THROUGH WHY** they are having a problem or just talking with others. **BLACK OR BROWN** people are more likely to be seen as **"SUSPICIOUS"** or **"VIOLENT"** and more likely to be targeted and hurt or killed by police.

How often has the presence of police made you or your family feel safer? **NONE OF OUR PROBLEMS ARE MADE BETTER BY STRANGERS SHOWING UP WITH GUNS.**

When we do have **PROBLEMS IN OUR COMMUNITY OR WITH EACH OTHER**, we should first be able to **TURN TO THOSE AROUND** and closest to us like **FRIENDS/FAMILY, NEIGHBORS, MENTORS, RELIGIOUS OR SPIRITUAL LEADERS...**

The better **CONNECTED** we are as a **COMMUNITY**, the better **PREPARED** we are to **DEAL WITH OUR PROBLEMS TOGETHER.**

OF COURSE THERE ARE SOMETIMES problems and emergencies that we **CANNOT TALK THROUGH.** We should have people to call on that are **TRULY EQUIPPED** to deal with these problems and emergencies. These people could be **MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS, MEDICALLY TRAINED RESPONDERS, YOUTH ADVOCATES, MEDIATORS,** and all these people would be trained to **FIRST AND FOREMOST, DE-ESCALATE.**

THERE IS NO ONE ANSWER FOR EVERY COMMUNITY OR SITUATION AND THAT'S THE POINT! LET'S WORK TO SUPPORT AND CREATE ALTERNATIVES THAT CREATE TRUE SAFETY.

EXAMPLE SCENARIOS:

1. In school, two students get into an argument and one of them punches a wall. A School Resource Officer (SRO) gets called into the classroom, the student is arrested and charged with disorderly conduct. How can you imagine this going differently without the presence of police? What resources could have helped this student?
2. There is a small group of houseless people living in a park nearby your house. In the park they have access to bathrooms but there's no trash cans for them to use so they have bags of trash around. Someone in your neighborhood calls the cops, they come and throw away people's tents and bedding and give them a ticket they cannot pay. What else could have been done other than calling the cops? What resources could have helped these people?
3. Imagine it is 30 years in the future from right now. Police have been successfully abolished and replaced with larger access to food, housing, and mental/physical healthcare. Neighborhoods are different now, since there's more resources for parks, community centers and gardens. What do you think your neighborhood could look like?