

BEYOND POLICING

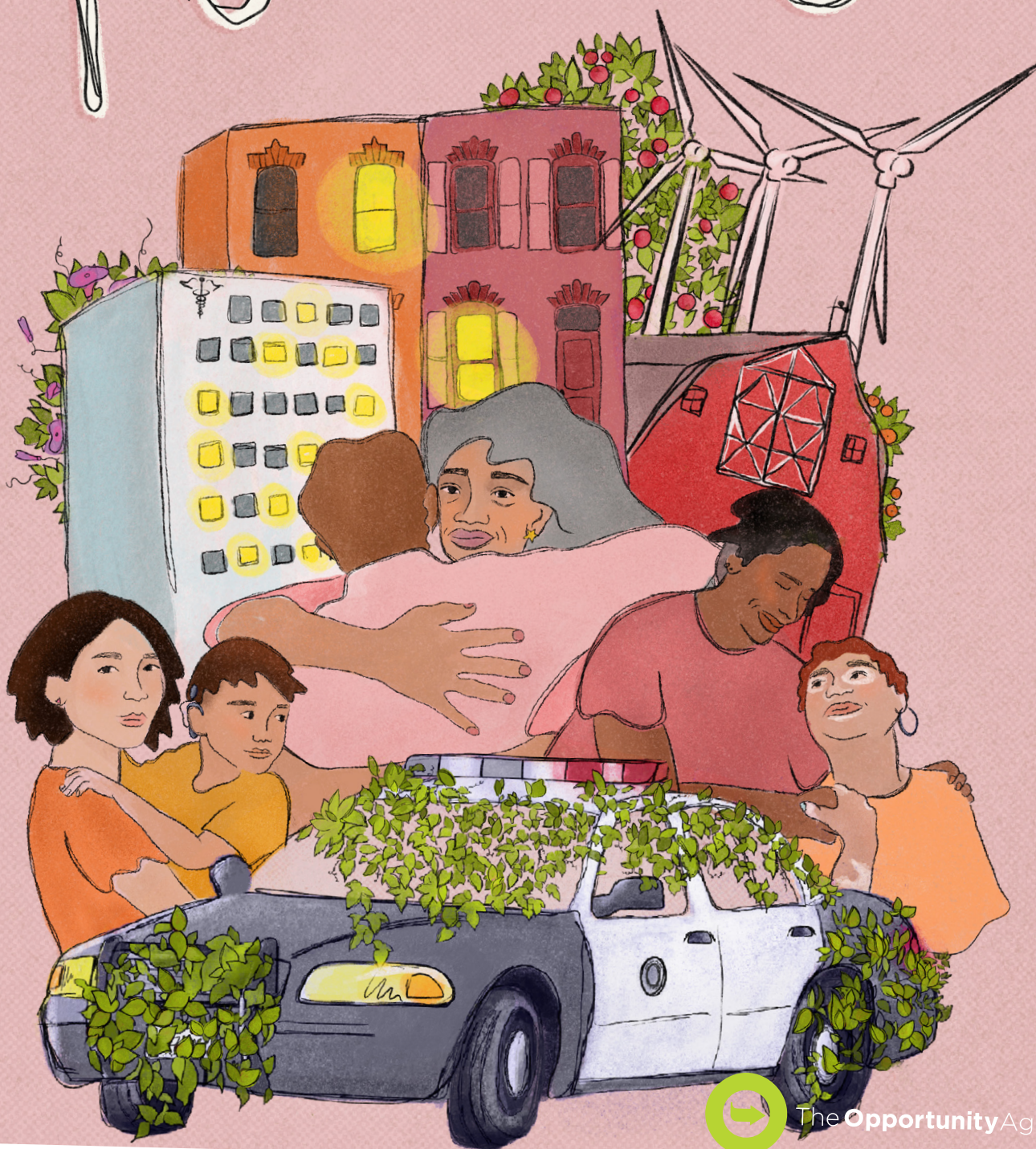


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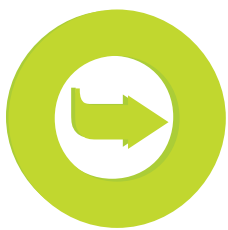


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ABOUT The Opportunity Agenda

The Opportunity Agenda is a social justice communication lab. We collaborate with leaders to move hearts and minds, driving lasting policy and culture change. We bring the inspirational voices of opportunity and possibility to social justice issues through communication expertise and creative engagement. To learn more about The Opportunity Agenda, go to our website at www.opportunityagenda.org.

BEYOND POLICING—SUPPORTING #DEFUNDTHEPOLICE

We all deserve to live in communities where we feel safe. And true community safety means feeling safe from violence by the state, which includes the police.

Social inequity has systematically and institutionally permeated our country since its founding, becoming more visible at various times in our history. We are now living in one of those moments of tremendous clarity, and it calls on us to look deeply at the efficacy of the reforms and narratives which preceded it. The deadly consequences of political decisions that create health disparities are now a wound that cannot be unseen as the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately ravages Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities. At the same moment, Americans of all back-grounds are bearing witness to the pervasive nature of racism in this country as we watch a seemingly endless stream of viral videos of police officers and white supremacist vigilantes murdering Black people.

This storm of violence, awareness, and anger about racial injustice has energized a new social justice movement to address police violence. Protesters around the world have taken to the streets chanting “Defund the Police” and “Black Lives Matter” to eradicate the ongoing threat of police violence. In light of the growing acknowledgment that policing has been an institution that compromises the safety of marginalized communities, the political will to re-imagine the very essence of community safety is growing.

Society must move beyond police and punishment when thinking about community safety, so that we can enjoy solutions and interventions that promote dignity, humanity, anti-racism, and freedom from fear.

Beyond Policing reveals that calls to enact moderate policing reforms are not backed up by a track record of success. Instead, the analysis shows why calls to defund the police open doors to new solutions, which show promise and move beyond the police and punishment. It is intended as a tool for advocates and policymakers to talk about the importance of defunding the police and investing in communities. Beyond Policing includes:

- A 13 city analysis of police departments that have adopted moderate reforms to improve policing but have nevertheless continued to engage in police violence. Our analysis provides support for the #DefundthePolice movement’s acknowledgment that it is past time to look beyond the old reforms and old ways of communicating about police reform.
- A detailed look at numerous community groups and programs that enhance community safety without relying on police involvement. These programs adopt restorative justice, community empowerment, peer mediation, and economic support to address and prevent harm. They provide concrete solutions that address the question, “If not police, then what?”
- Tips for talking about #DefundthePolice, including guidance for supporting a narrative that recognizes that the demand is realistic and needed in this moment.

WHY CALLS FOR “MODERATE POLICE REFORMS” ARE NOT ENOUGH

Advocates are calling for policymakers to #DefundthePolice because many moderate reforms, such as bans on chokeholds and the use of body-worn cameras, that are typically suggested—and often implemented— after incidents of police violence have failed to systemically transform the practice of policing.

We conducted a survey of existing police department policies in 13 cities to illustrate how these policies have not led to the elimination of pervasive police violence and discriminatory policing. We looked at the policies of the police departments in New York City; Chicago; Philadelphia; Washington, DC; San Francisco; Los Angeles; New Orleans; Miami; Atlanta; Minneapolis; Yonkers; Oklahoma City; and Milwaukee. We compared: (1) bans on chokeholds, (2) de-escalation trainings, (3) implicit bias trainings, (4) “community policing” programs, (5) civilian complaint review boards, (6) body cameras, and (7) duty to intervene and/or report.



We found that the selected police departments have adopted the vast majority of the moderate policing reforms. Every city, except Milwaukee, has adopted a ban on chokeholds.¹ Likewise, every city except for Yonkers has adopted a body-camera-wearing policy,² a de-escalation training course,³ and a duty to intervene against or report misconduct by a fellow officer.⁴

In addition, all the cities adopted implicit bias training⁵ and a community policing program.⁶ Finally, with the exception of Yonkers, each city has an independent department for complaints or civilian complaint review board to evaluate police misconduct.⁷

In sum, moderate police reform policies have already been adopted across the country.

“MODERATE POLICE REFORM POLICIES HAVE ALREADY BEEN ADOPTED ACROSS THE COUNTRY”

The prevalence of these policies in police departments suggests that moderate reform policies have failed to eliminate systematic police violence. Systemic racial disparities in police enforcement have continued as well. One study found African Americans were nearly three times more likely to die at the hands of police officers than white Americans.⁸ African Americans are similarly overrepresented in arrest rates. Indeed, in one study of more than 800 jurisdictions across the country, African Americans were five times more likely to be arrested.⁹ And once arrested, African Americans are, according to one study, 50 times more likely to “experience some form of force.”¹⁰ These disparities continue unabated even as departments have adopted the moderate policies that some commentators are suggesting as a response to the ongoing policing crisis.

In some cases, the civil rights violations by officers have been severe enough to require federal intervention. Specifically, cities have entered into “consent decrees” with the federal government, a court order where the city agrees to take or refrain from certain actions.¹¹ Of the cities covered by this memorandum, Chicago, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Yonkers, and Los Angeles (for the county sheriff’s department) are subject to some federal supervision.¹²

The need for federal intervention and the failure to reverse systemic disparities reveal the limits of moderate reforms. Some of the limits are practical. Implicit bias training, for instance, is helpful, but it is unlikely to change a new officer with a preexisting racial bias.¹³ Some of the limits are institutional. Duties to report and intervene when another officer is engaging in unauthorized acts of violence are helpful. Yet such requirements cannot overcome ingrained cultures of silence among officers, especially when strong police unions stand ready to fight any accusation against an officer.¹⁴ Officers in Buffalo and Chicago, for instance, were fired for reporting a fellow officer’s misconduct.¹⁵ Other limits include legal doctrines that shield officers, qualified immunity chief among them.

Yet all these policies share a common thread: they depend on officer buy-in. And officers are buying in. This resistance to reform has been pronounced with body camera requirements. According to a New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board investigation, officers would tip each other off when they had a camera on¹⁶ and in Chicago, officers often either did not wear or turn on their body cameras.¹⁷ Given these violations, it should come as no surprise that the use of body cameras has shown no statistical impact on a reduction in force.¹⁸

50times

MORE LIKELY TO “EXPERIENCE SOME
FORM OF FORCE”

Following that trend, the near-uniform ban on chokeholds across the country actually seemed to increase the use of force. In fact, a review by the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board in 2014 found the practice on the rise.¹⁹ And this “banned” technique has caused the death of multiple victims, including Eric Garner, James Thompson, and Gerald Arthur.²⁰ The resistance to the chokehold ban has become so prevalent in Washington, DC, that city legislatures felt compelled to pass a new law to strengthen the ban.²¹

Moderate reforms have failed to curb racially disparate treatment by police across the country. These policies have been met by resistance and sabotage by the departments the policy is meant to restrain. Thus, cities should look to more systemic change to end racially disparate treatment by the police. Acting under that frame of change, Berkeley, California, recently replaced officers at traffic stops with unarmed, city employees.²² Other police departments across the country should follow Berkeley's lead by adopting policies

that look beyond police for public safety. The following chart outlines the various moderate policies that the selected police departments have already adopted. Advocates can use this chart to respond to the "Why Defund the Police?" question.

The chart below suggests that we need to move beyond the same old reforms if we want to promote true community safety.

POLICE DEPARTMENTS THAT ALREADY HAVE MODERATE REFORMS

MODERATE REFORMS	NYC	CHICAGO	PHILLY	DC	SAN FRANCISCO	LOS ANGELES	NEW ORLEANS	MIAMI	ATLANTA	MINNEAPOLIS	YONKERS	OKLAHOMA CITY	MILWAUKEE
CHOKEHOLD/NECKHOLD BAN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓*	✓*	✓*	✓*	✓	
BODY CAMERA POLICY	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
DE-ESCALATION TRAININGS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
IMPLICIT BIAS TRAININGS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
COMMUNITY POLICING PROGRAM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CIVILIAN COMPLAINT REVIEW BOARD	✓	✓	✓*				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
INDEPENDENT COMPLAINT DEPARTMENT				✓	✓								
DUTY TO INTERVENE AND REPORT	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓*	✓		✓	✓
CONSENT DECREE	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
VIOLATIONS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

* POST-GEORGE FLOYD'S DEATH

* Yonkers police to test body cam program for 90 days in response to the George Floyd killing. <https://www.lohud.com/story/news/2020/08/17/yonkers-launch-pilot-police-body-camera-program-thursday/3376672001/>.

* Philadelphia has the Philadelphia Police Advisory Commission <https://www.phila.gov/departments/police-advisory-commission/>.

POLICE DEPARTMENTS THAT ALREADY HAVE MODERATE REFORMS

ATLANTA

- ✓ Chokehold ban (post-George Floyd's death)⁸³
- ✓ Body camera policy⁸⁴
- ✓ De-escalation trainings⁸⁵
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings⁸⁶
- ✓ Community policing program⁸⁷
- ✓ Civilian complaint review board⁸⁸
- ✓ Duty to intervene and report (post-George Floyd's death)⁸⁹

CONSENT DECREE:
No

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

CHICAGO

- ✓ Chokehold ban³¹
- ✓ Body camera policy³²
- ✓ De-escalation trainings³³
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings³⁴
- ✓ Community policing program³⁵
- ✓ Civilian complaint review agency³⁶
- ✓ Duty to intervene and report³⁷

CONSENT DECREE:
Yes³⁸

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

DC

- ✓ Ban on neck restraints⁴⁶
- ✓ Body camera policy⁴⁷
- ✓ De-escalation trainings⁴⁸
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings⁴⁹
- ✓ Community policing program⁵⁰
- ✓ Independent Office of Police Complaints⁵¹
- ✓ Duty to intervene and report⁵²

CONSENT DECREE:
No

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

LOS ANGELES

- ✓ Chokehold ban⁶⁰
- ✓ Body camera policy⁶¹
- ✓ De-escalation trainings⁶²
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings⁶³
- ✓ Community policing program⁶⁴
- ✓ Civilian complaint review board⁶⁵
- ✓ Duty to intervene and report⁶⁶

CONSENT DECREE:
Yes, but for the county sheriff's department⁶⁷

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

MIAMI

- ✓ Chokehold ban (post-George Floyd's death)⁷⁶
- ✓ Body camera policy⁷⁷
- ✓ De-escalation trainings⁷⁸
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings⁷⁹
- ✓ Community policing program⁸⁰
- ✓ Civilian complaint review panel⁸¹
- ✓ Duty to intervene and report⁸²

CONSENT DECREE:
No

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

MILWAUKEE

- ✓ Body camera policy¹⁰⁷
- ✓ De-escalation training¹⁰⁸
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings¹⁰⁹
- ✓ Community policing program¹¹⁰
- ✓ Civilian complaint review commission¹¹¹
- ✓ Duty to intervene and report¹¹²

CONSENT DECREE:
No

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

MINNEAPOLIS

- ✓ Chokehold ban (post-George Floyd's death)⁹⁰
- ✓ Body camera policy⁹¹
- ✓ De-escalation trainings⁹²
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings⁹³
- ✓ Community policing program⁹⁴
- ✓ Civilian Police Review Authority⁹⁵

CONSENT DECREE:
No

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

NEW ORLEANS

- ✓ Neck-hold ban⁶⁸
- ✓ Body camera policy⁶⁹
- ✓ De-escalation trainings⁷⁰
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings⁷¹
- ✓ Community policing program⁷²
- ✓ Civilian complaint review board⁷³
- ✓ Duty to intervene and report⁷⁴

CONSENT DECREE:
Yes⁷⁵

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

NYC

- ✓ Chokehold ban²⁴
- ✓ Body camera policy²⁵
- ✓ De-escalation trainings²⁶
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings²⁷
- ✓ Community policing program²⁸
- ✓ Civilian complaint review board²⁹

CONSENT DECREE:
No

VIOLATIONS:²³
Yes, on multiple occasions

OKLAHOMA CITY

- ✓ Chokehold ban¹⁰⁰
- ✓ Body camera policy¹⁰¹
- ✓ De-escalation trainings¹⁰²
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings¹⁰³
- ✓ Community policing program¹⁰⁴
- ✓ Civilian complaint review board¹⁰⁵
- ✓ Duty to intervene and report¹⁰⁶

CONSENT DECREE:
No

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

PHILLY

- ✓ Chokehold ban³⁹
- ✓ Body camera policy⁴⁰
- ✓ De-escalation trainings⁴¹
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings⁴²
- ✓ Community policing program⁴³
- ✓ Duty to intervene and report⁴⁴

CONSENT DECREE:
Yes⁴⁵

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

SAN FRANCISCO

- ✓ Chokehold ban⁵³
- ✓ Body camera policy⁵⁴
- ✓ De-escalation trainings⁵⁵
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings⁵⁶
- ✓ Community policing program⁵⁷
- ✓ Independent Department of Police Accountability⁵⁸
- ✓ Duty to intervene and report⁵⁹

CONSENT DECREE:
No

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions

YONKERS

- ✓ Chokehold ban (post-George Floyd's death)⁹⁷
- ✓ Implicit bias trainings⁹⁸
- ✓ Community policing program⁹⁹

CONSENT DECREE:
Yes, an ongoing Memorandum of Agreement

VIOLATIONS:
Yes, on multiple occasions



LOOKING BEYOND POLICE TO PROMOTE TRUE COMMUNITY SAFETY

Below is a list of programs and organizations that look beyond policing to promote true community safety. It aims to assist advocates with addressing the question, “If no police, then what?” The techniques surveyed here include the use of violence interrupters, peacemaking circles, mobile crisis intervention systems, the use of stipends, and youth and community courts. The featured programs are illustrative of the potential of a model of community safety that redirects resources from the police to programs that aim to provide true community safety.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative justice organizations with violence interrupter programs employ local members from the community who have experienced violence themselves to connect with young adults to stop violence before it happens.¹¹³ Violence interrupters and other community-based outreach workers use their “personal relationships, social networks, and knowledge of their communities to dissuade specific individuals and neighborhood residents in general from engaging in violence.”¹¹⁴ After connecting with high-risk individuals, the program links youth with needed services.¹¹⁵ Organizations with this type of program include Cure Violence, Oakland Unite, the Newark Community Street Team, and the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective. In October 2017, the John Jay College of Criminal Justice released a study of two Cure Violence programs located in the South Bronx and in Brooklyn.¹¹⁶ The study included analysis of a variety of metrics, including the reduction in social norms that support violence and violent acts. In terms of social norms, the study found that propensity to use violence in petty disputes declined by 20%.¹¹⁷ Overall, young men in neighborhoods with Cure Violence and violence interrupters reported “sharper reductions in their willingness to use violence compared with young men in similar areas without programs.”¹¹⁸

When it came to gun violence, the study found that gun injury rates fell by 50% in the Brooklyn neighborhood with Cure Violence, whereas injury rates only fell by 5% in a Brooklyn neighborhood without Cure Violence.¹¹⁹ In the area of the South Bronx with Cure Violence, gun injuries declined by 37% and shooting victimizations fell by 63%, compared with 29% and 17% in an area of Harlem without Cure Violence.¹²⁰ Overall, the study concluded that Cure Violence’s approach to violence reduction “may help to create safer and healthier communities.”¹²¹

PEACEMAKING CIRCLES

Many restorative justice organizations now use a Native American traditional approach to justice: peacemaking circles. Circles include disputants as well as their family members, friends, and other members of the community, giving them the chance to resolve the dispute but also heal relationships among those involved.¹²² A number of restorative justice organizations have a peacemaking circle program, including the Red Hook Community Justice Center, the Brownsville Community Justice Center, Philly Stands Up, Common Justice, and Men As Peacemakers.

Several qualitative studies of programs implemented in schools and by restorative justice organizations reveal the beneficial impact peacemaking circles have had on participants. For example, a study focusing on two Chicago schools that used peacemaking circles found that peace circles “effectively provide young people a non-judgmental, safe, and trusting space to express themselves” and serve as “effective sites of social and emotional learning.”¹²³ A study of the Red Hook Community Justice Center’s peacemaking program showed more mixed results, but generally participants positively responded to the program and felt like they were making progress with the dispute.¹²⁴ Victims, however, were generally less likely to say the program had a positive impact on them.¹²⁵ Nevertheless, peacemaking circles can serve as an effective way to resolve disputes through community-led efforts.

MOBILE CRISIS CENTERS

Mobile crisis centers modeled after Eugene, Oregon's Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets (CAHOOTS) program are promising alternatives to policing. Established in 1989, CAHOOTS is a "community-based public safety system to provide mental health first response for crises involving mental illness, homelessness, and addiction."¹²⁶ Rather than deploy police officers, mental health specialists respond to situations to "ensure a non-violent resolution of crisis situations."¹²⁷ In 2019 alone, CAHOOTS responded to 24,000 calls and only requested police backup 150 times.¹²⁸ In terms of cost, CAHOOTS saves the city of Eugene around \$8.5 million every year in public safety costs.¹²⁹ The CAHOOTS budget of \$2.1 million is a fraction of the size of the Eugene and Springfield police departments, which have an annual budget of around \$90 million.¹³⁰

Other cities have responded by implementing their own mobile crisis programs, including Portland, which just last month approved the budget for Portland Street Response.¹³¹ Organizations in other cities like Denver are currently advocating for the establishment of mobile crisis centers.¹³²

STIPENDS WITH ADVANCE PEACE

Advance Peace has implemented one of the more unique but encouraging programs to resolve gun violence that does not rely on the police. Upon learning that 70% of shootings in Richmond, California, were caused by 17 people, Advance Peace created a program to identify the most potentially lethal men, invite them to a meeting, and offer to pay them a monthly stipend of up to \$1,000 for a maximum period of 9 months to attend meetings, stay out of trouble, and respond to mentoring.¹³³ Advance Peace's founder explained the reasoning behind the stipend in a *New York Times* op-ed: "The social context for our prospective fellows was a laundry list of deprivation and dysfunction: high unemployment, fragmented families, inadequate education and a heavy dose of substance abuse."¹³⁴ Compared to the massive amount of money spent on law enforcement and prisons used to respond to gun violence, the stipend is modest.¹³⁵

After 6 years of the program, 94% of the program fellows were still alive, 84% had not sustained a gun-related injury or been hospitalized for one since becoming fellows, and 79% had not been arrested or charged for gun-related activity since becoming fellows.¹³⁶ After just the first year of the program, Richmond homicides fell by half, from 45 to 22.¹³⁷

SINCE BECOMING FELLOWS

84% HAD NOT SUSTAINED A GUN-RELATED INJURY OR BEEN HOSPITALIZED FOR ONE

79% HAD NOT BEEN ARRESTED OR CHARGED FOR GUN-RELATED ACTIVITY



YOUTH AND COMMUNITY COURTS

Community courts are part of a larger “problem-solving courts” movement that “seeks to prevent crime by directly addressing its underlying causes” rather than simply relying on punishment to address social issues.¹³⁸ The nation’s first community court was established in Manhattan in 1993 as a way to relocate justice from courts to the local community, aiming to encourage communities to enforce social norms, and now there are at least 70 community courts around the world.¹³⁹ Distinguishing features of community courts include individualized justice through wider access to information about defendants, expanded sentencing options, varying mandate length, offender accountability, community engagement, and community impact.¹⁴⁰ Community courts, unlike other problem-solving courts, do not specialize in one particular problem like drugs, mental health, or domestic violence.

In November 2013, the National Center for State Courts released an extensive evaluation of the Red Hook Community Center’s community court in Brooklyn. The study found that adult misdemeanor offenders who went through the community court were to a “statistically significant degree less likely to become recidivists” than adult misdemeanor offenders in a control group.¹⁴¹ The probability of rearrests for offenders that went through the community court reduced by 10%.¹⁴² In addition, although the study could not definitively conclude that there was a causal relationship between the opening of the Community Center and a reduction in local arrests, there were “sharp decreases in the levels of both felony and misdemeanor arrests in the catchment area precincts” when the Center opened.¹⁴³ Overall, the study concluded that “the community court model can indeed reduce crime and help to strengthen neighborhoods” and “the practice of procedural justice in interactions with individual representatives of the justice system...comprise[s] highly effective criminal justice policies.”¹⁴⁴

“THE COMMUNITY COURT MODEL CAN INDEED REDUCE CRIME AND HELP STRENGTHEN NEIGHBORHOODS”

This evaluation of one particular community court falls in line with the results of other studies including an Urban Institute report conducted in 2002. This report focused on youth teen courts in Alaska, Missouri, Arizona, and Maryland and concluded that “teen courts represent a promising alternative for the juvenile justice system” after finding that youth who were sent to teen court were less likely to re-offend than youth in comparison groups.¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, community courts should not be used to expand the reach of the criminal system, nor should they be the primary basis for providing social welfare services. Instead, they should be viewed as an alternative when interaction with the criminal system would otherwise be required.

When it comes to community safety and justice, no one size fits all: each community’s needs are unique and each responds differently to efforts to resolve complicated issues like violence. However, there are effective alternative ways to improve community safety that do not involve the police. The programs outlined here reveal the powerful impact that restorative justice methods can have on communities in terms of both their ability to directly address issues like violence and their potential to strengthen communities as a whole by relying on community members to serve as active participants in community safety.

“...THERE ARE EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY SAFETY THAT DO NOT INVOLVE THE POLICE.”

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT LOOK BEYOND POLICE TO PROMOTE SAFETY

PROGRAM	LOCATION	MISSION	PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
Advance Peace	Richmond, CA	Program aimed at reducing gun violence by investing in the development, health, and well-being of those most likely to be at the center of the gun violence crisis.	Office of Neighborhood Safety: identifies those most likely to perpetrate violence and offers them support, including a stipend.
Alliance for Safety and Justice	San Francisco, CA	Aims to replace over-incarceration with more effective public safety solutions rooted in crime prevention, community health, rehabilitation and support for crime victims.	Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice: building a movement to heal together and promote public safety policies that help the people and communities most harmed by crime and violence; Shared Safety: rethinking how to understand, invest in, evaluate, and achieve community safety; Trauma Recovery Centers: removing barriers to health and stability, healing communities and interrupting cycles of violence.
Apna Ghar	Chicago, IL	Provides critical, comprehensive, culturally competent services, and conducts outreach and advocacy across communities to end gender violence.	Provide comprehensive intervention and prevention services aimed at helping survivor participants achieve safety, stability and self-sufficiency as well as provide services to those who perpetrate harm to take responsibility to repair the harm; conduct outreach, provide community education, training and technical assistance in an effort to raise awareness about gender violence while providing resources and information on appropriate responses; conduct systems and policy level advocacy in partnership with advocacy groups to improve overall conditions for the survivors they serve.
Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective	Oakland, CA	Working to build and support transformative justice responses to child sexual abuse.	Labs: free and open to the community, labs focus on building up skills and sharpening tools around various topics that undergird the work of transformative justice; Monthly Community Potlucks; Transformative Justice Study: a six session study where participants learn about core concepts, values, and practices of transformative justice and community accountability; Interventions: studies models for responding to sexual violence and child sexual abuse and takes on actual cases.
Brownsville Community Justice Center	Brooklyn, NY	Initiative with a mission to prevent crime by investing in local youth and improving the physical landscape of the neighborhood. The center does this by, among other things, providing Brooklyn judges with alternative sentencing options, connecting men and women on probation with educational and professional resources, offering youth development projects for local young people, engaging local businesses and community residents to reimagine and redesign public spaces, offering an on-site computer room to young people, and doing community service projects.	Youth Court: hears cases that'd otherwise be in Family Court or Criminal Court; offers a restorative response to misbehavior; Legal Hand: trains volunteers to provide free legal information, and referrals to neighbors; Project Reset: gives participants the ability to avoid court and a criminal record by completing community-based programming.



PROGRAM	LOCATION	MISSION	PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
Collective Action for Safe Spaces	Washington, DC	Grassroots organization that uses comprehensive, community-based solutions through an intersectional lens to eliminate public gendered harassment and assault in the DC metropolitan area.	Advocacy, Rethink Masculinity: seeks to address gendered violence by engaging masculine-identifying people in work to promote healthy masculinities; Safe Bar Collective: uses training, safety messages, and advocacy for equitable hiring practices to equip bar and restaurant staff with the tools they need to cultivate safer environments; Trainings & Workshops.
Common Justice	New York, NY	Develops and advances solutions to violence that transform the lives of those harmed and foster racial equity without relying on incarceration.	Operates an alternative to incarceration program in response to serious and violent felonies based on restorative justice principles; facilitates restorative justice "circles" where responsible parties sit with those they've harmed; and monitors adherence to circle agreements.
Communities Partnering for Peace	Chicago, IL	A framework that provides a comprehensive, long-term approach to reducing violence and gang activity among the individuals and communities it serves.	Violence Prevention through re-entry services, family support, employment, trauma-informed services, restorative justice, and legal services; Metropolitan Peace Academy, Light in the Night: events four nights a week to reclaim safe spaces.
Crisis Assistance Helping Out On the Streets (CAHOOTS)	Eugene, OR	Provides mobile crisis intervention to those in urgent medical need or going through a psychological crisis.	Services include client counseling; suicide prevention, assessment, and intervention; conflict resolution and mediation; grief and loss; substance abuse; housing crisis; first aid and non-emergency medical care; resource connection and referrals; transportation to services.
Cure Violence	Chicago, IL	Violence prevention program that engages young men of color to act as "credible messengers" of an anti-violence message to prevent and reduce youth violence.	Connects members of the community who have experienced violence with high-risk youth to prevent conflicts before they happen. Works with staff at public hospitals to work with victims and their friends and family.
Denver Alliance for Street Health Response	Denver, CO	Creating alternative responses and methods to navigate conflict and crisis as well as reducing overdose and expanding health access to people experiencing homelessness.	Advocating for community-based crisis response, advocating for alternatives to jail, training programs (medic, overdose response, and restorative practices), statewide truth and reconciliation effort focused on food insecurity.
Harm Free Zone	Durham, NC	Using restoring intervention practices to prevent or intervene in interpersonal conflict and state violence and reducing community reliance on law enforcement.	Transformative Justice Training: a 12-week program where participants craft tools and practices to strengthen individual and collective capacities to confront and transform harm; Documentaries & Book Studies: program that has partnered with organizations to develop a shared understanding about issues impacting poor people and people of color; Campaigns and Direct Action: various campaigns including working on a task force to research and propose viable, cost-effective, long term solutions to violence and harm that does not involve the police.

PROGRAM	LOCATION	MISSION	PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
Men As Peacemakers	Duluth, MN	Mobilizing existing community resources and developing innovative primary prevention and restorative justice strategies that are proven to significantly reduce and repair the harm caused by men.	IMPACT: helping athletic coaches promote and respect equality, reduce violence, and identify signs of abuse; Boys and Girls Youth Groups: helping young men develop healthy understandings of masculinity and giving young, at-risk women the resources to thrive in high school; Juvenile Restorative Justice: using the Circle Process to provide mediation for different levels of offenders.
Moms 4 Housing	Oakland, CA	A collective of homeless and marginally housed mothers with the goal of reclaiming housing for the community from speculators and profiteers.	Advocates for housing reform at various town hall meetings and by creating petitions.
Mothers Against Senseless Killings	Chicago, IL	Established to put eyes on the streets, interrupt violence and crime, and teach children to grow up as friends rather than enemies.	Building stronger communities by focusing on violence prevention, food insecurity, and housing.
Newark Community Street Team	Newark, NJ	Hires, trains, and deploys Outreach workers and High Risk Interventionists in the South Ward and West Wards of Newark to provide casework to those at greatest risk of becoming a victim or a perpetrator of violence, engage in high-risk intervention, offer safe passage at contracted schools, and provide support to crime survivors who are overlooked by traditional victim services agencies.	Safe Passage: Outreach Workers develop relationships with students at contracted schools, intervene in and mediate potential conflicts, and ensure students arrive to and from school safely and in a timely manner; Case Management: Outreach workers work individually and as a team to prevent community based violence; High Risk Intervention: connecting those engaged in violence to supportive counseling, crisis intervention assessment and mediation, referrals, and resource information.
Oakland Unite	Oakland, CA	Program aimed at interrupting violence currently occurring and preventing future violence.	Gun Violence Response: intervening in the cycle of gun violence by connecting community-based responders with individuals, interrupting conflicts between groups and individuals, providing adult life coaching, and enhancing participants' long-term job prospects; Youth Diversion and Reentry: helping youth move away from deeper involvement in violence and the juvenile justice system through coordinated interventions; Community healing: lifting up the wisdom of people closest to violence and deepening their skills to promote healing through community-led outreach activities and events.
Philly Stands Up	Philadelphia, PA	Collective of individuals working to confront sexual assault in various Philadelphia communities using a transformative justice framework.	Works with people who have assaulted others to hold them accountable to the survivor(s) and restore their relationships within their communities; works to educate on issues that contribute to sexualized violence; provide support to survivors.
Portland Street Response	Portland, OR	Directing a street response team to respond to calls related to street homelessness and public disorder.	Deploys medics and peer support specialists with specialized training in de-escalation and behavioral health.



PROGRAM	LOCATION	MISSION	PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
Project Nia	Chicago, IL	Works to end the arrest, detention, and incarceration of children and young adults by promoting restorative and transformative justice practices.	Educational Curricula: Develops educational curricula to help grassroots activists teach transformative and reformatory justice practices in their communities; Research & Reports: conducts research on youth incarceration, arrests, and policing in public schools; NYC Transformative Justice Hub: provides political education, consultations, and support from experienced practitioners, and increases connectivity and visibility across groups doing transformative justice and community accountability work.
Reclaim the Block	Minneapolis, MN	Organizes Minneapolis community and city council members to move money from the police department into other areas of the city's budget that truly promote community health and safety.	Organize around policies that strengthen community-led safety initiatives and reduce reliance on police departments.
Red Hook Community Justice Center	Brooklyn, NY	The nation's first multi-jurisdictional court, where a single judge hears cases that would ordinarily go before Civil, Family, and Criminal Courts. The Center also offers programs that work to improve public safety and trust in justice.	Peacemaking Program: program relying on traditional Native American approaches to facilitate community healing and restoration through group peacemaking sessions rather than punishment; Youth Court: hears cases that'd otherwise be in Family Court or Criminal Court; Driver Accountability Program: providing a restorative alternative to fines and fees for those who have committed criminal driving offenses.
Resilience	Chicago, IL	Dedicated to the healing and empowerment of sexual assault survivors through non-judgmental crisis intervention counseling, individual and group trauma therapy, and medical and legal advocacy in the greater Chicago metropolitan area.	Trauma therapy and crisis prevention; medical advocacy; and legal advocacy.
Vera Institute of Justice	Brooklyn, NY	Working with others who share its vision to tackle the most pressing injustices of our day—from the causes and consequences of mass incarceration, racial disparities, and the loss of public trust in law enforcement, to the unmet needs of the vulnerable, the marginalized, and those harmed by crime and violence.	Youth Justice: works with policymakers and practitioners who want juvenile justice to be rooted in the community, more effective, and smaller in scale, touching the lives of fewer children; Sentencing and Corrections: developing and supporting balanced, fair and humane sentencing and corrections policies to reduce the overall use of incarceration; Policing Program: aiming to shrink the footprint of American policing and advance racial equity by providing data and tools in support of grassroots and community-led movements and blueprint approaches to prioritize community needs.
Violence in Boston	Boston, MA	Providing a one-stop-shop for comprehensive victim services.	Social Impact Center: preventing and reducing the impact of violence by addressing immediate and basic needs: housing, food, clothing, and public safety; Social Impact Teams: various issue-specific teams including education, parental support, legal/law enforcement, and career/employment.

SHIFTING TO A NARRATIVE ABOUT TRUE COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Opportunity Agenda believes that any conversation about policing practices must start with the aspiration to redefine safety and for communities that can live without fear. Below is a guide to shifting to a narrative about true community safety and away from one rooted in state violence.

1. Lead with a Positive Vision and Shared Values.

The Opportunity Agenda's past analysis shows that commentators are often divided about how they discuss criminal justice issues. Uplifting the values that you share with different audiences will allow them to "hear" what you're saying. Most communicators agree: people don't change their minds based on facts alone, but rather based on how those facts are framed to fit their emotions and values.

- **Share a clear and inspiring vision.** In many cases, audiences have a difficult time envisioning what a different system would look like. Offer a vision that both shows how a new approach will uphold our values and what that could concretely look like. What would it look like to have first responders who were unarmed mental health specialists work with those experiencing a crisis in public? How would it be different for those experiencing homelessness if they had an ongoing relationship with a trained social worker instead of periodic encounters with police? Paint a clear picture for audiences that shows what defunding looks like and how it benefits the larger community while also protecting those most currently affected by problematic policing policies.
- **Be prepared to answer tough questions, but don't dwell on them.** Many who are opposed to the idea of defunding the police, or who don't fully understand the vision it represents, will start with the toughest questions: "What happens when someone is murdered?" "How should we handle school shooters?" and so on. It's important to have a strategy for these questions and to not appear to dodge them. Then, you can move on to the larger part of the argument that affects far more people: what the country would look like with more and better mental health services, enough affordable housing and robust anti-homelessness programs, and well-funded schools, for instance.
- **Evoke shared values. Some values to engage audiences in conversations about policing include:**
 - **Equal Justice**—the assurance that what you look like, the accent you have, or how much money you make should not affect the treatment you receive in our justice system. Current disparities in the application of laws violate this value, and the emphasis on policing and punishment has contributed heavily to these disparities.
 - **Community**—the notion that we share responsibility for each other and that opportunity is not only about personal success but about our success as a people. Define what a truly healthy and safe community looks like and remind audiences that we can use the resources we expend on policing to promote our shared values by enhancing **health and education** and protecting **family**.
 - **True Community Safety**—the belief that we all want to live in communities where our family and property are safe. We should work toward communities where all individuals feel safe and paint a picture of what that can look like and what steps will get us there.
 - **Voice**—the idea that we should all have a say in the decisions that affect us and our communities.
 - **Basic Rights/Human Rights**—the guarantee of dignity and fairness we all deserve by virtue of our humanity, some of which are also itemized in the Constitution.



2. Clearly identify and describe the problem. Emphasize how police violence undermines community safety.

- The violence that police inflict upon Black and Brown communities is often unreported and uncounted but nevertheless very dangerous for these communities. This everyday violence may take the form of aggressive searches and verbal abuse on the streets, and it is often overlooked in crime statistics that police officials use to argue that we should rely on police to redress community harms. Remind your audience that the police themselves have undermined safety in many communities through acts of everyday violence that is often unrecorded and without witnesses.

3. Communicate that reforms that fail to name the harms of racial discrimination, namely anti-Black racism, perpetuate the status quo.

- The centrality of racism to police violence is apparent, and policymakers should address this issue directly. Adopting colorblind reforms and language that fail to name racism will only continue to exacerbate the racist outcomes that persist in policing. It is time to have the tough conversation about racism in policing and to look for solutions that deal with it head on.

4. Discuss the overreliance on punitive responses to social problems.

- Remind your readers about the harms of this country's overreliance on incarceration and policing to address social issues. Emphasize that there are alternatives for addressing social issues that don't involve punishment and incarceration, both of which can separate families, punish people for being poor, and come with collateral consequences that keep people from voting and living in public housing after they have been incarcerated.

■ *Public safety is a broad charge and should include a broad range of people, agencies, and resources. The root causes of crime and other harms are complex and varied, and there are many approaches that we can and should take to address them instead of funneling people into our deeply flawed criminal justice system.*

5. Highlight the failures of moderate reforms that allow police departments to operate as business as usual.

- The Opportunity Agenda has provided charts that advocates can use to illustrate the need for transformative demands that move beyond the minor reforms of the past that have been ineffective or moderately successful. Many of these reforms direct more public dollars into the nation's police departments.

6. Provide solutions that go beyond policing to achieve community safety.

- **Tell people what works.** Put forward specific goals and solutions and show how they support the larger vision.
- **Talk about the need to re-examine our laws.** What should be de-criminalized and what does that look like? How can our laws be fair, be fairly enforced, and lead to true safety?
- The Opportunity Agenda chart on effective alternatives to policing (page 10) provides community programs that may serve as examples for thinking about a world that looks beyond police for community safety. Advocates can use this chart to respond to questions about how to provide safety while taking resources away from the police.

7. Be cautious when discussing data and statistics.

- Make sure to frame racial disparities in statistics and data as caused by systemic obstacles to equal opportunity and equal justice. For some audiences, disparities that are not properly framed as the result of systemic obstacles may only reinforce racist views that those audiences already had about why those disparities exist. Explain how systemic biases affect all of us and prevent us from achieving our full potential as a country. We can never truly become a land of opportunity while we allow racial inequity to persist. And ensuring equal opportunity for all is in our shared interest.

8. Redefine the notion of community safety.

- Don't shy away from conversations about safety. #DefundthePolice is about providing safety for everyone and doing so in a manner that respects everyone's rights and dignity. It's about well-resourced communities that feel empowered. The goal is to achieve **True Community Safety** that is centered on empowering communities rather than punishing them.

9. Don't forget the importance of staying intersectional.

- It's important to keep the conversation intersectional. At times, there can be a tendency to only focus on Black men and boys when talking about police violence. But it's important to remind your audiences that Black women and girls have experienced unique harms from police violence in this country, as have Black trans people, indigenous women, and others. In addition, people with disabilities, mental health issues, and other communities that have experience with systemic discrimination should remain a part of the conversation.

10. Emphasize the uniqueness of this moment, and invite audiences to imagine a world that matches our values as a society.

- We are at a unique moment of our history. Now is the time for us to use our imagination to create the world we would like to see.

BONUS

Call out the fear-based narratives that our opponents will use to undermine the movement.

- The call to #DefundthePolice is a call to fundamentally shift power from the police to the community. It is a radical demand, and advocates should expect strong opposition to it. Some of the opposition may come through direct responses to the demand. But much of the opposition will likely come through the manipulation of crime statistics, threats that the police will not enforce the law, and other indirect tactics to stoke fear. Call out these fear-based tactics and narratives for what they are. Remind your audiences that #DefundthePolice is about providing **True Community Safety**.



VPSA: VALUES, PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS, ACTION

V: We all deserve to live in communities where we feel safe. And true community safety means being safe from violence from members of the government, including the police.

P: Americans have witnessed the pervasive nature of racism in this country from the steady stream of videos of police officers and vigilantes murdering Black people. These videos demonstrate that racism permeates policing and cannot be addressed by tinkering with the system.

S: It's time for policymakers to defund the police and readjust local budgets to provide resources back to the communities. In NYC, the New York City Council should reallocate \$1 billion from the NYPD budget to education, healthcare, and social services for the city's low-income communities.

A: Call your city council representative.

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