

No Cops[★] in Crisis Care: Community Care Options in a Crisis

A LETS Guide to Supporting Each Other Without Policing



Why Police Are Not Crisis Care

Calling the police may feel like the only option, but it often makes crises worse. Police are trained to control and punish, not support or heal.

People often call because they:

Think help will happen

Are exhausted or scared

Feel legally or institutionally coerced

Don't trust themselves to respond

Just want the crisis to stop

Are responding to biased assumptions about danger

Have no visible alternatives



This includes 988, which works in partnership with police and clinician-led teams engage in psychiatric incarceration.

How We Interrupt Police Calls

Think something helpful will happen

→ Show real help

- Peer-run warmlines & crisis lines
- Mobile peer crisis teams
- Peer respite houses
- Trusted community contacts

Tip: Keep a "Who to Call First" card in your phone or fridge

Fear → Opportunities to put skills into practice

- Crisis companions trained in anti-carceral skills
- Body/mind/spirit support strategies
- Phone-based co-regulation

Tip: Remember: intensity ≠ danger

Exhaustion → Build backup and relief

- Creating a care team/pod/group chat
- Rotating caregiver and support shifts
- Short-term crisis accompaniment
- Respite care; Mutual aid swaps

Tip: Make a "If I'm fried, call this person" plan

Coercion → Reduce institutional pressure

- Written crisis plans naming non-police responders
- Psychiatric advance directives
- Peer advocates to interface with schools, employers, or landlords

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How We Interrupt Police Calls

Self-doubt → Build community confidence

- Peer crisis response trainings
- Know Your Rights sessions
- Access to cultural & ancestral care practices and practitioners

Bias → Center impacted leadership

- Prioritize responders from the same community
- Calling on Mad, Black, Indigenous, Disabled, or houseless people can directly lead to their deaths

No alternatives → Make care visible and funded

- Peer respite networks
- Mutual aid crisis funds
- Community emergency trees
- Practice using these supports before crises occur

Key Principles

- Safety is relational, not forceful
- Presence beats policing
- Practice before the emergency
- Community care saves lives
- Together, we can build a world where no one has to fear being policed when they are in distress

LETS Resources

- **Psychiatric Incarceration Support Line:** 401-400-2905
- **Crisis Support 101:**
projectlets.org/crisis-support
- **Psychiatric Abolition Resource Toolkit:**

