




save SEXUAL
ASSAULT
VOICES OF
EDMONTON



Sexual Assault Voices of Edmonton (SAVE)

is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to exist in solidarity with people who've experienced sexual violence and amplify their voices. We dream of a world without sexual violence and that includes a community without policing. Our hope with this Zine is to affirm the strength of communities when we support and rely on each other. We are also directly challenging the belief that policing systems support and/or protect survivors. We offer space to imagine a future of collective safety outside of carceral systems and share ways our community is already working towards this aim.





Who We Art & Love

Edmonton is located on Treaty 6 territory and Métis Region 4: the traditional lands of the Nehiyaw Cree), Denesuliné (Dene), Nakota Sioux (Stoney), Anishinaabe (Saulteaux), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Métis, and Inuit peoples. As we live, learn, and organize as settlers on these lands, we recognize our obligation to continuously work to repair harms perpetrated upon Indigenous communities, presently and historically.

Where We are

We thank all of the people, especially Indigenous and Black women and 2SLGBTQ+ folks, who have been foundational to community and movement building and without whom radical futures wouldn't be imaginable. We would also like to thank all of our supporters, collaborators, creators, and everyone working to keep their communities safe. In particular we thank Black Lives Matter YEG; HARES; Free Lands, Free Peoples; and artist Emily Chu who illustrated this Zine. We are honoured to be in community with all of you.

What We're About

We recognize that the collaboration between sexual assault support services and policing agencies have perpetuated the deep roots of white supremacy and racism by prioritizing relationships with policing organizations over the lives of Black and Indigenous people, people of colour, people experiencing poverty, sex workers, LGBTQ2S+ folks, and people with disabilities. In solidarity with local Black organizers, including the Black Lives Matter Edmonton chapter, we are pushing for systemic change by calling for an end to policing in our community.

We know that policing practices most often fail to bring justice for survivor-victims and instead increase trauma symptoms or even cause additional traumatization. This is because contemporary policing was created in a settler colonial society that values domination, control, and forms of hierarchical power that maintain the white cisheteropatriarchal status quo. Believing survivor-victims and holding those who've caused harm accountable for their actions would challenge this social order. Eliminating policing in our community would also address the (often hidden) sexual violence that occurs at the hands of the police themselves.

Unfortunately, when the mainstream anti-sexual violence movement has attempted to address issues with policing and the criminal legal system, it's largely relied on reformist approaches. The reformist mindset maintains the status quo by insisting that the system only needs to be fixed. However, we know that the system is just doing what it was always intended to do: control, oppress, and eliminate those most marginalized in our community. This means that the bulk of our efforts have gone into improving an institution rooted in oppression so it can better inflict harm and violence.

Our experience shows us that policing doesn't keep our communities safe and will never address the root causes of sexual violence. However, SAVE believes justice and accountability are possible for survivor-victims outside of a retributive, carceral system. We envision a city in which the attitudes and norms that uphold and normalize all forms of violence are actually discouraged, and where everyone's basic needs are met. To reach this goal, we need to immediately limit the scope of policing in our community while working towards the complete elimination of police presence in Edmonton. Using the essential funds this frees up, we must then invest in: education, mental health and addiction support services, free transit, housing for all, a universal living wage, harm reduction services, conflict resolution options, and transformative justice practices. SAVE believes that when we are invested in the wellness of those most marginalized in our community, putting an end to the cycle of abuse is possible.



What Else We Can Do (Abolition in Everyday Life)¹

- 1 Think systemically. Push relevant governing bodies to end cash bail, overturn the Police Act in Alberta, abolish police unions, and disarm the police.
- 2 Show up to Edmonton City Council meetings and write your councillor to urge them to focus on reducing the EPS budget by 32%.
- 3 Demand that Edmonton City Council transfer crisis response and intervention for non-violent calls related to mental health response, homelessness, and addictions from the Edmonton Police Service and re-allocate them to other public services provided by the City of Edmonton.
- 4 Be critical of policing reform. The goal of reforms should be to make things immediately safer for the most vulnerable members of the community. If reforms make police forces larger, extend their power, or give them more funds, they MUST be opposed.
- 5 Disrupt policing in your community. When you see a cop interacting with someone around you, ask questions to hold the cops accountable, ensure everyone involved is alright, and film any harm or violence being inflicted on your fellow community member--with their consent, of course!
- 6 Support local alternatives to policing. Checkout groups like HARES; Prairie Sage Protectors; Elizabeth Fry Society, BLM YEG; Free Lands, Free Peoples; etc. and share their work, or donate your time and money to their organizations.
- 7 Assess what you can contribute to the cause. Take stock of the skills you have, those that you could learn, and the skills that are needed to keep your community safe.
- 8 Get to know your neighbours. Introduce yourself and exchange numbers to resolve issues, like noise complaints, rather than calling the cops. Resist social policing practices in formal organizations like community leagues and neighbourhood connection apps.
- 9 Practice accountability in your personal life. Acknowledge when you've caused harm, apologize for the impact your actions had, and work to change your behaviour into the future.
- 10 Dream about what a world without police would look like. Work on intentionally building community with the principles and values you want to see, like radical compassion.
- 11 Check-in regularly with yourself and your community. Abolition is not a short-term goal--practice cultivating hope.

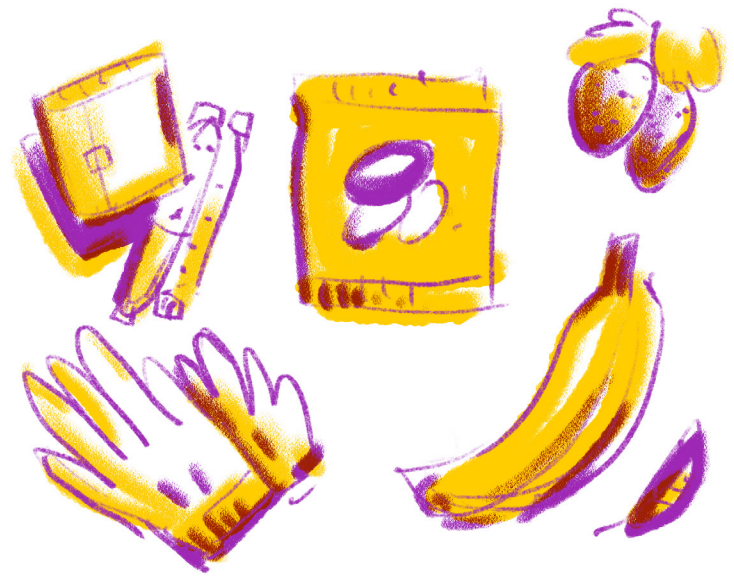
Communities in Action

We Keep Us Safe Block Party, April 2022

As the so-called “Freedom Convoy” took over public conversation and our cities, the cops showed us that they were on the convoyers’ side. On February 12, 2022, we, a small group of concerned Edmontonians, stood together peacefully on a quiet road that leads past a golf course, holding up a long train of convoyers. In less than an hour, tens of cops were lined up in riot gear, ready to arrest and charge us for disturbing “critical infrastructure”, rather than addressing the interference, racism, bullying, and noise disturbances caused by the convoy.

The critical infrastructure that we need to protect is community infrastructure. Two weeks after stopping the convoy, we showed up for community and each other at the We Keep Us Safe Block Party, held to reclaim downtown space for all of us. The naloxone trainings, ACAB 101 training, and a session on how to communicate with people who disagree with you were held side by side with community-sourced coffee and food, neighbors meeting neighbors, and an art build. We’re not sure what the future brings, but we know that we’re going to keep connecting, training, and building a community that imagines and works towards a future without cops, a community that is strong and resilient and that keeps us safe.





HARES, November 2021

“HARES outreach is a mutual aid network within so-called Edmonton that provides ongoing support for members of so-called Edmonton’s unhoused community. We started in the wake of COVID-19 shutdowns, seeing the increased needs of our unhoused neighbours as services shut down or reduced capacity. Currently, we are out every Friday from 1-4pm at Wilbert McIntyre Park providing food, safer use supplies, and naloxone as our core services. As much as we can, we also provide hot meals, clothing, and seasonal necessities to those sleeping rough.

Mutual aid is built on two principles, reciprocity and relationship. Reciprocity is central in mutual aid, unlike the power dynamics embedded into the givers and receivers relationship that dominate NGO and charitable services. By being directly accountable to the people we see in our work,

rather than being accountable to a board or donors, we build trust and help people reach out for help knowing they will get it to the best of our ability without judgement or means-testing.

Mutual aid is also rooted in building relationships as a key component of how we keep each other safe. The relationships we hold within the community are vital to the support that we can provide. For those marginalised by interlocking systems of oppression a familiar face can go a long way in a crisis situation. Emphasis on relationship and community also helps to create expectations around behaviour in our spaces that are mutually respected without having to be enforced by security or threat of police intervention. Respect for one another and the bonds we make with people who would otherwise have been strangers is what keeps us safe.”

Additional Information

<https://defundthepolice.org/canada/>
<https://transformharm.org/abolition/>
<http://criticalresistance.org/abolish-policing/>
<https://www.creative-interventions.org/>

Support Local Alternatives to Police

HARES
Prairie Sage Protectors
Elizabeth Fry Society
BLM YEG
Free Lands Free Peoples

Create Change



**SAVE
Website**



SCAN ME

**YEG Police
Violence Archive**



SCAN ME

