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Alternatives to police for mental health & substance use crisis

This zine is
designed to
grow awareness
of the crisis
assistance
resources in
Gainesville and
Alachua County.



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Research indicates that

OVER 75%

of 911 calls dispatched to law enforcement involve non-violent issues that do not require an armed response.

AND

Roughly

60%

of individuals in U.S. jails and prisons have a substance use disorder, and

44%

have a history of mental illness.

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Uncarcerated envisions a community that doesn't use incarceration as the answer to public health issues but instead connects people to **mental, behavioral, and cultural resources** that are rooted in community and compassion.



***THAT'S WHY WE NEED
ALTERNATIVES TO POLICE***

Alternatives to Police

HOT LINES

Dedicated, direct telephone lines for urgent crisis counseling

ALTERNATIVE FIRST RESPONDERS

Unarmed healthcare workers, peers & counselors trained to respond to mental health crises

CRISIS CENTERS

Facilities that offer services that can be accessed in both during and after a crisis

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY SAFETY NETS

Sometimes the best thing to do when things are out of control is to reach out to friends and family

Local and National Hotlines

- **Alachua County Crisis Center:** 988 or 352-264-6785 or Toll-Free at 1-800-971-0016. this hotline is available 24/7 with trained counselors
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 988
- National hotline operates just like 911 but specifically for mental health crises
- **Meridian behavioral healthcare crisis line:** 352-374-5600 (option 1)
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text "HOME" to 741741
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Helpline:** 1-800-950-NAMI (6264)
- **UF Mental Health Support:** 352-392-1575

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LGBTQ+ Hotlines

- **The Trevor Project (for LGBTQ+ youth):**
1-866-488-7386
- **Trans Lifeline :** 1-877-565-8860

BIPOC Hotlines

- **Black Emotional and Mental Health (BEAM) Collective:** 855- 998-2266
- **National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA) Helpline:** 1-888-235-8535
- **National Latino Behavioral Health Association (NLBHA) Helpline:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- **National American Indian and Alaska Native MHTTC (Mental Health Technology Transfer Center) Helpline:**
1-844-986-2264

Alternative First Responders

- **Alachua County Crisis Center Mobile Response and Crisis Intervention:** 352-264-6789, text “TALK” to 741741, or ask for them through 911 or 988
- **Gainesville Community Resource Paramedicine:** Provides compassionate emergency medical care; 351-334-2400
- **Co-Responder Program:** Police response with mental health clinicians that provide care, referrals, and follow-up support; Request a co-responder through 911

Crisis Centers, Services, & Mobile Outreach

- **Peaceful Paths:** Offers 24/7 domestic violence hotline and walk-in services, safety planning, counseling, advocacy, and legal aid; 2100 NW 53rd Ave, Gainesville, FL 32653; 352-377-5690
- **Meridian:** Bridge House (rehab) and crisis stabilization; 352-374-5600
- **UF Psychiatric Hospital (Vista):** 24/7 Crisis Stabilization; 352-265-5481
- **UF Florida Recovery Center:** Addiction treatment; 352-265-4372
- **Alachua County Metamorphosis:** 6-12 mo substance use treatment; 352-264-6790

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- **Central Receiving System:** Offers 24/7 screening and assessments for mental health and substance use; 386-339-4012
- **CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services:** Free mental health resources for children 6-17
- **Impact GNV:** Violence Interrupter Partners; community-based conflict mediation; 352-393-8388
- **Alachua County Victim Services:** Free services to survivors of crime; 352-264-6760
- **Released Reentry:** Mental health support for people returning home from incarceration; 352-432-8600
- **Malcolm Randall Veteran Affairs Mental Health Care:** 352-384-3560

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- **Family Promise:** Family homeless services; 352-378-2030
- **Alachua Fire Rescue Mobile Integrated Healthcare:** Care for substance use, mental health, chronic illness, and homelessness; 352-384-3101
- **Grace Street Outreach:** Mobile homelessness response; 352-792-0800
- **UF Mobile Outreach Clinic:** Brings healthcare directly into neighborhoods; 352-273-5329
- **Block by Block Downtown Ambassador Program:** Can provide safety escorts to walk with people to their cars, transit, or downtown destination in downtown Gainesville; 352-710-6406



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Social/Community Safety Nets

Rather than relying solely on the police and 911. Connection with trusted friends and family can offer a more personalized and compassionate approach.

The next few pages have some advice from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) on **how to support a loved one with a mental health condition** by:

- Building a pre-crisis plan
- Supporting them during a crisis
- Setting up an after care plan

For more info see the guide "[Navigating a Mental Health Crisis](https://www.nami.org)" available at [nami.org](https://www.nami.org).

Pre-Crisis plan

When creating a crisis plan with a loved one, here are seven things to consider:

1. Learn all you can about the illness your loved one has and any medications they are on
2. Find out about benefits and support systems when things are going well.
3. Learn to recognize early warning signs of relapse, such as changes in sleeping patterns, increasing social withdrawal, inattention to hygiene, and signs of irritability.
4. Talk to your loved one, especially when they're doing well, and let them tell you what helps to reduce symptoms and relieve stress.
5. Do what your loved one wants, as long as it's reasonable and safe.
6. Acknowledge your own uneasiness, tell your loved one how their behavior is making you feel, and diffuse the situation.
7. Give your loved one plenty of physical and emotional space.

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Social/Community Safety Nets

In times of crisis, it can be helpful to consider alternative ways of getting or offering support. Rather than relying solely on the police and 911. Connection with trusted friends and family can offer a more personalized and compassionate approach.

The next few pages have some advice from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) on how to support a loved one with a mental health condition by:

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How to help during a mental health crisis

- Empathize with the person's feelings and try to de-escalate the crisis by keeping your voice calm, avoiding overreacting, and listening to the person.
- Express support and concern, avoid continuous eye contact, and ask how you can help.
- Keep the stimulation level low, move slowly, offer options instead of trying to take control, and avoid touching the person unless you ask permission.
- Be patient, gently announce actions before initiating them, and give them space, don't make them feel trapped.
- Call a psychiatrist, clinic nurse, therapist, case manager or family physician that is familiar with the person's history if you don't believe there is an immediate danger.
- Consider calling one of the crisis hotlines or alternative responders listed above if the situation is worsening.

Aftercare Plan

The goal of an aftercare plan is to offer someone a range of tools and resources to support their ongoing recovery and minimize their risk of relapse. Here are some potential components of an aftercare plan:

- **Medication Management:** Ensuring they have access to their prescribed medication and understand how to take it properly can help prevent medication-related crises.
- **Regular Check-Ins:** Consistent communication and check-ins with a healthcare provider, therapist, or support group can help to identify issues early on.
- **Peer Support Group:** A support group can provide a sense of community and a place to share experiences.
- **Mindfulness Practices:** Engaging in mindfulness practices, such as meditation or yoga, can help manage stress, regulate emotions and promote overall well-being.
- **Community-Based Initiatives:** Participating in community-based initiatives, such as volunteer work or hobby groups, can offer a sense of purpose and build new connections.

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*Lets envision a community where
needs are met with care*

Learn more at:
Representjustice.org/uncarcerated
or Uncarcerated.org

