

## Community Accountability, Restorative and Transformative Justice— Definitions

**Community Accountability**— INCITE!  
Women of Color Against Violence defines community accountability as “ a community-based strategy, rather than a police/prison-based strategy, to address violence within our communities”. Community-based strategies prioritize the self-determination and agency of those impacted by harm while providing them with safety and support. For those who caused harm, community accountability creates a process for them to acknowledge their abusive actions and work towards transforming their behavior.

**Restorative Justice** is a philosophy and practice that promotes the crucial shift from punitive measure to a needs-based justice paradigm. By shifting our definition of justice towards meanings of healing, compassion and accountability, restorative justice is concerned with three main questions:

- Who has been hurt?
- What are their needs?
- Who has the obligation to address the needs, to put right the harms, and restore relationships?

**Transformative Justice**—According to community organization, generationFIVE, “Transformative Justice responds to the lack of – and the critical need for – a liberatory approach to violence. A liberatory approach seeks safety and accountability without relying on alienation, punishment, or State or systemic violence, including incarceration and policing [...] Through building the capacity of communities to increase justice internally, Transformative Justice seeks to support collective action toward addressing larger issues of injustice and oppression.”

## Community Accountability, Restorative and Transformative Justice - A few local and national organizations

### Community Justice for Youth Institute (Chicago, IL)

<http://communityjustice4youth.org/>

Offers trainings in Peacemaking Circles and Restorative Justice practices for communities, schools, and other institutions.

### Project NIA (Chicago, IL)

<http://www.project-nia.org/>

Through participatory action research, community engagement, education, and capacity-building, Project NIA facilitates community-focused responses to youth violence and crime.

### Young Women’s Empowerment Project (Chicago, IL)

<http://youarepriceless.org/>

Offers safe, respectful, free-of-judgment spaces for girls and young women impacted by the sex trade and street economies to recognize their goals, dreams and desires.

### Generation FIVE (Oakland, CA)

<http://www.generationfive.org/>

Through survivor leadership, community organizing, and public action, Meaningful community response is the key to effective prevention.

### Incite! Women of Color Against Violence

<http://www.incite-national.org>

A leading national activist organization of radical feminists of color advancing a movement to end violence against women of color and our communities through direct action, critical dialogue, and grassroots organizing.

### StoryTelling and Organizing Project of Creative Interventions (Oakland, CA)

<http://www.stopviolenceeveryday.org/>

A community project that shares stories of community-based actions — involving family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, community members -- to stop, address or prevent interpersonal violence.

## Building Communities, Ending Violence



A DePaul-based community accountability and transformative justice project

*Liberation*

**Healing**

*Compassion*

*Action*

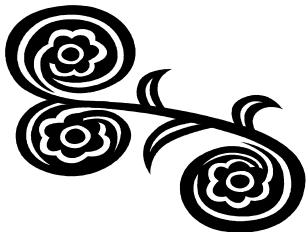
**Imagination**

*Process*

*TRANSFORMATION*

## Mission Statement

We are a group of DePaul students, staff, faculty, and community activists who are interested in everyday, community-based methods for ending oppression and violence in our communities. Through **safety labs, peacemaking circles, and other transformative practices**, we offer space for reflection, dialogue and skill building in order to develop collective and community-based strategies for **healing, intervention, accountability, and transformation**. Together and with others we hope to contribute to broader movements for social justice, transformative change, and collective liberation.



Contact us:  
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## Our Values

We believe that community building is crucial in supporting survivors, promoting accountability and preventing violence. Through deep reflection, dialogue and storytelling, we create possibilities for connection, collaboration and mutual understanding.

We are committed to developing skills and strategies that enable community members to intervene in the face of conflict and violence, rather than rely solely on law enforcement.

## Our Practices

**Peacemaking circles** are based on indigenous practices that are used for relationship building, decision-making and conflict resolution.

**Safety labs\*** are spaces for people to develop collective strategies that promote healing, support, and accountability in situations of conflict or harm. Safety labs emphasize community-based alternatives to law enforcement and other forms of policing.

\*Safety Labs are collective practices created by **Community United Against Violence (CUAV)**. Their mission is to build the power of LGBTQQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning) communities to transform violence and oppression and support the healing the leadership of those impacted by abuse. For more information, visit their website: [www.cuav.org/](http://www.cuav.org/)

## Ways to Build Community

- Build a community garden!
- Invite neighbors over for a potluck!
- Lead a peace circle or safety lab in your neighborhood or school!
- Host a book club!
- Volunteer with Community Justice for Youth Institute, Project NIA, or any other restorative and transformative justice organization!
- Shop at local farmer's markets!
- Join a local sports team!
- Become a member of *Building Communities, Ending Violence!*