



Community Care Art Workshops

TOOLKIT

A how-to guide for holding community care art workshops. Gather your neighbors to make art while assessing your local mental health resources and building care networks together.



TREATMENT NOT TRAUMA

Grassroots Collaborative
Chicago Creatives for Justice







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Authorship & Acknowledgements

The following toolkit for Community Care Art Workshops was created by Chicago Creatives for Justice (CCJ) fellow, Yasmeen Khayr (she/her). Her experience conducting community-based research, facilitating art workshops and gathering spaces, creating justice-oriented art, and training to become an art therapist influenced the development of Community Care Art Workshops for the Treatment Not Trauma campaign.

Yasmeen created the original content and overall design of this toolkit. The graphic design is a continuation of the artwork created by former CCJ fellows, Citlali Perez (they/she) and Mia Festo (they/them). Many of the graphic images were designed by Citlali while Mia developed the branding colors and fonts. Much gratitude for them for their ongoing contributions to representing TNT.

Yasmeen's facilitation of the Community Care Art Workshops and complementary toolkit were developed during her fellowship as a Chicago Creative for Justice with Grassroots Collaborative (GC). GC is a coalition of eight community-based organizations fighting for policy and material changes at the local and national level.



How to Use this Toolkit

As a part of the Treatment Not Trauma (TNT) campaign, the goal of this toolkit is to equip our communities with the tools to gather our neighbors, friends, and community members and creatively build networks of care through art workshops.



This toolkit will:

- Give an overview of the Treatment Not Trauma campaign;
- Offer insights on the power of artmaking, healing, and community care;
- Detail the step-by-steps of how to host your own community care art workshop;
- Share logistics to consider when hosting a workshop;
- Describe resource mapping and how to prepare for moments of crisis;
- Introduce zine-making and offer a zine template for resource mapping;
- Offer a list of mental health resources;
- Suggest other ways to get involved with TNT!





Treatment Not Trauma

Campaign Overview



Treatment Not Trauma

Vision



Chicago should be a city where every resident can access care, healing, and safety—without fear, punishment, or police violence. The Treatment Not Trauma (TNT) campaign envisions a public safety system rooted in care, not criminalization—where social workers, mental health professionals, and community responders are dispatched to crises instead of armed officers, and where neighborhood mental health clinics are fully funded and community-driven.

Background

For decades, Chicago has disinvested from public mental health infrastructure, closing half of its city-run clinics and leaving thousands without care. Meanwhile, the city continues to spend over 35% of its budget on policing. The result has been predictable: people in crisis—especially Black and Brown Chicagoans—too often encounter police instead of counselors, and are met with force instead of help.



Background Cont.

Launched by community organizations, labor partners, and public health advocates, the Treatment Not Trauma campaign builds on years of grassroots organizing to reimagine safety through public health, not punishment. The campaign has won widespread community support, multiple City Council champions, and pilot programs that demonstrate a better way is possible.

Why it Matters

Every Chicagoan deserves care when they are in crisis—not to be handcuffed, jailed, or traumatized. Treatment Not Trauma is about transforming how Chicago responds to suffering, building a city that invests in healing instead of harm. It's a vision of safety grounded in justice, dignity, and the belief that care should be a right, not a privilege.



Campaign Goals



1. Fully Fund and Expand Public Mental Health Clinics

Reopen the city-run mental health clinics closed under past administrations, expand hours and services, and ensure care is free, accessible, and culturally competent.

2. Establish a Non-Police Crisis Response System. Citywide

Scale up mobile crisis response teams staffed by social workers, clinicians, and peer support specialists—so that 911 calls about mental health, homelessness, or substance use are met with care, not cuffs.

3. Invest in Care Workforce

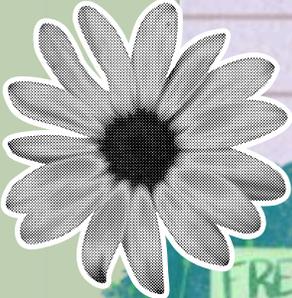
Create stable, unionized, and well-resourced jobs for mental health professionals, community care workers, and peer responders—many of whom come from the communities most impacted.

4. Shift the City Budget Toward Care

Redirect funds from policing and incarceration to community-based health, housing, and youth programs that actually prevent harm and promote safety.



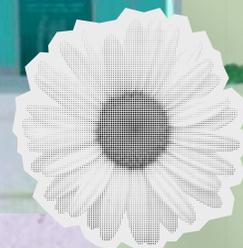
Recent Wins!

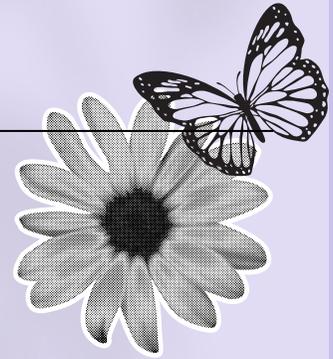


The campaign secured the creation of the **Crisis Assistance Response and Engagement (CARE)** program, that established teams of clinicians and EMTs to respond to mental health calls.

City Council passed a **resolution endorsing Treatment Not Trauma** and supporting the reopening of public mental health clinics.

Ongoing community pressure has pushed the **Department of Public Health** to begin planning for clinic expansion and new hiring pipelines.



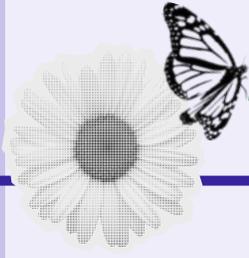


Hosting a Community Care Art Workshop

How-To Guide



Community Care Art Workshop



Cultural Organizing & Collective Artmaking

Community Care Art Workshops are gathering spaces that combine

- **Collective artmaking;**
- **Building communities of care; and**
- **Furthering campaign goals.**

Cultural organizing is an integral tool for facilitating communal gathering and healing spaces for our community members while also modeling approaches to care, community wellness, practicing community wellness and how to show up for one another, as well as strategizing around systemic social, economic, and political issues affecting our communities.

Utilizing learnings from art therapy, these art workshops can utilize various types of artmaking and creative mediums to gain different skills collectively. The workshops can focus on visioning better worlds, practicing collective care, and resource mapping, among others. Artmaking has always been part of liberation movements; these workshops encourage us to consider how collectively creating can be cathartic, strategic, and liberatory.



10 Building a Community Care Art Workshop



Use these questions to consider your objectives and purpose for facilitating a community care art workshop

Objectives

- What is our purpose for holding a workshop?
- What do we want people to gain from attending a workshop?
- How can this workshop activate a larger campaign goal?
 - Public education and awareness
 - Asset mapping
 - Resource sharing
- Who do we want to engage in the workshop?
- What kind of artmaking do we want folks to engage in?
 - Collage/mixed media
 - Weaving or embroidery
 - Printmaking
 - Zine-making

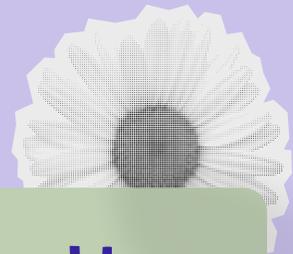


11 Building a Community Care Art Workshop



Logistics

1. How will we gather community members to participate in a workshop?
2. Where will the workshop take place?
 - a. Geographical location
 - b. Physical gathering space
3. Does the gathering space accommodate the type of artmaking?
4. How many people do we want to attend the workshop?
 - a. How many people does the space allow for?
 - b. How will the type of workshop change depending on the number of participants?
5. What materials do we need for the workshop?
6. When and how long will the workshop be?
 - a. Consider people's capacity and time available
7. How do we want to advertise the workshop?



Consider these questions when planning the logistics to facilitate a community care art workshop





What do you need to facilitate an effective workshop?



Openness to Creativity

We all are capable of creating!

We need creativity to imagine, strategize, and build new realities we want for our world.



Accessible Materials

Try to set up art workshops that use materials that are easily available at home or in stores, affordable, and are accessible for the spectrum of physical abilities.

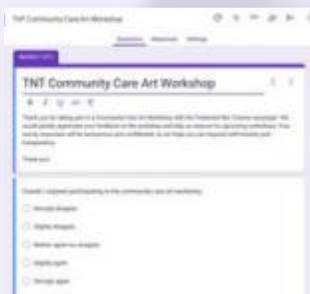
EX. scrap papers, pencils, pens, markers, crayons, glue, scissors, thread/yarn/string, cardboard, paints, other found materials.



Visual Aids, Powerpoints, Examples, etc.

Visual aids, video instructions, and physical examples are helpful in facilitating any discussions or artmaking.

Consider bringing example art projects, step-by-step artmaking videos or directions, artwork to decorate the workshop space, etc.



Receive Feedback and Evaluation

Receiving feedback on your workshop is helpful to making sure there is room to improve the workshop based on participants' experiences.

Consider including a moment for participants to debrief at the end of the workshop, an evaluation survey, or setting up follow-up interviews with participants.



Template Workshop Agenda

Use this template workshop agenda; it includes suggestions for facilitating a workshop and is adaptable based to fit your specific workshop goals and community participants. Time suggestions can also be adapted depending on how much overall time is allotted to the workshop.

INTRODUCTIONS (15–20 MINUTES)



- Share a brief overview of the agenda
- Introduce the campaign, the facilitators, and the physical space
- Round of introductions of participants/community members
 - Name, pronouns, relationship to campaign, what folks are looking forward to in the space
- Take your time here, it is important to take the time to build rapport with the folks in the space

COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS (5–10 MINUTES)

- Set community agreements with the participants
 - Prepare an initial list of agreements and allow for participants to add/remove/suggest others
- Example:
 - **We are all creative and imaginative**
 - *Our creativity allows us to imagine new worlds*
 - **Confidentiality**
 - *Stories stay, lessons leave*
 - **Process over product**
 - *Embrace the experience of creating without fixating on the final product*
 - **Stewards of the space**
 - *Take care of the physical and emotional spaces we occupy*
 - **Honor your emotions**
 - *Take any time or breaks to tend to your emotionally wellbeing if anything comes up for you*
- Ask for consent from all participants about taking photos during the workshop





Template Workshop Agenda

GROUNDING QUESTIONS (10 MINUTES)

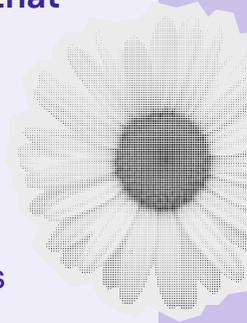
- Transition into some grounding questions that engage the campaign and begin conversations around safety and community care
- Grounding questions to consider:
 - **What does safety and care feel like? smell like? taste like? look like? sound like?**
 - **How do we keep each other safe?**
 - **What would our communities look like if we fully invested in it?**
 - **What would our communities look like if we had all the resources that we needed?**

ROLE OF ARTMAKING & CULTURAL ORGANIZING (10 MINUTES)

- Gauge comfort with artmaking among community members/participants
 - Have folks share their experience with artmaking
- Introduce cultural organizing, art as resistance and activism, and art as tools for healing, gathering, and community building
- **How can artmaking help us build the skills we need to support one another?**
 - Open it up to discussion

COLLECTIVE ARTMAKING (30–60 MINUTES)

- Lead participants through artmaking activity
 - Artmaking options will depend on objective of workshop, skills the facilitator wants to share, what participants will be excited to engage in
 - Describe and share art materials as well as physical examples
- Incorporate campaign-related questions throughout the artmaking process and inspire both creativity and discussion
- Open time for collective artmaking
 - Facilitator making, walking around, and supporting others in artmaking as needed
- Encourage discussion as folks are making!



Template Workshop Agenda

REFLECTION & SHARE OUT (10–15 MIN)



- Participants share what they made
 - Engage in a **gallery walk**--each participant puts their art on the table and have everyone walk around to see what everyone made
- Have participants reflect on the process of artmaking and what was made together
- Return to the campaign-related questions and tie back to the art that was made collectively

SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN & CLOSE OUT (5–10 MIN)

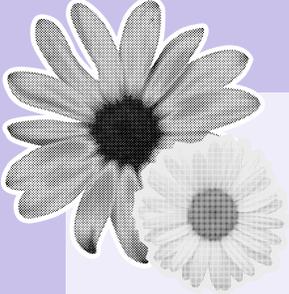
- Transition into discussing practical resources that community members can tap into, especially when considering the questions:
 - **How can we show up and support folks with mental health struggles in our communities?**
 - **What resources can we tap into when our community members are having mental health emergencies?**
- Share campaign asks and how folks can get more involved:
 - Make a safety plan for your and/or community
 - Join a regional team
 - Host your own art workshop
 - Come to monthly meetings
 - Make a donation
- Share any final thoughts with the group



DEBRIEF POST-WORKSHOP

- It is important to debrief and evaluate how the workshop was experienced by participants. Below are some ideas for evaluating:
 - Debrief with participants directly after the workshop, asking for their feedback on what went well and what parts did not land well
 - Share an online evaluation survey that participants can fill out
 - Follow-up 1:1 conversations with participants and can also encourage deeper involvement with the campaign





Artmaking Options

There are various art materials and artmaking activities that can be centered in the workshop. Consider the goals you have for the workshop and how the artmaking can support actualize the workshop outcomes for participants. Below are some creative ideas to take inspiration for your own artmaking workshop.

What skills or information do i want participants to gain from this workshop and how can the artmaking reflect or facilitate these goals?

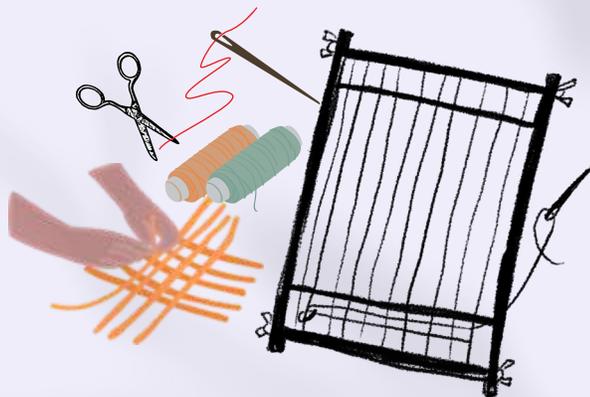
Do we want community members to imagine new worlds?

Collaging & Visioning can be a way to engage community members to imagine different realities we are fighting to create (safety, community care, non-carceral mental health support). Use collage materials like magazines, thread, fabric, text, markers, crayons, etc. to envision these new worlds.



Do we want to model the feeling and act of communal care?

Collective Weaving invites community members to weave together different materials (thread, old fabric, natural and found materials, etc.) into a single collective piece. This experience can have folks consider approaches to care, problem-solving, and how to show up for others through this communal act.



Artmaking Options

Do we want to create and distribute resources and information to our communities?



Zine-Making guides community members to create a container for information, resources, emotions, and skills that are helpful during different moments or experiences. Zines come in different sizes, can include various texts and images, and can be both cathartic and practical depending on the need. They can be especially useful for easily sharing public education to our friends and communities.

Can we take a moment to express our emotions?



Open Studio invites community members to play with a range of art materials to express and process their emotions. These art materials can include watercolor and acrylic paints, embroidery, collaging, etc.

Art Supply List

- Paper, card stock, lined paper, construction paper
- Markers, acrylic paint markers, alcohol-based markers
- Pencils, colored pencils, crayons, oil pastels
- Embroidery thread, yarn, fabric
- Collage materials, magazines, natural materials, etc.
- Scissors, tape, glue/glue sticks

Art Supply Stores

- The Wastshed
- Blick Art Materials
- Michaels





Resource Mapping

Artmaking is not merely the act of making, but also considering how to fold that creativity into practical skill-building. As we work to amplify non-carceral approaches to mental healthcare, it is crucial to share alternative skills and resources when confronting, experiencing, or witnessing a mental health crisis.

Resource Mapping is a valuable tool to determine the specific people, physical safe spaces, as well as material and emotional resources available to us that can support us through a physical, emotional, or economic crisis. Pulling from pod mapping (Mingus, 2016), mapping community ecosystems of collective care (Perez-Darby & Ritchie, 2020), and mapping community defense (Hayes, 2025), these models prioritize relationship-building, trust, and strengthening the immediate communities we have access to that we can lean on for care, accountability, violence prevention, and crisis rapid response.

Resource mapping allows us to take inventory of what and who we already have access to, while also considering where we may still have gaps or which parts of our networks need strengthening. As we hold these community care art workshops, we can utilize resource mapping to develop ways in which we all can respond specifically to mental health challenges for ourselves and our neighbors.

Below are some questions to begin mapping out the resources you need when responding to a mental health emergency:

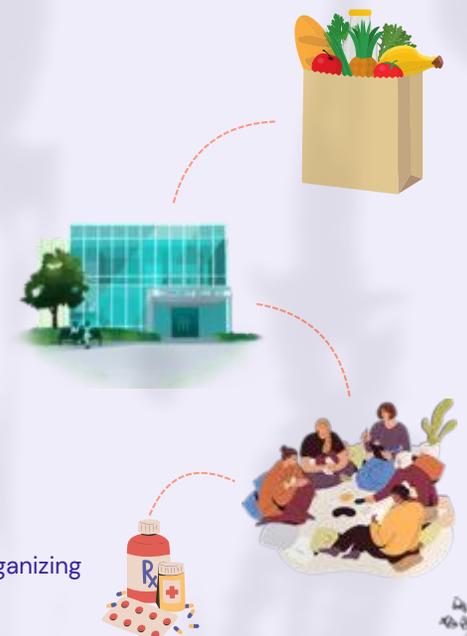
- What does safety feel, look, taste, sound, and smell like?
- What could some signs look like if you or others are experiencing a mental health emergency?
- How does your body respond when stressed?
- What helps your body and mind stay present and responsive during crisis?
- Who can I call when I experience or witness a mental health crisis?
- Which spaces in the neighborhood can I go to when I experience or witness a mental health crisis?

References

Hayes, K. (2025). Mapping Community Defense and Care in our Neighborhoods. Organizing My Thoughts.

Mingus, M. (2016). Pods & Pod Mapping. Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective.

Perez-Darby, S. & Ritchie, A.J. (2020). Mapping Community Ecosystems of Collective Care. Interrupting Criminalization.



Receiving Feedback

Receiving feedback is an important practice to ensuring we are always improving the workshops, both in how they are effective and enjoyable. After putting on a workshop, there are few ways to receive feedback to understand what went well and what parts did not land well for participants, including:



Debrief with Participants

Ask participants directly after the workshop what they enjoyed and where there can be improvements.



1:1 Conversation

Follow-up 1:1 conversations with involved participants; can also encourage deeper involvement with the campaign.



Online Survey

Share an online evaluation survey that participants can fill out and anonymously share their experiences.

Some sample questions to ask:

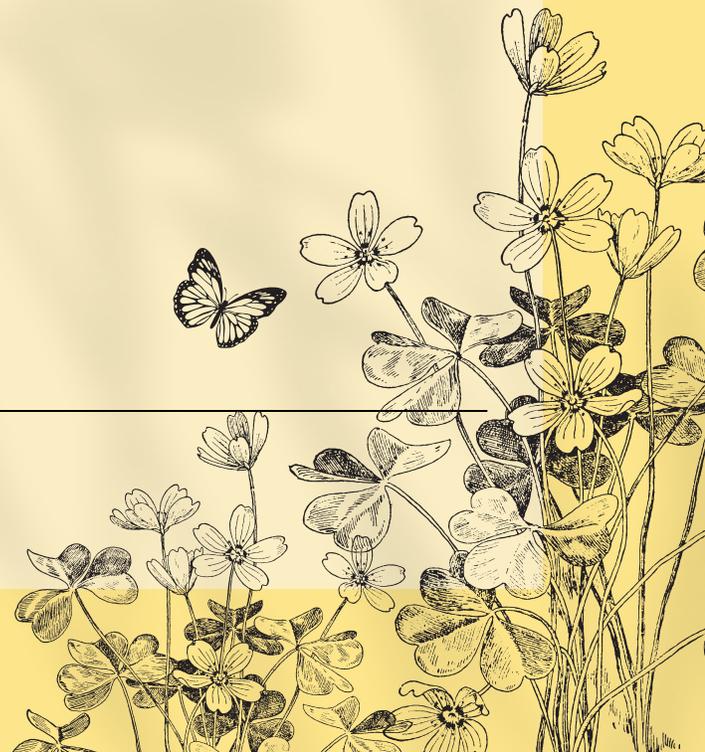
- Did you enjoy engaging in a community care art workshop?
- Did the facilitator nurture a safe and inviting workshop space?
- Did you feel supported during the artmaking activities?
- What did you learn about the TNT campaign during the workshop?
- How can we improve the overall workshop for the future?
- What other activities would you like to see for future workshops?





Artmaking Example

Zine-Making and Resource Mapping





Zine Making

Zine-making is one creative way to engage community members to begin resource mapping for themselves. The next two pages include a template for a resource mapping zine as well as a mental health resource list. They can be printed back-to-back and folded into a zine. With this zine, community members can learn to fold a zine and also engage in resource mapping together during a workshop!

Here are some basic ways to fold a zine using standard printer paper:



Resources for Networks of Care



TREATMENT NOT TRAUMA

Treatment Not Trauma

The Treatment Not Trauma (TNT) campaign envisions a public safety system rooted in care, not criminalization—where social workers, mental health professionals, and community responders are dispatched to crises instead of armed officers, and where neighborhood mental health clinics are fully funded and community-driven. The campaign builds on years of grassroots organizing to reimagine safety through public health, not punishment.

**Draw/write how you imagine
community care looks and feels
like when practiced!**

Resource Mapping

Resource Mapping is a valuable tool to determine the specific people, physical safe spaces, as well as material and emotional resources available to us that can support us through a physical, emotional, or economic crisis. The following zine will walk you through questions and resources to consider for yourself and your communities when facing difficult situations.

- Hayes, K. (2025). Mapping Community Defense and Care in our Neighborhoods. Organizing NY. Thoughts.
- Kingus, M. (2016). Pods & Pod Mapping. Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective.
- Perez-Darby, S. & Ritchie, A.J. (2020). Mapping Community Ecosystems of Collective Care. Interrupting Criminalization.

**Draw/write what safety feels,
looks, tastes, sounds, & smells
like?**

**Who can I call when I experience or
witness a mental health crisis?**

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•

**Which spaces in the neighborhood
can I go to when I experience or
witness a mental health crisis?**

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•

**We all react to crises in
different ways, how does your
body respond when stressed?**

**What helps your body and mind
stay present and responsive
during crisis?**

**What could some signs look like if
you or others are experiencing a
mental health emergency?**

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Mental Health Resources

North Side

North Park North Pulaski Health Clinic
5801 N Pulaski Rd
Monday, Tuesday, Friday 8:30am-4:30pm
Wednesday/Thursday: 8:30-7:30pm
(312) 744-1906

Englewood West 63rd Street Health Hub
641 W 63rd Street
Monday, Tuesday Friday 8:30am-4:30pm
Wednesday/Thursday: 8:30am-7:30pm
(312) 747-7496

Edgewater Branch
6000 N Broadway
Friday 9am-5pm
(312) 742-1945

Bronzeville East 43rd Street Health Hub
4314 S Cottage Grove
Monday Thursday Friday 8:30am-4:30pm
Tuesday/Wednesday: 8:30am-7:30pm
(312) 747-0036



South Side

West Side

Lawndale South Western Avenue Health Clinic
1105 S Western Ave
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:30am-4:30pm
Tuesday/Thursday 8:30am-7:30pm
(312) 746-5905

Woodson Regional Library
9525 S Halsted St
Tuesday 9am-4pm
(312) 747-6900

Legler Regional Library
115 S Pulaski Road
9am-5pm
(312) 746-7730

Roseland East 115th Street Health Hub
200 E 115 St, 2nd Floor
Monday/Tuesday: 8:30am-7:30pm
Wednesday/Thursday/Friday 8:30am-4:30pm
(312) 747-1090

Pilsen South Ashland Health Hub
1713 S Ashland Ave
Monday/Wednesday: 8:30am-7:30pm
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30am-4:30pm
(312) 743-7500

Greater Lawn West 55th Street Health Hub
4150 W 55th Street
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:30-4:30pm
Tuesday/Thursday 8:30am-7:30pm
(312) 747-1020

Southwest Side



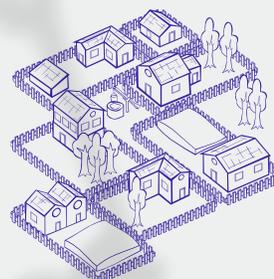
How to Get Involved

Support the Treatment Not Trauma Campaign



Make a safety plan for you and your community

Join a TNT regional team



Host your own workshop

Come to monthly TNT meetings



Make a donation to the campaign



**TREATMENT
NOT TRAUMA**





Grassroots Collaborative
Chicago Creatives for Justice



TREATMENT NOT TRAUMA

