

HOLISTIC SAFETY RESOURCE TOOLKIT

11 pieces you can read, listen to, or watch.

In addition to the newly released publication, [Do I Have the Right to Feel Safe? A Vision for Holistic Safety in Corrections](#), Chicago Beyond wanted to share more firsthand perspectives of correctional staff, people currently and formerly incarcerated, survivors of crime, their families, and their communities.

This list is a starting point. Countless other illuminating perspectives of people with lived experience have been documented. And no resource can replace having authentic, human conversations with people themselves.

QUICK STARTS:

[Leading with Conviction](#) by JustLeadershipUSA and the Center for Institutional and Social Change at Columbia Law School (5-minute read for executive summary). A report on the transformative role that formerly incarcerated leaders can play in reducing incarceration and rebuilding communities.

[Crime Survivors Speak](#) by the Alliance for Safety and Justice (5-minute read for the executive summary). The first ever national survey of survivors of crime on their experiences with and policy recommendations on the criminal legal system.

[I Am Not Okay](#) by One Voice United (5-minute read for executive summary). A whitepaper discussing the mental health crisis facing correctional officers and frontline staff.

[Silence Kills, and I am Not Okay](#) by One Voice United (9-minute watch). In gut-wrenching testimony, a veteran correctional officer shares the deadly impact of working in corrections and what it cost his family.

[Stories of Survivors](#) by Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice (3-minute read per story, 9 stories total). Firsthand accounts from nine different survivors of crime that showcase their individual healing journeys and the actions they took in response.

[The Change is Happening](#) by Amend (5-minute watch). A depiction of the ongoing culture change efforts at the North Dakota Department of Corrections to build trust, mutual respect, and humanity among people incarcerated and security staff.

[We Are Witnesses: Chicago](#) by The Marshall Project (5-minute watch per story, 15 stories total). An immersive short-video series presenting intimate portraits of Chicagoans who have been touched by the criminal justice system.

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GO DEEPER:

[Bird Uncaged: An Abolitionist's Freedom Song](#) by Marlon Peterson: Peterson challenges the typical “redemption” narrative and our assumptions about justice. With vulnerability and insight, he uncovers the many cages—from the daily violence and trauma of poverty, to policing, to enforced masculinity, and the brutality of incarceration—created and maintained by American society.

[Halfway Home: Race, Punishment, and the Afterlife of Mass Incarceration](#) by Rueben Miller: Informed by his experience as the son and brother of incarcerated men, Miller captures the stories of the men, women, and communities fighting against a system that is designed for them to fail. Halfway Home is a call to arms that reveals how laws, rules, and regulations extract a tangible cost not only from those working to rebuild their lives, but also our democracy.

[Letters to the Sons of Society](#) by Shaka Senghor: Senghor invites men everywhere on a journey of honesty and healing through this book of moving letters to his sons – one whom he is raising and the other whose childhood took place during his nineteen-year incarceration.

[Until We Reckon: Violence, Mass Incarceration, and a Road to Repair](#) by Danielle Sered: Sered asks us to reconsider the purposes of incarceration and argues that the needs of survivors of violent crime are better met by asking people who commit violence to accept responsibility for their actions and make amends in ways that are meaningful to those they have hurt – none of which happens in the context of a criminal trial or a prison sentence.

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