

2026

Care Is Infrastructure: A Healing Justice Agenda



**Ubuntu,
Collective Care,
Policy Outcomes**

Overview

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Introducing Transformative Changes

Our Mission

In the pursuit of justice and human liberation, we defy the status quo by centering the leadership and development of historically disenfranchised people in the social justice movement space.



Our Story

Black and Brown communities—especially youth—have long been excluded from shaping the systems that govern their lives. Too often, dominant institutions and even justice efforts reproduce harm by prioritizing control over care, individual responsibility over shared accountability, and punishment over repair.

Transformative Changes was founded in response to these conditions. We challenge approaches to policy and systems change that ignore culture, lived experience, and the collective nature of healing.

Our work centers historically disenfranchised people —especially young people —as leaders and co-creators of their own well-being. We believe justice must be rooted in relationship, dignity, and community care, not saviorship or surveillance.

Our Team



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Our Ubuntu Policy Frame

For Transformative Changes, policy reflects how a society understands responsibility and belonging. Rooted in Ubuntu—I am because we are—we believe public policy must be designed around interdependence, not isolation. When systems are built on individualism, they fracture communities and place responsibility for harm on people rather than on the structural conditions that produce inequity.

We advance policies grounded in collective well-being to build community care into public systems and create the conditions for long-term healing.

Ubuntu (Values)

Community wisdom, dignity, and shared humanity

Collective Care (Practice)

Care held in relationship—embedded in schools, neighborhoods, clinics, and communities

Policy Outcomes (Impact)

Systems that heal instead of harm



2026 Policy Priorities

Our belief: Healing is not an individual task. It is shaped by how systems support families, caregivers, elders, frontline workers, and future generations.

Intergenerational Healing & Care Justice

Reduce Medicaid and SNAP churn by funding Community Health Workers and community-based enrollment and retention support

Protect access to healthcare and nutrition, including for immigrant families, by reducing administrative barriers and offsetting federal cuts

Strengthen community safety-net providers, including federally qualified health centers and free clinics

Expand Food Is Medicine strategies that connect healthcare, local food systems, and families

Protect birthing people and caregivers from punitive responses to substance use by prioritizing family-centered plans of care over criminalization

Policy outcome: Families stay connected to care, supported across generations, and rooted in dignity—not crisis.



2026 Policy Priorities

Our belief: Schools should be places of belonging, care, and leadership—not punishment or control.

Youth & Education Justice

Guarantee universal access to school meals so students can learn nourished and ready

Advance restorative and healing-centered discipline, reducing exclusion and dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline

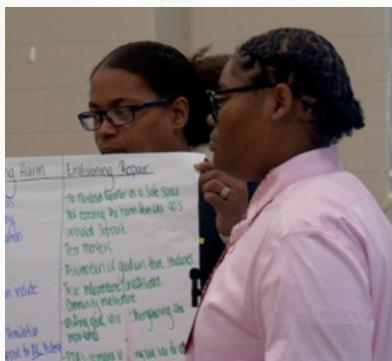
Invest in school-based health and mental health to address root causes of distress

Direct resources to students facing the greatest barriers, including students with disabilities and English learners

Fully resource public schools so opportunity is not determined by zip code

Expand Community Schools as culturally relevant hubs of care, coordination, and family engagement

Policy outcome: Young people remain connected to learning, supported by care-based systems, and empowered as leaders.



2026 Policy Priorities

Our belief: Where people live, and whether they can remain rooted, shapes health, education, and collective stability.

Housing & Ecological Justice

Prevent displacement by strengthening tenant protections and eviction safeguards

Hold landlords accountable for providing safe, habitable housing

Expand housing supports for families most at risk of instability

Reduce energy burden through community-based solar, weatherization, and utility protections

Protect families from environmental toxins by requiring cumulative-impact review before permitting new pollution sources in overburdened communities

Policy outcome: Communities remain housed, healthy, and able to heal in place.



2026 Policy Priorities

Our belief: Culture is not an accessory to policy—it is how people make meaning, build connection, and imagine new futures.

Cultural Organizing & Creative Justice

Invest in youth-led arts, storytelling, and cultural programs that support healing and identity

Support culturally grounded afterschool and community spaces that foster belonging

Create participatory pathways for story, testimony, and lived experience to meaningfully inform policy

Our Practice Includes



Youth storytelling & narrative strategy.



Healing circles & restorative community dialogue.



Participatory research & campaigns tied directly to policy change

Policy outcome: Communities shape the narrative and the policy about their own lives.



2026 Policy Priorities

Our belief: Safety grows from relationship, care, and opportunity—not fear or punishment.

Abolition & Community Justice

Defend immigrant families from criminalization, detention, and separation

Protect personal data from misuse, surveillance, and political targeting

Prevent abuse of state power through unchecked emergency or military deployment

Expand community-based violence prevention and credible messenger programs

Invest in care-centered crisis response models that reduce harm without criminalization

Advance culturally-relevant afterschool organizations and interventions for youth violence

Policy outcome: Communities experience safety through care, not control.



How We Advance Policy

Across all issue areas, Transformative Changes advances policy that is:



Community Led

Shaped by those most impacted and rooted in lived experience.



Culturally-Grounded

Honoring ancestral knowledge, identity, and community wisdom.



Relational & Accountable

Building trust through repair, responsibility, and care.



Focused on Prevention & Repair

Addressing root causes and healing harm before it escalates.



Designed for Long-Term Healing

Strengthening systems that sustain collective well-being over time.

Get Involved

We collaborate with organizers, educators, healers, advocates, and policymakers who believe care belongs at the center of governance.



Safer & Restorative Schools

Led by the Black Youth Mental Health Collaborative. Join as a partner, youth, or volunteer.



Read Our Report

Breaking the Bars: Creating Safe & Restorative Schools in VA.



Crisis-to-Care Cohort

A cohort of BIPOC community organizers, healers, advocates, and frontline workers shifting from crisis to care.



Rapid Responders Network

Become a part of Virginia's statewide Rapid Responders Network co-created by crisis to care participants.



Get Involved

Join our board, attend events, view our initiatives, donate, or shop.

Voices of Power



At fourteen, one choice nearly made my whole future disappear. I didn't need punishment—I needed support, safety, and someone to speak up for me. I'm sharing my story because no young person should be pushed out of school instead of being given the chance to grow, heal, and try again.

— Mikayla Pearson, Black Youth Mental Health Collaborative Participant



Healing-centered leadership means creating spaces where people feel safe, respected, and fully human while actively confronting the structural barriers that exclude and harm them.

It requires honoring lived experience, cultural strength, and belonging, and advocating for systems that nurture rather than deplete our communities.

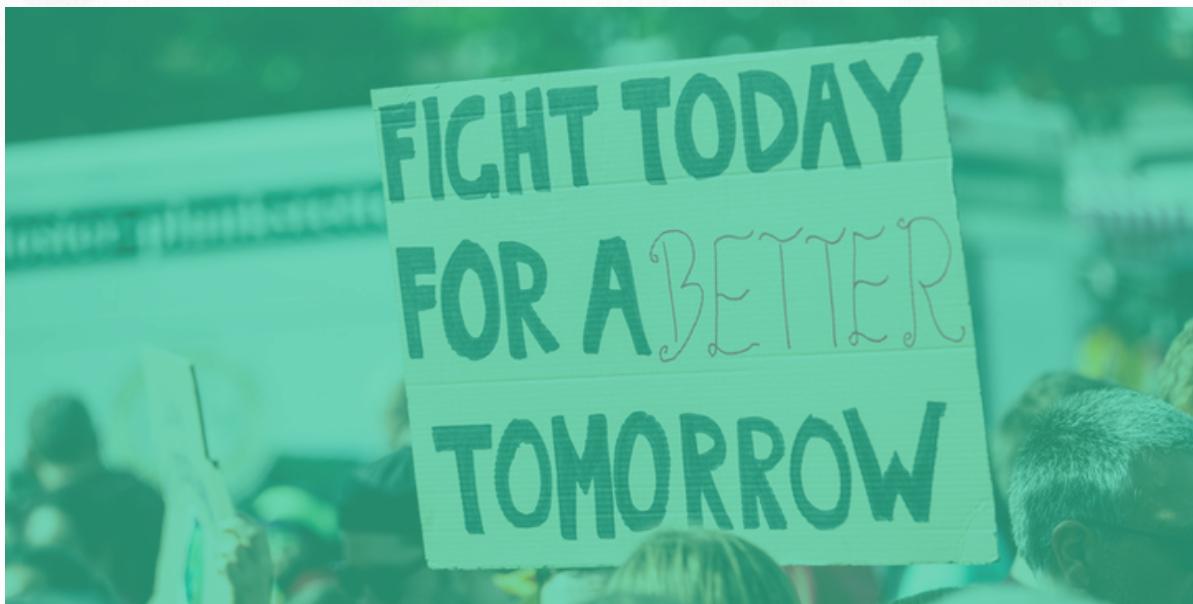
— Veronica Tovar-Castro, Crisis-to-Care: Healing-Centered People of the Global Majority Cohort



I recognized structural inequity when people were denied basic necessities, because systems made housing unaffordable, transportation inaccessible, and safe food, water, and healthcare out of reach. Justice is about whether people truly have choices and can move through the world with safety and dignity.

— Betty Borden, Crisis-to-Care: Healing-Centered People of the Global Majority Cohort

Get To Know Us More!



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