



Conversation with people with lived experience with the criminal justice system



On May 9, 2024, Office of Community Safety (OCS) staff facilitated a conversation with people with lived experience with the criminal justice system at Better Futures. The event included 21 individuals who identified as male and primarily African American with one individual identifying as Indigenous American/Native American or Alaskan Native.

After discussing the concept of community safety centers, participants engaged in conversation about what services are important in a community safety center. The group focused on the South Minneapolis Community Safety Center.

Individuals shared what services are important to them and concerns around safety.

The following social services received the most support:

- Mental health
 - Therapist on site available for walk in visits or to schedule an appointment
 - Affordable access to mental health practitioners
 - “If you get your mental health in order things will fall into place.”
 - “If you’re in a good place, then you can help other people too.”
- Affordable Housing
 - Help finding and getting housing
 - Well-rounded support that doesn’t end once you get housing
 - Remove barrier of being shut out and denied because of a felony conviction
 - Housing literacy
 - Know your rights when signing a lease
- Mentoring
 - Life coaches
 - Available service to both adults and youth
 - Provide opportunities for members of the community to become mentors
- Youth services
- Food security

The top building uses and resources were:

- Legal services
- Medical services
- Space for supervised parental visits
- Appeal hearings
- Childcare for people utilizing services in the center

Participants also had other suggestions:

- Re-entry support
- Ongoing training for officers around racism
- Community representatives – culturally specific representatives who are able to speak on issues or concerns that impact a specific community