

**Session 10**  
**Violence In The Community**

**Goals**

- Students will discuss how personal experiences of loss and grief can affect survivors.
- Students will discuss various ways to cope with loss and grief.
- Students will discuss ways to help cope with loss and grief, and specifically, with the aftermath of violence.
- Students will use writing, or other creative methods, as a vehicle for coping and remembrance.

**Materials**

Activity 1  
Activity 2  
Activity 3

**Procedure**

Greet the students. Wait until the students are seated and quiet. Briefly describe the goals of today's lesson. Reintroduce yourself to the students if necessary. Have one of the students in the class do a recap of the last lesson.

**Script**

In today's society violence seems to touch everyone's life in some way, shape or form. Situations involving violence takes place in our homes, schools and communities. Stories of violence are repeatedly found in games, movies and music.

Unfortunately, many teenagers have to deal with violence up close. It helps if you can find positive ways to cope. In this lesson, we will look at constructive ways that students have found to handle the violence that touches their lives.

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**Activity 1: Hash'im's Sister**

Sophia tells the story of what happened to her family when her older brother was killed. The impact of this loss on her and her family was devastating. Writing can be a way to heal after a terrible loss.

Read Sophia's story and answer the questions listed below.

**Activity 2: The Obituary**

When reading the Obituary section of the newspaper, it is startling to come across an age lower than 20. Teenagers don't belong on an obituary page. The truth is that violence in our community is taking more and more young people. When reading a young person's obituary you are struck by how many lives will change because of this loss.

Have you ever thought of what information is put in an obituary? An obituary includes a person's name, age, day and date of death and date of birth. It includes the place of death and who was with the person when they died. It tells of who preceded the person in death. It also can include career information and a person's school history. Then the survivors are listed. Everyone from your immediate family and siblings to your great aunts and uncles are listed.

Script your own obituary below. Use the back of the form if necessary.

**Activity 3: How To Deal With Grief**

After a violent tragedy life then becomes about the survivors. Life becomes about those who are left behind. These are the lives that are impacted and must cope with the loss in some way, shape or form.

Get in groups of 3 or 4 and discuss the increase in teen death due to violence. Consider the ways to deal with grief listed below. Do you agree with the advice given? Can you add some healthy strategies to this list? Try to add at least 3 more strategies to the list.

Be prepared to share your group's strategies with the rest of the class.

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**Activity 4: Virginia Hero**

**Lott Cary** (1780-November 10, 1828) was an African American slave, born in Charles City County, Virginia. He became a free man, Baptist minister, and physician, and was instrumental in the founding of the Colony of Liberia in Africa. He also became the first American Baptist missionary to Africa.

Lott Cary was born into humble surroundings in Charles City County, Virginia. It soon became apparent that he was exceptionally bright and energetic. In 1804, his owner, John Bowry, a Methodist minister, hired Cary out in the City of Richmond about 25 miles away from his home, where he joined the First Baptist Church of Richmond in 1807. Beginning his education by learning to read the Bible, Cary later attended a small school for slaves made up of twenty young men taught by Deacon William Crane who had come from Newark, New Jersey in 1812, opened a shoe store and joined the First Baptist Church. Crane's school met three evenings each week to learn reading, writing, arithmetic and the Bible.

As he became educated, Lott Cary rose from working as a common laborer to become one of the best shipping-clerks in the Richmond tobacco warehouses along Tobacco Row. Because of his diligent and valuable work, Cary was often rewarded by his master with five-dollar notes. He was also permitted to collect and sell small bags of waste tobacco for his own profit. With this money, in 1813, he purchased his own freedom and that of his two children for \$850. However, as a free man, he continued to be both industrious and frugal with his money, and he continued to work in Richmond. He became a Baptist minister in 1819.

The remarkable story of Lott Cary has been often used as inspiration for young African-American school children. Despite starting life as a common slave in a rural county with few apparent opportunities, he became educated and industrious, bought his own freedom, became both a minister and a physician, and helped found a whole new country.

His mission and memory have been kept alive through the work of the Lott Cary Baptist Foreign Mission Convention, based in Washington, DC. The church he founded in Monrovia celebrated its 175th anniversary in 2001. **Lott Cary Road** in Charles City County is named for him. The **Lott Cary House**, where he was born as a slave, is a historical location (although the structure is still in use as a private residence). It is marked by a Virginia historical marker, **V27 Lott Cary Birthplace**, which is located at the intersection of Virginia State Highways 155 and 602. In his honor, the Board of Supervisors of James City County, Virginia (not far from his place of birth) declared March 21, 2001, to be **Lott Cary Day** in the county.

**Activity 5: Teen Health and Safety**

How Can I Help A Friend Who Cuts?

The first thing is to be realistic about what you can achieve: As with any damaging behavior some people just may not be ready to acknowledge the problem and stop. So don't put too much pressure on yourself. Your friends problem could be a long-standing one that requires help from a professional

therapist or counselor. Therapists who specialize in treating adolescents are often experienced in working with people who self-harm, and can also help with other issues or emotional pain they might have.

- Talk about it.
- Tell someone.
- Help your friend find resources.
- Help your friend find alternatives to cutting.
- Acknowledge your friend's pain.
- Be a good role model.
- Avoid delivering an ultimatum.
- Avoid accidentally reinforcing the behavior.
- Do not join in.