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The May 14 mass shooting in Buffalo is a sobering reminder of the pervasiveness of racial violence and trauma in America.

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When will the pain go away? Why does this keep happening? When will it end? These are questions youth and caregivers alike in the groups at Uplift Center for Grieving Children ask as they grapple with difficult emotions after hearing of the horrific mass shooting in Buffalo, NY. "I struggled with whether I should tell my child. I mean, how do you tell them people died while shopping in a market because of the color of their skin?"

The truth is that the pain, also known as grief, never goes away. We simply learn how to manage it by drawing strength from our loved ones, community, faith/spirituality, and other resources that we view as sources of comfort and support. This grief is also based in a sobering reality: the racially motivated attack in Buffalo, New York on the 14th, in which 10 Black people were killed and three were injured, is this year's deadliest attack to date.

It is reasonable to refer to the attack in Buffalo as both a hate crime and an act of terrorism, because it elicits fear, anger, and sadness – especially among the local Black community in western New York and Black communities around the US, including Philadelphia.

The staff at Uplift are firmly in solidarity with families in Buffalo grieving their loved ones, as the courage and strength they show in their grief echoes what we see locally in the families who give us permission to work with them. The youth and caregivers who attend our groups are primarily Black, with 85% of youth and caregivers represented, a demographic close to Buffalo's East Side neighborhood. Many participants have already experienced a death in their family due to violence: 60% of the youth in school grief groups and 40% in our Family Services grief groups have lost a loved one to homicide. Others have witnessed a loved one die due to illnesses including COVID, which has disproportionately affected Black Philadelphians.

For many Black families, the Buffalo attack and the emotions and physical reactions stirred by it are unfairly familiar and are amplified by the traumas of systemic racialized violence. During the current news cycle of racialized violence, self-care practices are crucial for caregivers, particularly those supporting youth or family members. Below, we offer a few tips and resources gathered by Uplift's clinical staff:

- Drink cold water. Hydration is key to eliminating stress hormones from your body, and cold water can calm the brain if it is in a traumatized or crisis state.
- Take deep breaths OUT. Breathing in normally, and then pushing air out for as long as possible can slow your body down by calming your central nervous system.
- Exercise large muscle groups to get the trauma out of your body and ground yourself. Make time for a physical activity you enjoy, whether running, playing, dancing, or doing yoga.
- Turn off the news and stop reading the paper or electronic media as much as possible. Even while staying informed, you are allowed to take a break.
- Find your support system, whether it be friends, religious/faith community, family, existing support group, or your therapist. With them, discuss fears, feelings, and safety plans. Healing grows in community.

Addressing and deterring mass shootings requires many streams of action. It is vital to include anti-violence groups, such as Uplift partner Network of Neighbors. We encourage adequate funding for grief and mental health community supports for trauma, including our work at Uplift and that of Black-led groups including Moms Bonded By Grief, EMIR Healing Center, and YEAH Philly. We also want readers to understand that mass shootings, like the tragedy that unfolded in Buffalo, are symptomatic of white supremacist ideology and affect everyone's quality of life. It is imperative to stand against it in whichever actions we take in deterring violence.

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