

# Community Youth Against Violence (CYAV) Graveyard Therapy Program

Graveyard Therapy Program is designed for first-time offenders and ungovernable youth. CYAV-Graveyard Therapy Initiative will partner with Miami-Dade Public School, Juvenile Justice and Miami-Dade County State Attorney Office to establish at least three (3) locations for youth to be assigned and will conduct clean-up operations whereas youth will maintain designated graveyards – in the Brownsville, Opa Locka and South Dade areas.

1. Graveyard Therapy approach is to slow-down minds of our youth so during group/individual counseling sessions can be an ideal choice and the ability to address and diffuse the problems (Stopping the Violence) and making positive changes in your life.
2. Graveyard Therapy Program will act as a support network of resources and information. Also it will provide sounding boards to youth to assist with changing behaviors and lifestyles.
3. Graveyard Therapy Program was developed to eliminate and/or reduce violence in homes, schools and communities in order for our youth to have longevity, success and rewarding lifestyles.
4. Graveyard Therapy Program was designed reduce and/or eliminate our youth from the court system, while introducing them to positive social interactions such as volunteering in the communities, community agencies, private businesses and private and public schools.
5. Graveyard Therapy Program will assist in a safe learning environment and space; because we know that you are not able to learn in violent settings.

The Graveyard Therapy Program objective is to target a specific problem, stopping the youth violence in the homes, schools and communities. In addition, part two of this group will focus more on life coaching for example solving conflicts peacefully, anger management, building self-esteem, how to get along at home, school and community, improving social skills, helping youths deal with other issues such as respecting authorities, stealing, drug usage, dress code, curfews, the importance of education, careers, an academic assistance (tutoring) and fun and games. Groups will also assist with grief counseling (experienced loss), whether it be a sibling, friend, family member and/or suicide.

## Program's Expectations:

The program will work with up to a 75 to 100 youths, and families this contractual period. The youth is enrolled in the program for 14-16 weeks. The groups will be held for two hours every Mondays thru Thursdays, 4pm to 6pm, it will include fieldtrips and other outside activities related to 'Stopping the Violence'. This program will also implement Parenting Skills Training (12 weeks) to assist with training-up their children in the way they should go with the help of the village. The village is made up of homes, schools, churches, community centers, and optimist clubs, private and public businesses (It takes a Village to Raise a Child). The Parenting Skills Training will be held once a week; there will be two graduation ceremonies to be held June and December of each year. During the ceremony there will be guest speakers, certificates, an open forum and refreshments. Group therapy involves one or more counselors who will the lead group of no more than 15 to 20 youth per session. This therapy will include any youth that need individual and/or family therapy, in addition to groups therapy, while others youth may participate in groups only.

Suggested topics for group and individual counseling, information, education, activities and information to 'Stop the Violence' and live the American Dream:

- \*Academic Excellence & Career Preparedness (Tutoring)*
- \*Anger Management*
- \*Bereavement Counseling (Death & Dying)*
- \*Building Self-Esteem*
- \*Community Engagement & Service*
- \*Do You Know There Will Be An Enforced Curfew*
- \*Family Violence*
- \*Good Hygiene, Housekeeping & Dress Code*
- \*Good Nutrition*
- \*How to Get Along at Home, School, & Community*
- \*Importance of Following Rules and Regulations*
- \*Negative Behaviors Vs Good Manners*
- \*Respecting All Authorities*
- \*Say No To Drugs – Using & Selling*
- \*Say No To Stealing*
- \*Solving Conflicts Peacefully*
- \*Stop the Bullying*
- \*Stop the Violence*
- \*Theft Counseling and Other Subjects*
- \*Fun & Games*
- \*Open Forum*



# How Youth & Family Register?

1. Referrals will come via court orders, schools, families, churches, mental health and medical centers and other avenues of community agencies, outreach programs and walk-ins will be welcome.
2. Youth (17 and under) and guardians will complete registration form by Intake Worker.
3. Schedule an enrollment appointment with Intake Worker.
4. Keep scheduled appointment or re-schedule appointment within 24 hours Intake Worker.
5. Social Worker will conduct psychosocial assessment and individual treatment plan with each family and schedule for next group session.
6. Youth will attend sessions two hours Mondays thru Thursdays for 16 weeks.

## Benefits of this Group Therapy

Participating in a group of friends, associates, classmates, schoolmates and/or strangers may seem intimidating at first, but this therapeutic group will provide assistances in understanding why it is so important to be an instrument in stopping the violence and to gain resources and information in becoming an independent, self-sufficient, productive law abiding citizen – the American dream. According to research, “Psychologists say, in fact, that group members are almost always surprised by how rewarding the group experience can be.”

- 1) These groups will act as a support network of resources and information and sounding board.
- 2) The youth and counselors will often help you come up with specific ideas for improving a difficult situation or life challenge, and hold you accountable along the way.
- 3) Frequently sharing, discussing and listening to each other motivation and helps the youths to put their own problems/concerns/issues in perspective.
- 4) Majority of our youths will experience some mental challenge(s), but limited number of the youths will speak openly about this particular issue especially with others they don't have a relationship with.
- 5) Often they may feel like they are the only one struggling — but we know majority of our youths carries some mental challenges. It can be a refreshing to see and hear others discussing that they too are going through challenges, and see that they are not alone.
- 6) Having a diverse group offers a variety of participants, which is an essential benefit of group therapy. We all have different characters and upbringings, and they get the chance to see and hear how they handle situations in different ways, than their own. By seeing and hearing how other youth/friends/family tackle problems and make positive changes, they too can learn different methods/processes/strategies for facing their own concerns/issues/challenges.
- 7) After successful completion of the program, a Certificate of Completion and community hours will be awarded for graduation, ceremony and luncheon or early

dinner, donations from community sponsors such as Publix, Walmart, and other private, public and community sectors.

## How Groups Work and is Group Therapy Enough

Groups usually work best when members experience similar difficulties and function at similar levels age, grade, mixed gender, nationality, ethnicities, philosophies, values, beliefs, and other relates ideals and cultures.

Many people find it's helpful to participate in both group therapy and individual therapy. Participating in both types of psychotherapy can boost your chances of making valuable and lasting changes. If you've been involved in individual psychotherapy and your progress has stalled, joining a group may jump-start your personal growth.

### **Will the Groups be Confidential?**

Confidentiality is an important part of the ground rules for group therapy. However, there's no absolute guarantee of privacy when sharing with others, so use common sense when revealing personal information. That said; remember that you're not the only one sharing your personal story. Groups work best where there is open and honest communication between members. Group members will start out as strangers, but in a short amount of time, they'll most likely view them as a valuable and trusted source of support and genuine information.

## Other Support and Benefits:

Graveyard therapy sessions offer benefits beyond informal self-help and support groups. These therapy sessions are led by one or more counselors and/or guest speakers with specialized training, skills and education. They will teach youth proven strategies for managing specific challenges/problems/issues. The sessions, according to the curriculum are designed for 'Stopping the Violence' group, the counselor will describe scientific tested strategies for 'Stopping the Violence' and other topics. These tested strategies guidance will assist to make the most of the group's therapy experiences, by slowing down the impulsive actions/decisions/thoughts patterns and assisting and help gain knowledge, information and resources in order to achieve the desires of their hearts.

# **How Do Youth and Family Join the Group:**

- 1) The youth and/or parents join the group - via referral by Juvenile Justice System, schools, courts, walk-ins, families, mental health; also local churches, community action agencies, hospitals and medical centers, and other resources.**
- 2) As mention earlier, each youth and parent/guardians will complete intake application, which will include the following forms: intake, confidentially, release of information, agreement to participate and authorization to pull student volunteers out of school, psychosocial records and other necessary documentations.**
- 3) Youth and their family members will be given an overview of the program and expectations, pros and cons, pre-tests and post-test, surveys, answer questions, etc.**

After 16 group sessions the youth will be presented a temporary Certificate of Completion and asked to return to volunteer in the 2<sup>nd</sup> session as guest/guest speaker. Returning for the ceremony program (June or December), he/she will walk across the stage, receive the authentic Certificate of Completion. While family, friends and other group members watch and cheer them on during the ceremony, lunch or an early dinner will be served and donations will be presented to youth and families.

# Parenting Skills Training Sessions

Suggested topics for parents:

- \*Budgeting Assets & Expenses*
- \*Consequences & Rewards*
- \*Family Night Meeting (Weekly)*
- \*Family Violence & Child Abuse*
- \*Following Laws & Rules*
- \*Getting Along at Home*
- \*Good Housekeeping & Nutrition & Health & Dress Code*
- \*HIV/AIDS/STDs Presentations (Parents & Children)*
- \*How to Resolve Problems Peacefully*
- \*Parents Responsibilities*
- \*Stages of Development – Erik Erikson*
- \*Substance Abuse*
- \*Talking Sex Education With Children*
- \*The American Dream – Family, Education, Religion, Rights, etc*
- \*Values & Beliefs*
- \*What is a Family*



# Suggested Material for Assisting Youth with Stopping the Violence:

## Youth Violence: Prevention Strategies

- [Effective and Promising Programs](#)
- [Prevention Guidance and Planning Tools](#)
- [Other Resources](#)

Youth violence is a serious problem that can have lasting harmful effects on victims and their family, friends, and communities. The goal for youth violence prevention is simple—to stop youth violence from happening in the first place. But the solutions are as complex as the problem.

Prevention efforts should aim to reduce factors that place youth at risk for perpetrating violence, and promote factors that protect youth at risk for violence. In addition, prevention should address all types of influences on youth violence: individual, relationship, community, and society. Effective prevention strategies are necessary to promote awareness about youth violence and to foster the commitment to social change.

Youth violence prevention—one of the oldest fields in violence—continues to advance rapidly. Many prevention tools have been developed and implemented; many of these prevention programs and strategies have been evaluated, and found to be effective at preventing violence and related behaviors among youth. Such evidence-based programs have shown positive effects in rigorous evaluations.

## Effective and Promising Programs that is evidenced Base

- [Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere \(STRYVE\) Strategy Selector Tool](#)  
STRYVE is a national initiative led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prevent youth violence. The STRYVE Strategy Selector Tool pulls together information from multiple sources to help communities connect with evidence-based youth violence prevention approaches. The strategies included have been rigorously evaluated and shown to impact factors for youth violence and/or lower the occurrence of youth violence.
- [The Community Guide for Violence Prevention](#)  
Developed by the Task Force for Community Preventive Services, a nonfederal group of experts in public health and prevention, the Community Guide includes recommendations for preventing youth violence based on systematic reviews of evidence-based strategies.

- [The National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices \(NREPP\)](#)  
The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) supports NREPP to help connect the public to information about evidence-based approaches that promote mental health, prevent substance abuse, and treat mental health and substance abuse. The registry includes interventions with violence outcomes.
- [Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development](#)  
Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development is an online resource for communities to learn more about model or promising strategies that reduce youth violence or key risk factors for violence, and promote healthy youth behavior and relationships.
- [Crimesolutions.gov](#)  
The U.S. Department of Justice developed this resource to provide practitioners and policy makers with information about effective strategies in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and victim services. Some of the identified programs are prevention strategies that are consistent with the public health approach to youth violence prevention.

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## **Prevention Guidance and Planning Tools**

- [Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere \(STRYVE\) Online](#)  
STRYVE is a national initiative led by CDC to prevent youth violence. Components of STRYVE, such as STRYVE Online, assist communities with developing and implementing comprehensive plans to prevent youth violence. Communities are connected to tools that help them convene partners, use data to design local prevention approaches, select evidence-based strategies, and conduct evaluations to help ensure community youth violence prevention goals are being achieved. STRYVE helps communities take a public health approach to preventing youth violence—stopping it before it even starts.
- [Health Curriculum Analysis Tool \(HECAT\)](#)  
The HECAT contains guidance, appraisal tools, and resources to help schools conduct an analysis of health education curricula based on the National Health Education Standards and CDC's Characteristics of an Effective Health Education Curriculum. The results can help schools select or develop curriculum to address a number of topics, including violence prevention.
- [School Health Index \(SHI\)](#)  
SHI is a self-assessment and planning tool that enables a school to identify the strengths and weaknesses of its health and safety policies and programs; develop an action plan for improving student health and safety; and involve teachers, parents, students, and the community in improving school services.



# CYAV Safe Haven Church “Program”

The Safe Haven Church Project goal is designed for collaborative partners with Southern Christen Leadership Council of Miami Dade County (SCLC) to assure safety (safe haven/place) for our youth and families of any gun violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and/or any other abuse/violence, to include reporting crimes. The consenting organizations will share resources to accomplish mutual goals to reduce and/or stop so much and senseless violence and the death of our love ones. The programs CYAV, SCLC and other partners will work parallel with each other with providing a safe place (assigned churches) to drop off our youth to be picked up by their parents/guardians. The programs will collaborate with Local Police Departments to implement Teen Curfew designed to keep youth out of night-time dangerous situations. The programs will also be a safe place to drop off guns and other weapons. Also, CYAV will assist SCLC with media advertisement of the Safe Haven Churches via radio and bill board announcements will aid in community awareness of the curfew, assisting in the enforcement, will ,understanding today’s youth.

CYAV with SCLC, Miami Dade, City of Miami, Opa Locka and Miami Gardens Police has established at least eight (8) churches as Safe Haven Churches; and will coordinate training with churches and police volunteers.

## CYAV Student Council Program

In addition, SCLC will work along with CYAV and their Student Council Program which is implemented in Miami-Dade Public Schools where students will run the coalition meetings with a C.Y.A.V. Mentor designed to target Youth Crime Reduction. The CYAV-Student will meet monthly with other CYAV High School groups to discuss and implement Crime Reduction Strategies and gun violence. C.Y.A.V. partners will establish lines of communication with parents in regard to nurturing their youth. C.Y.A.V and other partners will also provide information on available partners to help with issues other than crime including, counseling sessions of life skills. Also youth will participate in community activities pertaining to youth violence.....