

Barbershop Sessions Provide Mental Health Support for Black Californians

Hundreds of people have benefited from group therapy sessions at California barbershops.

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With help from the [Greater Sacramento Urban League](#) (GSUL), California barbershops are providing safe spaces for Black men to cope with [mental health](#) issues, [Yahoo! News](#) reports. The nonprofit GSUL aims to educate and empower African Americans.

Nearly one in seven adults in [California](#) experience mental health issues, according to the [California Health Care Almanac](#). In 2022, close to two thirds of California adults with a mental illness and two thirds of adolescents with major depressive episodes did not receive treatment. What's more, Black adults had the second highest rate of serious mental illness, at 5.3%.

Kendall Robinson, a barber at Five Starr Fades with decades of experience cutting Black men's hair and listening to them discuss various issues, told Yahoo!: "The barbershop is one of the most safe places you can go and feel relaxed."

Robinson and GSUL host monthly evening group therapy sessions called Cut to the Chase. As a person with vitiligo, a chronic autoimmune disorder that causes patches of skin to lose pigment, Robinson has found the sessions personally beneficial.

"I have to look at the man in the mirror and say, 'Man, I don't like what I look like today,'" Robinson said. "But today, because of the men I'm affiliated with, I have better coping skills now."

In just six months, the program has supported over 450 people in its two locations, according to GSUL's chief impact officer Troy Williams, PhD.

"We knew that there was a decline in mental health, and we knew that our community needed access to mental health services," Williams said. "So eventually, when we created this program, we absolutely knew that the turnout would be phenomenal."

The success of the program has inspired GSUL and Robinson to provide sessions in salons for Black women soon.

To read more, click [#Mental Health](#). There, you'll find headlines such as "[Five Tips for Talking With](#)

[a Health Care Provider About Your Mental Health](#),” [“Taraji P. Henson’s Foundation and Kate Spade New York Expand Mental Health Services for Women at HBCUs”](#) and [“Physicians Increasingly Addressing Mental Health Concerns.”](#)

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