

**The Wellbeing Partners:
Head to Heart
Outcome Evaluation Findings**

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Evaluation Purpose

The evaluator collaborated with The Wellbeing Partners (TWP) to complete an outcome evaluation of the Head to Heart program using a participatory approach in which TWP staff were actively involved in the evaluation planning and data collection. To accomplish the evaluation, the evaluator held regularly scheduled meetings with program staff, analyzed outcome data via survey, and interviewed barbers and stylists to assist with triangulating the data.

Background: Barbershops for Health

Black Americans only represent 12% of the U.S. population yet almost 20% experience mental health disorders (Jalloh et al., 2022). This number may be underreported due to the lack of access to treatment and services. Mental health disparities have been linked to under recognition by clinicians and implicit racial discrimination during their visits. In addition, there is a grave mistrust of the healthcare system by Black Americans because of racial discrimination, undertreatment, and non-rationally concordant providers (Jalloh et al., 2022). A notable and highly publicized example of this mistrust is the Tuskegee syphilis study in which 400 Black males with untreated syphilis went untreated for years when treatment was available. This example, along with others, may have led Black Americans to seek alternative approaches to addressing health including mental health. Many of these coping mechanisms may be more detrimental than helpful. Currently, homicide and suicide are in the top three causes of death for Black males under 35 in the U.S. (Gelzhiser & Lewis, 2023). This statistic among others provides a significant reason to explore and identify novel approaches and settings to promote mental and physical health and wellbeing for Black Americans, but specifically Black men.

The barbershop is a staple of the Black community, which provides a location for cultural exchange, discussion, and psychological connection among Black men. It is also a safe space for culturally responsive engagement without judgement, fear, or stigma. Researchers have started to scratch the surface of partnering with barbershops to deliver health interventions such as hypertension (Victor et al., 2018) and diabetes care (Osorio et al., 2020) – two prevalent and preventable chronic conditions among Black Americans. More recently, there has been more interest engaging barbershops in mental health interventions (Gelzhiser & Lewis, 2023; Jalloh et al., 2022; Curry et al., 2022).

Program Overview

The Head to Heart program is a culturally specific program designed to train Black barbers and stylists to be mental health advocates for their clients by listening and providing mental health resources when necessary. The program consists of a two-day evidence-informed training entitled *Mental Health First Aid*, which is designed to teach trainees how to identify signs and symptoms of mental well-being and actions to take in those circumstances. In addition to receiving this training, the barbers/stylists also received culturally responsive training as mental health responders by a licensed mental health specialist. After the program was completed, barbers and stylist spent the next 3-months implementing the knowledge and skills learned in the program to be mental health advocates. After barbers/stylists interacted with their clients, they asked each client to complete the Head to Heart Survey to share about their experiences interacting with their barber/stylist about their personal situation(s).

Evaluation Methods

Outcome Evaluation

The outcome evaluation consisted of an assessment of one (1) knowledge quiz administered at the end of the *Mental Health First Aid* training, and one (1) post survey completed by the clients of the barbers/stylist who participated in the Head to Heart program. A total of four (4) barbers and one (1) stylist (N=5) completed the

program. A total of 28 clients completed the survey during the evaluation period (September to November 2023).

The outcome measurement tool was developed in partnership with TWP staff (See *Appendix 2*). In partnership with the TWP Director, we decided to focus on surveying the clients to assess the success of the training. A 31-item survey was developed to assess interactions between the clients and the barbers/stylists, and feedback about the mental health resources their barber/stylist may have provided to them. (See *Appendix 1*). Questions related to interaction were on a dichotomous scale (i.e., ‘Yes’ or ‘No’), a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 with ‘1’ being ‘Strongly disagree’ and ‘4’ being ‘Strongly agree,’ or an open-ended question (e.g., Why didn’t you feel comfortable discussing your personal situation with your barber/stylist?). To assess the mental health resources provided during their appointment, clients were asked a series of questions with responses on a dichotomous (e.g., Did your barber/stylist provide you with mental health resources?) or Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 with ‘1’ being ‘Strongly disagree’ and ‘4’ being ‘Strongly agree (e.g., I used the mental health resources/materials given to me by my barber/stylist), or open-ended questions (e.g., What resources did your barber/stylist give you?). Demographic information (i.e., age, gender, race, ethnicity, zip code, and income) was also obtained to determine if the population of focus was being reached. The survey items were based on the content delivered during the Mental Health First Aid training administered by TWP staff. Lastly, we asked clients to self-report their mental health status on a scale of 1 to 5 with ‘1’ being ‘poor’ to ‘5’ being ‘excellent.’

The survey was administered electronically by placing posters with a QR code in the barber shops and hair salon. The barbers and stylist were asked to have their clients complete the survey if they provided them with mental health first aid. We asked each program participant to recruit at least 5 clients to complete the survey with a goal of 25 total participants. The survey responses were administered online through Survey Monkey[®] which could be accessed through a client’s smartphone. The survey responses were imported from Survey Monkey[®] to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. From there, the data was cleaned, and a codebook was developed so that the Excel file could be shared back with TWP at the end of the evaluation period. The excel spreadsheet was imported into IBM SPSS Statistics version 28.0.1.1 software for analysis. Frequencies and descriptive analyses were performed. In addition, Chi-square and regression analyses were performed to examine relationships among survey items.

In addition to the client survey administration, all Head to Heart participants (4 barbers, 1 stylist) were interviewed to assess their experience completing the Mental Health First Aid training. A semi-structured interview guide was drafted by the evaluator after meeting with the TWP staff – CEO and the Director of Community, Innovation, & Advocacy to establish the timeline, evaluation goals, and clarity about the program. A total of 15 questions were drafted and reviewed by the TWP Director. The Director refined the interview guide to five (5) questions that best assessed the program curriculum and implementation. The final interview guide consisted of six (6) questions that focused on program content, self-efficacy in client interactions, cultural relevance, and compensation.

The evaluator attended the luncheon to celebrate the successful completion of the program. This allowed an in-person introduction to the program participants and an opportunity to establish rapport for the interviews. Permission was given to the TWP Director from program participants to share their contact information with the evaluator to coordinate and schedule the interviews. The interviews took place over the weekend or on Mondays, which is the typical non-working day for the hair care industry. The interviews were conducted by phone and were 30 minutes in duration. The participants’ responses were captured through detailed notes taken

by the evaluator. The evaluator captured most information verbatim by typing the responses in real time. Qualitative analysis of the interview notes used an a priori approach in which responses were coded based on the evaluation goals.

Results: Outcome

Post-training quiz

For the *Mental Health First Aid* training, a total of 5 barbers and stylist completed the post-training quiz. The quiz consisted of 10 questions which offered scenarios or vignettes of situations in which they were asked to select the appropriate response to the scenario. All scenarios covered material (i.e., knowledge and skills) learned during the training. The program curriculum requires a 60% pass rate to be considered a successful participant of the *Mental Health First Aid* training. Only one question was missed by one of the five participants (i.e., *When you see your niece at Thanksgiving, she appears to have lost a great deal of weight. She says she is working on a project for school and takes her plate of turkey and trimmings to her room. You go up to see her later and noticed she has not touched her dinner. Do you...*) but all participants completed the quiz and successfully passed with an average score of 98% for the cohort.

Client survey

A total of 28 clients completed the survey. However, data was missing for 6 of the client surveys, and 1 had partially missing responses. Therefore, 22 client surveys were included in the analysis.

Demographics of the survey participants. Most of the clients surveyed (N=18) were Black/African American adults with an average age of 37 years (See Table 1). Half of clients were male (48%) and female (48%) with one client identifying as transgender female. Most clients resided in zip code 68104, reported income between \$50,000 to 75,000, and had health insurance. However, 38% of clients reported having no health insurance. Interestingly, most clients reported their mental health status as either 'Good' (29%) or 'Fair' (29%). Only about 40% of the sample reported their mental health status as 'Excellent' (19%) or 'Very Good' (19%).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Client Survey Respondents

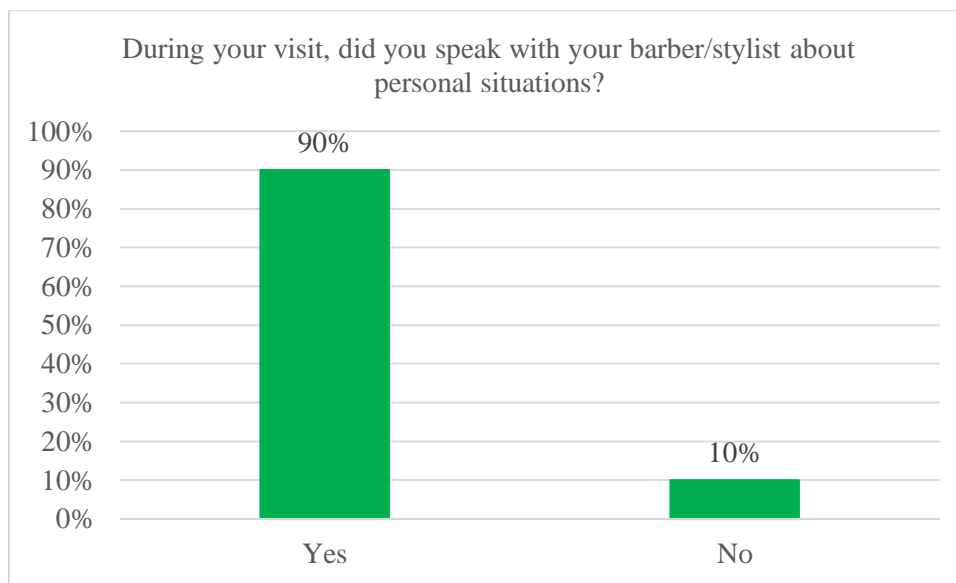
Age (average in years)	37
Gender*	
Male	10 (48%)
Female	10 (48%)
Transgender female	1 (5%)
Race*	
Black/African American	18 (86%)
Two or more races	2 (10%)
Prefer not to answer	1 (4%)
Spanish Origin*	
No	20 (95%)
Yes, Mexican, Mexican American	1 (5%)
Zip Code*	
68104	6 (29%)
68111	4 (19%)
68134	4 (19%)
Income*	
Below \$25k	2 (10%)
\$25k to \$49,999	5 (24%)

\$50k to \$74,999	7 (33%)
\$75k to \$99,999	4 (19%)
Health Insurance*	
Yes	12 (57%)
No	8 (38%)
Don't know	1 (5%)
Mental Health Status*	
Excellent	4 (19%)
Very good	4 (19%)
Good	6 (29%)
Fair	6 (29%)
Poor	1 (5%)

*N = 21, 7 missing

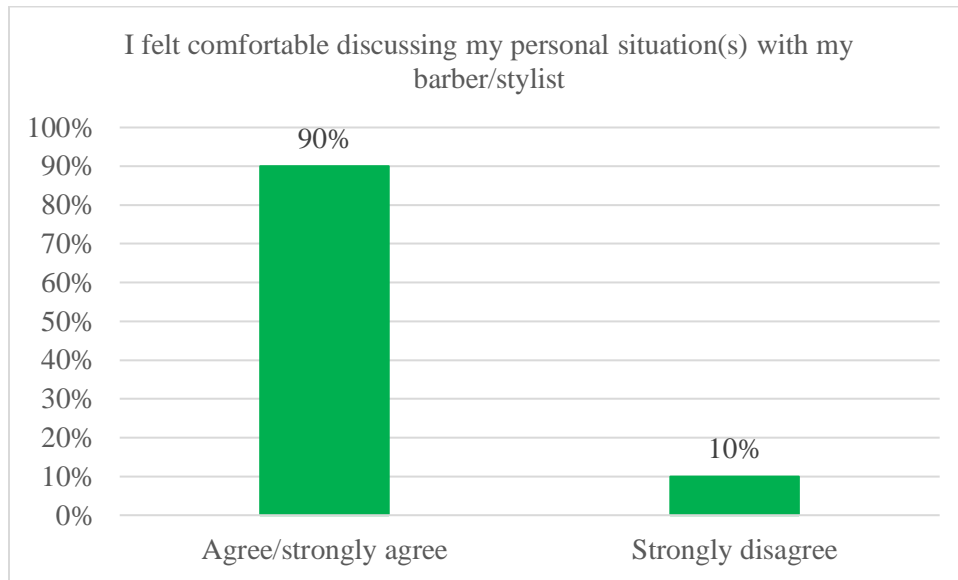
To assess client interaction with their barber or stylist, clients were asked if they spoke with their barber/stylist about personal situations during their appointment. The response choices included 'Yes' or 'No.' Majority of participants (90%) reported speaking with their barber/stylist about personal situations during their appointment (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Speaking with their barber/stylist



When asked whether they felt comfortable sharing their personal situation(s) with their barber/stylist, again, majority strongly agreed or agreed (90%) they did, although 10% (3 clients) reported not feeling comfortable sharing (Figure 2). When asked why they did not feel comfortable sharing, only 1 client responded to the open-ended question. They responded as follows: *Wanted to use my time getting my haircut to not hink about anything negative*. The remaining responses for this question were missing (N=2).

Figure 2. Comfort sharing personal situation(s)



Overall, majority of clients reported having a positive interaction with their barber/stylist (See Table 2). Most clients strongly agreed or agreed (90% to 95%) that their barber/stylist actively listened , reassured them, expressed concern, asked about their wellbeing, made them feel welcomed to share, and confirmed their feelings.

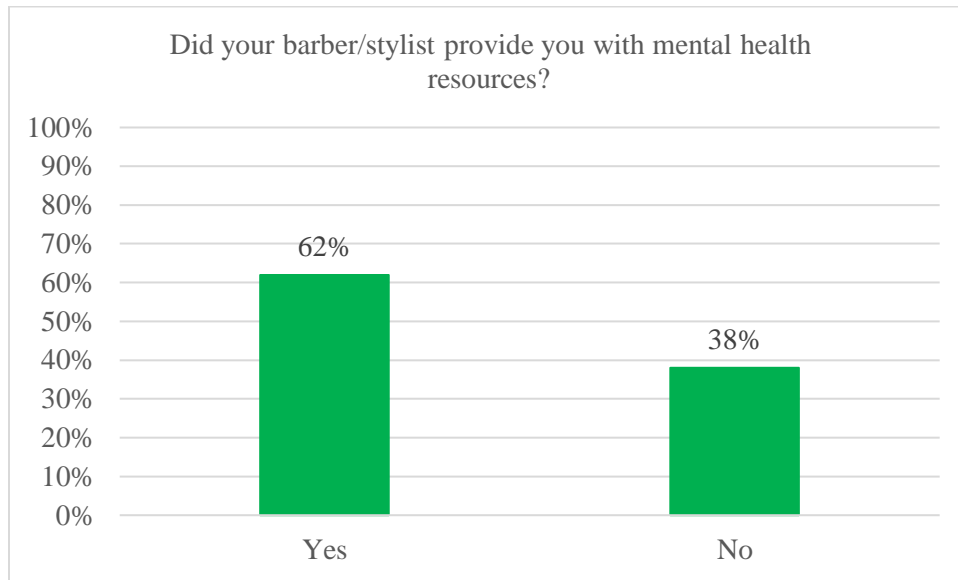
Table 2. Interaction skills reported by clients

Survey Items	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)
Thinking through the situation(s) with me	13 (59)	6 (27)	2 (9)	1 (5)
Giving me good advice about the situation(s)	15 (68)	5 (22)	1 (5)	1 (5)
Actively listening to me talk about the situation(s)	16 (73)	4 (18)	--	2 (9)
Reassuring me about the situation(s)	15 (68)	6 (27)	--	1 (5)
Expressing concern about the situation(s)	14 (63)	6 (27)	1 (5)	1 (5)
Offering assistance with the situation(s)	14 (63)	5 (23)	2 (9)	1 (5)
Pointing out changes in my behaviors because of the situation(s)	14 (66)	4 (19)	2 (10)	1 (5)
Asking me if I'm okay	15 (68)	5 (22)	1 (5)	1 (5)
Making me feel welcomed to talk about my situation(s)	17 (77)	3 (14)	--	2 (9)
Confirming my feelings about the situation(s)	16 (73)	4 (18)	--	2 (9)

*N is the number of clients who selected response choice
22 cases included; 6 missing cases

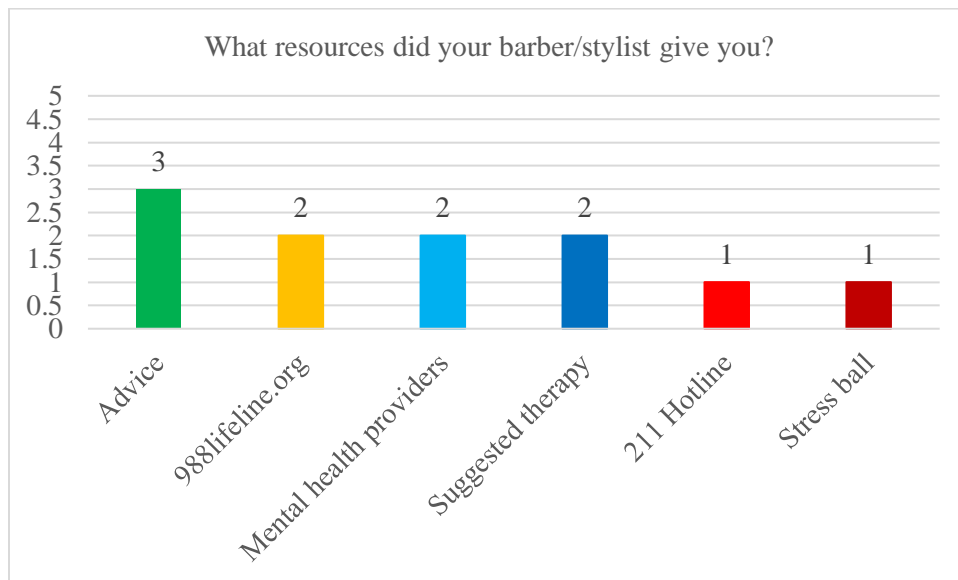
When asked whether their barber/stylist provided mental health resources to them, majority of clients (62% or 13 clients) reported they received resources. However, 38% of clients (8) did not receive resources.

Figure 3. Mental health resources distribution



Of the 13 clients who were provided mental health resources, they were asked an open-ended question to capture the types of mental health resources they were provided (What resources did your barber/stylist give you?). There were a mix of resources distributed to clients but most barbers/stylist (3) gave advice (e.g., *comforting words of advice, some good advice*). Other barbers/stylist provided a mental health hotline (2), a list of local mental health providers, suggested therapy, or a combination of them.

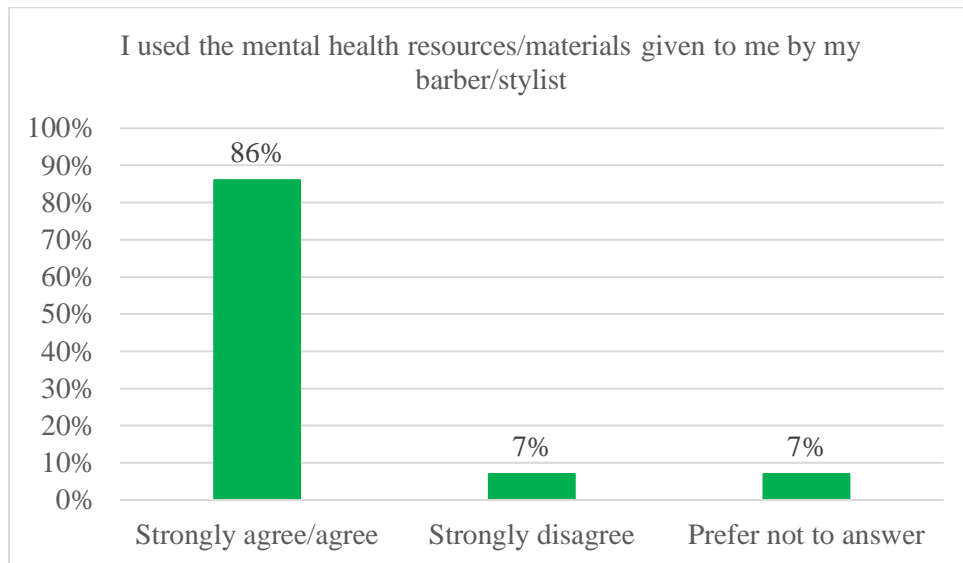
Figure 4. Mental health resources



Most clients strongly agreed (46%) or agreed (40%) that they used the mental health resources/materials given to them by their barber/stylist. Only 1 client preferred not to answer the question, and 1 client strongly disagreed with using the mental health resources provided to them by their barber/stylist. The client who reported not using the mental health resources was asked why, and the client stated, *don't need it*. When the additional follow up question was asked whether the client thought they would use the mental health resources within the next three months, the client again responded that they would not use the resources within the next 3 months.

The client gave the reason again that they *don't need it*. All other clients who reported using the mental health resources (11 clients) strongly agreed or agreed that the resources were helpful (100%)

Figure 5. Mental health resources utilization



Chi-square and regression analysis were conducted to identify relationships between demographic variables and self-reported mental health status among clients as well as interactions and mental health status. Due to a small sample size, there were not statistically significant relationships identified. In addition, when reviewing for practical significance no relationships were identified to provide further insight into the survey data about the program outcomes.

Limitations

There were two limitations of the outcome evaluation results:

- The small sample size limits the generalizability of the results and reaching statistical significance. It should be noted that statistical significance is not a requirement because practical significance can demonstrate program success.
- About 25% of the data was missing, which limited the ability to draw inferences about program outcomes. This may have resulted from technical difficulties, lack of time to complete the survey, or misunderstanding the question among other reasons.

Results: Interviews

Five themes a priori were described: 1) program content, 2) client interaction, 3) cultural relevance, 4) program satisfaction and 5) compensation (See Table 3).

Program content

Most of the program participants expressed that the program content was extremely helpful, and delivery of the content was very engaging. Many of the barbers/stylist discussed how they acquired or enhanced skills such as patience, awareness, becoming more relatable, active listening, among others.

Helped me to be more patient and understanding with my clients...learning the stuff in the class it helped me to be more patient...and not go overboard with stuff.

The part of the training where we were just listening because sometimes, I'm solution focused and not always listening, so it helped me to listen.

*Gave me a better sense of how I can relate to someone that's going through a crisis in life...
...it made me more conscious of things going on.*

In addition, some described how they are better able to identify the signs and symptoms of someone struggling with mental wellbeing after completing the program.

It's been very helpful because I can pick up on signs and talk and work with people in certain ways... also helped me out too because I see things in myself in other people and the information I learned helped them too.

Many barbers/stylist expressed that they really enjoyed the opportunity to dialogue and discuss the content with each other to gain clarity and insight about what they were learning in knowledge and skill.

The part where everyone was able to talk and have dialogue about different situations. Getting a lot of feedback from other people in the class...it gave me ideas of how I could deal with those types of situations when I encounter them.

The interactive parts where we would actually get in and role play because it took it from text to real life conversation. Also, the open-ended conversations about how we dealt with different things. We would talk about terms and go through different things but having the real-life conversations were very, very impactful.

As a result, some mentioned they were able to be more open and aware when actively listening to their clients discuss their personal situation(s).

When asked if there was any program content they questioned or were unsure of, most barbers/stylist stated that they did not have any issues with the program content. Only one barber/stylist questioned some of the content around suicide:

I think for me it was a suicide part because most people don't walk around verbally saying they will commit suicide... I think that was the only part that was like, Mmm, could be a thing but is that something I would personally deal with, I don't know but I'm still here for because you never know.

One barber mentioned a video that was shown in which the scenario seemed unlikely to happen in his community:

Some of the videos, one in particular, where two people were outside talking and said they hadn't see someone in a while and thought they should check on him...I don't see that in real life and seemed kind of random and not relevant to the work we're doing...

Other than those comments, no one else had a concern or question about the program content. In fact, many of them doubled down on how helpful the curriculum content was to them personally and they could think of personal examples from interacting with past clients to lessen their likelihood of questioning the material. They also further agreed that everything they learned was relevant and timely.

Honestly, I don't think there was a part because everything we went over was real... I really didn't question anything that was taught to us.

Client interaction

Each barber/stylist shared one or more stories about their client interactions that reflected their ability to exercise the knowledge and skills they learned during the Mental Health First Aid training. Overall, the barbers/stylist described productive discussions with their clients related to the personal situation(s) shared with them. Most of the situations were resolved positively whether it ended in receiving professional support (e.g., therapy, psychological assessment), clarity about their situation, or further discussion to provide support or advice. Most barbers/stylist mentioned they were able to showcase their actively listening skills:

I do a lot of listening more as well too. If someone is talking to me about something but I pay attention more and have more patience with them. It's kind of easy to get caught up on timeframes with the clients, instead I may block out more time in their appointment to give them more time instead of giving them their normal period of time for an appointment...

The listening aspect was super helpful so I'm focused more on hearing them out as some things can't be resolved (or they don't want to be fixed).

Others mentioned how they offered their help by checking on or even hanging out with their client after their appointment:

I had a situation where I asked the person if they were thinking about committing suicide. I freaked out and had to regroup and walk through the steps and I was able to give the person information...I offered to help my client and I called to check on the person and they said they're doing fine and checked into the hospital. I was sending text messages throughout the night to be positive. He said he checked in and I told him to prove it and I called his mother and she said she took him to Immanuel and was going to keep him for two days. He followed up later and my client said he's going to church and trying to do some spiritual healing.

... I do know one situation where the client was going through something and gave him more time in appt and he actually wanted to hang out with me, so I offered more time for him to get with me to shoot pool with him and give him more time to hear him out.

Some shared about how they were more cognizant of the language they used and avoided stereotypical or stigmatized words:

I kind of watch my language when I talk with them instead of quick to say the word "crazy"...so I would kind of say I'm pick my words carefully.

Most barbers/stylist were able to give their client information in terms of providing mental health resources or other information such as advice as it related to what they learned in the class:

I hand my clients the card you gave me to do the survey and the information so he can call someone else that he can talk to more in a professional state because he seemed that he was having a really hard time.

Also, giving them options with the resources...having them on hand was helpful. I passed the resources off to some of my customers and was able to share what I learned with them as well!

We used the other day, and went live on social media, and had a client in the chair and mental health came up, so I used mental health first aid training to have those discussions.

Program satisfaction

All barbers/stylist expressed high satisfaction with their participation and completion of the program. All barbers/stylist said they would recommend other barbers and stylists to take the program and provided reasons why they should:

Oh yea, I definitely recommend that all the barbers and stylists in Omaha should take this because they are dealing with everyone else's problems while sitting in the chair and it's mentally draining. Also, like all of us, we have issues too outside of work so it can help us too.

Oh yea, most definitely! I got 8 barbers at my shop and me and [XXXX] were the only ones that want to take it, but I got all the barbers in my shop that want to take it now.

I would [recommend this program to others] only because I think it's good everyone has baseline of knowledge of what it looks like when people are not just talking and joking.

One barber mentioned the training could help other barbers and stylists change their perspective of how they interact with their clients:

...I recommend all of them take this program and help them understand their clients better. I also know some stylists and barbers are like me that don't be focused on others and that could change their perspective.

Another barber mentioned this training should be taken like a CPR class because everyone needs to know how they can save someone's life by recognizing and taking action on a mental health crisis:

Most people will go get a CPR training; I think everyone should be trained in mental health first aid... It's for a good reason and even if you never use it, having it in the back of your mind because it can be useful when you least expect it.

Cultural relevance

Most barbers/stylist did not see any issues with the program curriculum being culturally relevant. Most of the comments were around how the curriculum was either relevant to them personally or to the past conversations they've had with their clients:

I could relate as just being a man period. I wouldn't say the material was presented as a Black or White thing...

Isolation. They had a course in there where it was geared towards the Black community. If you're constantly trying to tell other people what's going on and they're not listening, that opens up other issues that lead to isolation...In the training we learned about this in the context of being a Black person.

Some mentioned specific portions of the content they found relevant based on their personal experiences and past experiences interacting with clients about personal situations:

I would say the depression piece because when I was younger, I saw my cousin who was like my best friend was killed right in front of me. So, I was diagnosed with depression after that and still here and there I deal with

it... I could also relate to the anxiety piece and that just comes from you know going through a lot of stuff and thinking the worse basically...

The trauma portion – we’re so traumatized and some of us do recognize it and some of us don’t, so just letting people know if they’re traumatized or not, or why they’re acting like that which is definitely cultural.

With this question, I think some barbers found it cathartic to share how the content was personally relevant. One barber even thanked the evaluator for listening and expressed they felt like a weight was lifted off them:

I was going through something when I started the training and now, I’m doing things differently now by going to the gym or doing other things to build myself up and stay around for my family so that was the main one that I really connected.

When I started doing this class I’m like I’m not going to no therapy like a lot of Black folks so but after I learned everything I want to go to therapy and talk about my issues. I’m definitely going to get into therapy.

Compensation

All barbers/stylist agreed the compensation to participate in the program was fair:

It was fair, especially as a barber/cosmetologist it was on Monday which is the day we’re usually off and if you’re going to do it for them, then Mondays are pretty fair.

I feel like it was fair for the time we were there... It may have been more if I was at work, but it was a day I was off work, so it was a good supplemental day for me.

Oh, it was fine I mean you can’t put a price on education so whatever is the extra incentive to get people to come and do it and pay for their time so to speak that was cool, so I didn’t have no qualms about the pay. I figured it was reasonable considering I’m already off on Monday.

Suggestions were made about how to change the pay structure to encourage more engagement or involve more people in the program:

Even if they give the 400 for 3 weeks, it creates obligation to attend because once you learn the information, you want to learn more.

Table 3. Themes and accompanying quotes from barber/stylist interviews

Theme	Quotes
Program content	<p><i>Helped me to be more patient and understanding with my clients...learning the stuff in the class it helped me to be more patient...and not go overboard with stuff.</i></p> <p><i>Gave me a better sense of how I can relate to someone that’s going through a crisis in life...</i></p> <p><i>...when they [facilitator] were doing the videos and showing us what people were going through...in one of the videos one of the guys was going through changes and not keeping themselves up. We can see that when we deal with clients.</i></p>

	<p><i>The part where everyone was able to talk and have dialogue about different situations. Getting a lot of feedback from other people in the class...it gave me ideas of how I could deal with those types of situations when I encounter them.</i></p> <p><i>...it made me more conscious of things going on.</i></p> <p><i>...the part of the training where we had broken down and really discussed like what it looks like, and we learned all the terms which I was very familiar with...</i></p> <p><i>The interactive parts where we would actually get in and role play because it took it from text to real life conversation. Also, the open-ended conversations about how we dealt with different things. We would talk about terms and go through different things but having the real-life conversations were very, very impactful.</i></p> <p><i>It's been very helpful because I can pick up on signs and talk and work with people in certain ways... also helped me out too because I see things in myself in other people and the information I learned helped them too. The main part I remember is the assessment. It was at the beginning of the training gave an acronym and there were steps that helped to assess people to gather information instead of talking.</i></p> <p><i>It's like 6 steps you're supposed to use to assess your people. Another helpful part of the training was being able to talk to someone to ask the right questions; teach you how to use your words correctly instead of saying something that could make them hurt themselves even further. Learning how to use your words so that you don't say the wrong thing. That has been very helpful even in my own life.</i></p> <p><i>The part of the training where we were just listening because sometimes, I'm solution focused and not always listening, so it helped me to listen.</i></p>
	<p><i>I don't feel there was anything that I questioned... It taught me a lot but I don't have any questions or anything because I see it on a daily so it kind of spoke volumes for itself. It made me more aware of people's actions and behaviors.</i></p> <p><i>There really wasn't anything with the content but the manner of the person training or the videos we watched. Some of the videos, one in particular, where two people were outside talking and said they hadn't see someone in awhile and thought they should check on him...I don't see that in real life and seemed kind of random and not relevant to the work we're doing...The person doing the training was fine...it was cool to deal with two different people from different and from a different background. If it was just one, it probably would've been dull...</i></p>

	<p><i>I think for me it was a suicide part because most people don't walk around verbally saying they will commit suicide... I think that was the only part that was like, Mmm, could be a thing but is that something I would personally deal with, I don't know but I'm still here for because you never know.</i></p> <p><i>I can't recall a part I questioned because it was all new to me. I don't think there's a part that others questioned either. They answered all the questions that we had so...nah, man like I said overall, the whole experience is good with me.</i></p> <p><i>Honestly, I don't think there was a part because everything we went over was real... I really didn't question anything that was taught to us.</i></p>
<p>Client interaction</p>	<p><i>I had a situation where I asked the person if they were thinking about committing suicide. I freaked out and had to regroup and walk through the steps and I was able to give the person information...I offered to help my client and I called to check on the person and they said they're doing fine and checked into the hospital. I was sending text messages throughout the night to be positive. He said he checked in and I told him to prove it and I called his mother and she said she took him to Immanuel and was going to keep him for two days. He followed up later and my client said he's going to church and trying to do some spiritual healing.</i></p> <p><i>I'm now able to give them resources and tell them where to go. One client in particular was basically talking about this grief she's been going through. The father of her children was killed in front of her five years ago. She was very mush still in the first stages of grief and I could tell by how she was talking about her son's behavior and pics he was drawing. I pulled her to the side and told her I'm trained and let her know that I see the red flags, in which it was starting to bleed through to her children which can cause [negative] long-term effects to her children, so I gave her the resources I think it was to Charles Drew and I know she's reached out to them but I'm not sure if she followed through with it and I haven't seen her since her appointment.</i></p> <p><i>I kind of watch my language when I talk with them instead of quick to say the word "crazy..." so I would kind of say I'm pick my words carefully. I do a lot of listening more as well too. If someone is talking to me about something but I pay attention more and have more patience with them. It's kind of easy to get caught up on timeframes with the clients, instead I may block out more time in their appointment to give them more time instead of giving them their normal period of time for an appointment... I do know one situation where the client was going through something and gave him more time in appt and he actually wanted to hang out with me, so I offered more time for him to get with me to shoot pool with him and give him more time to hear him out.</i></p> <p><i>...I've been more patient and stuff and I listen to them and hear them out without focusing on my reply. I listen to their story and</i></p>

	<p><i>ask them what can I do to help them get through their situations. I realize how important it is to really listen to their story.</i></p> <p><i>Saturday, I had a talk with one of my clients who had just lost his mom but lost his dad a year and half ago. It was kind of hard for me to talk to him and understand that pain because my mom is still living but I basically tried to comfort him and let him know that he if needs someone to talk to, I'm here and pray that things get better for him because that's a hard pill to swallow. I hand my clients the card you gave me to do the survey and the information so he can call someone else that he can talk to more in a professional state because he seemed that he was having a really hard time.</i></p> <p><i>I haven't got too deep with them yet because I haven't had that person come across that chair yet, but I have talked to other people about different scenarios, like my employees. They deal with a lot more mental stuff in customers because they are trying to take care of themselves and their families, and like different scenarios in a mental space. That's where it been helping the most in dealing with the people that's working with me. It's helping me to work with them in opening up and using the resources.</i></p> <p><i>The listening aspect was super helpful so I'm focused more on hearing them out as some things can't be resolved (or they don't want to be fixed). Also, giving them options with the resources...having them on hand was helpful. I passed the resources off to some of my customers and was able to share what I learned with them as well!</i></p> <p><i>We used the other day, and went live on social media, and had a client in the chair and mental health came up, so I used mental health first aid training to have those discussions.</i></p>
<p>Program satisfaction</p>	<p><i>Oh yea, I definitely recommend that all the barbers and stylists in Omaha should take this because they are dealing with everyone else's problems while sitting in the chair and it's mentally draining. Also, like all of us, we have issues too outside of work so it can help us too.</i></p> <p><i>...I recommend all of them take this program and help them understand their clients better. I also know some stylists and barbers are like me that don't be focused on others and that could change their perspective.</i></p> <p><i>Yes, definitely y'all need to do this in more shops because it's an eye opener and helps us to study mental health and breakdown what it means to be mentally healthy. Also, the barbershop setting is where most people talk about personal situations and can talk to different people in different kind of ways. I mentioned the class today too to one of my business associates and talked about starting the Mental Health Mondays.</i></p>

	<p><i>Oh yea, most definitely! I got 8 barbers at my shop and me and [XXXX] were the only ones that want to take it, but I got all the barbers in my shop that want to take it now.</i></p> <p><i>I would [recommend this program to others] only because I think it's good everyone has baseline of knowledge of what it looks like when people are not just talking and joking.</i></p> <p><i>Most people will go get a CPR training; I think everyone should be trained in mental health first aid... It's for a good reason and even if you never use it, having it in the back of your mind because it can be useful when you least expect it.</i></p> <p><i>Yes, I recommend others because the old saying, "people they think they know it all but don't know nothing." It teaches you about your mental and signs in order to help somebody else going through it... I think a lot of people should do it because it helps out with your children, family members, and yourself.</i></p>
<p>Cultural relevance</p>	<p><i>Really almost all of it. Well, I'm gonna go to the substance abuse part first because I had a problem trying to drink and smoke all my problems away.</i></p> <p><i>I was going through something when I started the training and now, I'm doing things differently now by going to the gym or doing other things to build myself up and stay around for my family so that was the main one that I really connected. I would say the depression piece because when I was younger, I saw my cousin who was like my best friend was killed right in front of me. So, I was diagnosed with depression after that and still here and there I deal with it... I could also relate to the anxiety piece and that just comes from you know going through a lot of stuff and thinking the worse basically... I could relate to the suicide because my friend committed it, but I couldn't relate to that personally for myself. I think other Black men definitely think about it...I've had friends that have said that to me.</i></p> <p><i>When I started doing this class I'm like I'm not going to no therapy like a lot of Black folks so but after I learned everything I want to go to therapy and talk about my issues. I'm definitely going to get into therapy.</i></p> <p><i>I could relate as just being a man period. I wouldn't say the material was presented as a Black or White thing... I would say to get more people involved like it would've been nice to have some prior people that took the class to come back and talk about their experiences. It would even be nice the clients that were going through things would want to discuss openly about what's going on. I wish a lot more barbers would take it and even other professionals that are dealing with clients every day. I don't think so. There was a white lady in the training that was there, and she was super cool, but no I don't think so.</i></p>

	<p><i>The trauma portion – we’re so traumatized and some of us do recognize it and some of us don’t, so just letting people know if they’re traumatized or not, or why they’re acting like that which is definitely cultural. Majority of us are traumatized and we just have to figure out how to overcome that.</i></p> <p><i>Isolation. They had a course in there where it was geared towards the Black community. If you’re constantly trying to tell other people what’s going on and they’re not listening, that opens up other issues that lead to isolation...In the training we learned about this in the context of being a Black person.</i></p>
<p>Compensation</p>	<p><i>It was fair, especially as a barber/cosmetologist it was on Monday which is the day we’re usually off and if you’re going to do it for them, then Mondays are pretty fair.</i></p> <p><i>I feel like it was fair for the time we were there... It may have been more if I was at work, but it was a day I was off work, so it was a good supplemental day for me.</i></p> <p><i>Oh, it was fine I mean you can’t put a price on education so whatever is the extra incentive to get people to come and do it and pay for their time so to speak that was cool, so I didn’t have no qualms about the pay. I figured it was reasonable considering I’m already off on Monday.</i></p> <p><i>That was a great amount! That was nice that they paid for our time because I really appreciated it, and I would’ve definitely took it for free. Yes, I think they [other barbers] would find it fair because we were going to class on our day off and so we were really getting paid on our day off and I think it would be fair because what we’re learning is more than money.</i></p> <p><i>Even if they give the 400 for 3 weeks, it creates obligation to attend because once you learn the information, you want to learn more.</i></p>

Recommendations

The recommendations below are based upon the evaluation findings and relevant recommendations from barbers/stylist who participated in the program:

Invite past cohort participants to attend the current cohort to provide insights and their experiences leveraging the first aid training in real time.

1. **Consider asking additional interview questions for the next cohort.** In Appendix 1, you will find the interview questions that were asked of barbers/stylist after the program ended. The questions highlighted in yellow were the questions asked. The non-highlighted questions were not asked to be efficient with time. However, it may be beneficial to consider asking these questions for future cohorts to have better understanding of the process to support future outcome evaluations. Refining the process can help support better outcome data collection to establish the effectiveness of the program.
2. **Consider emphasizing how barbers/stylists can leverage specific skills from the program.** In the survey, clients were asked to report on which skills their barbers/stylist used to interact with them. While

barbers/stylist used most of the skills taught in the program, there were a few skills that were used less often: 1) thinking through the situation with their client, 2) offering assistance with the client's situation, or 3) identifying and acknowledging changes in client behaviors. There could be several reasons why the barbers/stylist chose not to leverage these skills unrelated to their level of comfort exercising these skills. However, it may be beneficial to provide more training to build efficacy in using these skills (e.g., additional role playing, asking past cohort participants to attend and share how they use these skills).

3. **Consider collecting more client surveys.** Since we had a small sample size ($N = 21$) for the outcome analyses, statistical significance could not be established. For the next cohort, you may want to consider doubling the number of surveys collected. This may be possible by enrolling more barbers into the program or ask each barber to recruit more clients to complete the survey. Please note, approximately 28 clients completed the survey, but 6 surveys had missing data and 1 survey was partially completed.
4. **Consider inviting barbers who participated in past cohorts to join future cohorts.** Most barbers/stylist who participated in this cohort expressed interest in dialoguing with past cohorts. They were interested in hearing their perspectives and how they used the information learned in the program in their interactions with their clients. This could produce more fruitful discussion and potentially a mentoring opportunity. It could also be an opportunity to initiate a network for the barbers/stylists to provide ongoing support to one another.
5. **Consider a culturally matched facilitator.** While most barbers/stylist did not have an issue with the facilitator, a couple mentioned that it may be beneficial to have someone racially concordant facilitate the program. This could enhance the relatability and crystallization of the content and skills learned in the program. It may also offer more robust discussion.
6. **Consider providing follow-up or booster sessions.** Many of the barbers/stylist had questions about their interactions or wanted to talk to their peers about how they handled some of their conversations. Therefore, it may be of great benefit to provide ongoing opportunities to connect after the formal programming concludes. 1-3 booster sessions for 30- to 60-minutes may be helpful to review content, answer questions, and engage in dialogue that may crystallize skills or address concerns or challenges encountered.
7. **Consider providing more content around substance abuse and alcohol misuse.** Barbers expressed an interest in learning more about substance and alcohol abuse. Many felt they encountered signs of abuse when interacting with their clients. However, some expressed this content area was not detailed enough especially since they see this a lot in their community. Consider reviewing the content around substance and alcohol abuse to determine how this content can be enhanced. Since an evidence-based curriculum is being used for the program (Mental Health First Aid), it may be an opportunity to add more content during the portion of the training with the mental health specialist/social worker, Ms. Janae Donaldson.
8. **Consider changing the program format.** Some barbers/stylist expressed it was a lot of content for two, 8-hour days. Some stated it was difficult to retain the information or process what they were learning. The content was a lot in a short period of time. Consider changing the format from 2 days to 3 days which could also allow for dialogue with past cohort barbers/stylists.
9. **Consider adding content about local mental health disparities.** All barbers/stylist enjoyed the program content. Some expressed they would have liked to learn more about the local mental health disparities to give context to the problem. Many relied on their own experiences to understand local disparities, but this was subjective and not based on objective data. Therefore, consider providing this

Conclusion

data or including an expert to speak with them about local mental health disparities and describe any current efforts to address these gaps.

Overall, the evaluation findings were extremely positive. The barber/stylist interviews revealed that the barbers/stylist had a highly positive experience learning about mental health, illness, and wellbeing. They also enjoyed building their skills in becoming a mental health advocate. There were no significant issues or concerns with the program content; none of the barbers/stylist mentioned any issues with the content being culturally relevant. Most felt the content was culturally relevant although a couple brought up the possibility of having a culturally matched facilitator.

When reviewing client survey data, most of the clients were male, Black, lived in 68104, and having health insurance. Most clients reported 'good' or 'fair' mental health, which may speak to experiences of living through a pandemic where mental health disorders were exacerbated for all Americans. However, it also demonstrates the importance of this program especially with the shortage of mental health professionals in the state. There is a need for programs like this to be a first line of defense to identify individuals who may need encouragement to seek help coming from a trusted source in the community – a barber or stylist. Finally, all clients also reported talking about a personal situation with their barber/stylist, and they felt comfortable interacting with them. Most of the clients agreed that their barber/stylist exercised the skills taught in the program except a couple skills which were not utilized as much as other skills but there was not a statistically significant difference in use. Most clients reported that their barber provided them with mental health resources and were able to list which resources were provided. Of the clients provided resources, most of them used the resources provided to them. Only one client did not use the resources and stated that the resources were not needed at that time.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Head to Heart Evaluation Interview Questions

1. What has your experience been like as a mental health advocate?
2. How has the process been for sharing resources? Referring clients?
3. How deep are your conversations with clients regarding their personal issues or situations?
 - a. *[If not much interaction]* why do you believe you're not having deep conversations with your clients?
4. How helpful was the Adult Mental Health First Aid training in interacting with clients?
 - a. Which part of the training has been most helpful in your interactions?
5. How prepared did you feel to talk with you clients after the training?
 - a. *[If they did not feel prepared]* Why do you feel this way?
6. How have you handled difficult conversations with your clients since participating in the training?
 - a. How was the conversation resolved?
 - b. What did you use from your training during this conversation if anything?
7. How often have you revisited the Mental Health First Aid training manual or other materials?
 - a. *[If they have rarely or never used the manual or other materials since training]* Why haven't you revisited the manual or other materials since the training?
8. How was the process promoting the survey to your clients?
 - a. What did you do to promote the survey?
 - b. What would you change about promoting the survey?
9. Which part of the Mental Health First Aid training did you culturally relate with the most?
10. A part of your training was also with a local mental health provider, Ms. Janae Donaldson. What part of your training with her did you culturally relate with the most?
11. What part of the training did you question the most?
12. What would you like to see differently in the training content?
13. Would you recommend others participate in this program? Why or why not?
14. Please recall you were paid for your time to participate in the training. How did you feel about the amount given to you?
 - a. Was the amount fair?
 - i. *[If not]* What would be a fair amount?
15. What other thoughts or recommendations would you like to share with me today?

Appendix 2: Client Survey (Screenshots of first two pages)

Head to Heart Evaluation

Thank you for taking this survey!

Your responses to the following questions will help us understand how to improve the Head To Heart program. We also want to better understand the communication between your barber/stylist and you. Please answer the questions. There are no right or wrong answers.

At the end of the survey, we will ask for your name and email address to be entered into a drawing for a \$10 Amazon gift card. If you are interested in having your name in the drawing please be sure to share your name and email so we can contact you if you're chosen as one of the lucky winners!

* 1. During your last visit, did you speak with your barber/stylist about personal situations (e.g., family, children, relationships, etc.)?

No

Yes



Next

3. Thinking about your last visit to your barber/stylist, please tell us whether you strongly agree or strongly disagree with the following statements:

My barber/stylist helped me by:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Thinking through the situation(s) with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Giving me good advice about the situation(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Actively listening to me talk about the situation(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reassuring me about the situation(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expressing concern about the situation(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offering assistance with the situation(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pointing out changes in my behavior because of the situation(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asking me if I'm okay.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Making me feel welcomed to talk about my situation(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confirming my feelings about the situation(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Did your barber/stylist provide you with mental health resources?

- No
- Yes



Appendix 2: Client Survey

Head 2 Heart Program Survey

Directions: Please answer the following questions. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to better understand the communication between your barber or stylist and you.

Mental Health Support & Resources

1. **During your last visit, did you speak with your barber/stylist about personal situations (e.g., family, children, relationships, etc.)?**
 No
 Yes

2. **I felt comfortable discussing my personal situation(s) with my barber/stylist?**
 Strongly disagree (**Skip to Question 3**)
 Disagree (**Skip to Question 3**)
 Agree (**Skip to Question 5**)
 Strongly agree (**Skip to Question 5**)
 Prefer not to answer (**Skip to Question 5**)

3. **Why didn't you feel comfortable discussing your personal situation(s) with your barber/stylist?**
 [OPEN ENDED QUESTION] _____

4. **What would make you feel more comfortable discussing your personal situation(s) with your barber/stylist?**
 [OPEN ENDED QUESTION] _____

Thinking about your last visit to your barber/stylist, please tell us whether you strongly agree or strongly disagree with the following statements:	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
My barber/stylist helped me by:				
5. Thinking through the situation(s) with me.	1	2	3	4
6. Giving me good advice about the situation(s).	1	2	3	4
7. Actively listening to me talk about the situation(s).	1	2	3	4
8. Reassuring me about the situation(s).	1	2	3	4
9. Expressing concern about the situation(s).	1	2	3	4
10. Offering assistance with the situation(s).	1	2	3	4
11. Pointing out changes in my behavior because of the situation(s).	1	2	3	4
12. Asking me if I'm okay.	1	2	3	4
13. Making me feel welcomed to talk about my situation(s).	1	2	3	4
14. Confirming my feelings about the situation(s).	1	2	3	4

15. **Did your barber/stylist provide you with mental health resources?**

No (**Skip to Question 24**)

Yes

16. What resources did your barber/stylist give you?

[OPEN ENDED QUESTION] _____

17. I used the mental health resources/materials given to me by my barber/stylist.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Agree (**Skip to Question 21**)

Strongly agree (**Skip to Question 21**)

Prefer not to answer (**Skip to Question 21**)

18. Why didn't you use the mental health resources/materials given to you by your barber/stylist?

[OPEN ENDED QUESTION] _____

19. I plan to use the mental health resource/materials within the next 3 months.

Strongly disagree (**Skip to Question 20**)

Disagree (**Skip to Question 20**)

Agree (**Skip to Question 24**)

Strongly agree (**Skip to Question 24**)

Prefer not to answer (**Skip to Question 24**)

20. Please list the reason(s) why you do not plan to use the mental health resources/materials later?

[OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS] _____

21. The mental health resources/materials given to me by my barber/stylist were helpful.

Strongly disagree (**Skip to Question 22**)

Disagree (**Skip to Question 22**)

Agree (**Skip to Question 24**)

Strongly agree (**Skip to Question 24**)

Prefer not to answer (**Skip to Question 24**)

22. Why weren't the resources helpful to you?

[OPEN ENDED QUESTION] _____

23. What resource(s)/materials would be helpful to receive?

[OPEN ENDED QUESTION] _____

Demographic Questions

24. What is your age? _____

⁹⁷ Prefer not to answer

⁹⁸ Don't know

25. What is your gender?

¹ Male

² Female

³ Transgender Female

⁴ Transgender Male

⁵ Non-Binary

⁹⁷ Prefer not to answer

26. What race do you most identify with? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

¹ Black/African American

² White

³ Asian/Pacific Islander

⁵ Two or more races

⁶ Native American/Alaska Native

⁷ Other (please specify) _____

⁹⁷ Prefer not to answer

⁹⁸ Don't know

27. Are you Hispanic, Latino/a, or of Spanish origin?

⁰ No

¹ Yes, Mexican, Mexican American

² Yes, Puerto Rican

- ₃ Yes, Cuban
- ₄ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish origin
Please write answer (examples: Columbian, Dominican) _____
- ₉₇ Prefer not to answer
- ₉₈ Don't know

28. What is your home zip code? _____

- ₉₇ Prefer not to answer
- ₉₈ Don't know

29. In 2022, what was your total family combined income before taxes for you and the family members you live with (e.g., wages, salaries, commissions, bonuses, tips, or self-employment)?

- ₁ Below \$25,000
- ₂ \$25,000-\$49,999
- ₃ \$50,000-\$74,999
- ₄ \$75,000-\$99,999
- ₅ \$100,000-\$124,999
- ₆ \$125,000-\$149,999
- ₇ \$150,000-\$174,999
- ₈ \$175,000-\$199,999
- ₉ \$200,000 or more
- ₉₇ Prefer not to answer
- ₉₈ Don't know

30. Do you have health insurance?

- ₀ No
- ₁ Yes
- ₉₇ Prefer not to answer
- ₉₈ Don't know

31. Overall, how would you rate your current mental health?

- ₁ Excellent

- 2 Very good
- 3 Good
- 4 Fair
- 5 Poor
- 97 Prefer not to answer
- 98 Don't know