



EMBRACING OUR COMMUNITY

WINTER 2019

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On the Road to Better Health

Cedars-Sinai Study Brings Pharmacists to L.A. Barbershops to Fight Hypertension Among African-American Men

Xavier Chavis is never more at peace than when he's riding his shiny black Harley up wide open stretches of California's coastal Highway 1.

The Compton resident, who has high blood pressure and Type 2 diabetes, recently bought the new motorcycle to celebrate turning 50. The bike is a big incentive to be vigilant about taking care of his health. "I really gotta watch it if I want to live long and keep riding my Harley," he says.

He found motivation in an unexpected place—at the barbershop he'd been going to for years.

Chavis was part of a landmark Cedars-Sinai clinical trial that engaged 52 black-owned L.A. barbershops in an effort to help African-American men lower their blood pressure. Led by the late Ronald Victor, MD, who was director of the Hypertension Center at the Smidt Heart Institute, the study gave barbershop patrons an opportunity to swivel from a haircut to a potentially lifesaving visit with a pharmacist.

Chavis, a North Carolina native who moved to Los Angeles in 2005, was only 20 when he was diagnosed with hypertension while serving a four-year stint in

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Walk This Way

Adopting a more active lifestyle doesn't have to mean intense gym workouts or 3-mile runs—a simple walk around the block can be a powerful step toward fitness.

This is the idea behind the Cedars-Sinai Healthy Habits step and sweat program, launched last spring for parents at Johnnie L. Cochran Jr. Middle School and Wilshire Crest, Mid-City's Prescott and Sixth Avenue elementary schools. The program is now being expanded to 10 other Mid-City schools where Cedars-Sinai provides Healthy Habits workshops as well as to many other school sites across the city through a partnership

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On the Road to Better Health

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the U.S. Marines. He saw multiple doctors over the years and took medication, but his blood pressure never stabilized at a normal level.

Called the “silent killer” because it usually has no obvious symptoms, hypertension causes more deaths among African-American men than any other race, ethnic or gender group in the United States.

“Uncontrolled hypertension is one of the biggest health problems facing the African-American community today,” Victor said.

His 2017 Barbershop L.A. study involved 319 black male barbershop patrons with systolic blood pressure of 140 mm Hg or greater, a level that increases their risk of having a heart attack or stroke. One group in the study met with pharmacists every two or three weeks and took medication for hypertension, while the other men received health education from barbers while having their hair cut. The pharmacists coordinated with participants’ primary care physicians, and the barbers encouraged patrons to follow up with their doctor.

As the results published this year in *The New England Journal of Medicine* showed, both groups reduced their blood pressure over a six-month period. Those who met with pharmacists fared better: Nearly two-thirds got their blood pressure down to a normal level—six times more than the other group.

Chavis was in the group that received medication. He understood the risks he was facing because of his family history. His father fought heart disease for years and died of a heart attack at 82. His mother also had heart disease but died of complications from diabetes at 79.

Chavis looked forward to his visits with Cedars-Sinai pharmacist C. Adair Blyler, PharmD, at L&D’s Barbershop in Compton. “It was an appointment I made sure I kept,” he says.

He has always felt rushed in doctors’ offices, but it was different at the barbershop. During each visit, Blyler took his blood pressure and used a handheld device to conduct metabolic tests to monitor the effects of hypertension medication. Then they would talk about exercise, diet and any challenges Chavis was experiencing.

With Blyler’s help, Chavis found the right medication to keep his blood pressure at a healthy level without side effects. He also was able to make lifestyle changes—including drinking more water, reducing salt, eating more fruits and vegetables, and exercising regularly—that brought his diabetes under better control.

For Victor, the study was the culmination of 20 years of research dedicated to demonstrating the benefits of bringing healthcare to the community to better serve a high-risk population.

Chavis continues to lead a lifestyle he hopes will keep him around a long time for his wife, Bianca, and 6-year-old grandson, Nasir. Every weekday, he picks up Nasir from school and spends the afternoon overseeing his homework and making sure he has healthy snacks.

“I want to be a good role model for him, the way Adair was for me,” Chavis says.

“Uncontrolled hypertension is one of the biggest health problems facing the African-American community today.”

RONALD VICTOR, MD
(1952–2018)



Ronald Victor, MD, planned his hypertension study with barbershop owners like Wally Riddle, owner of Wally’s Barber Shop in Altadena.

Barriers to Heart Health for African-American Men

A complex mix of factors puts African-American men at higher risk for hypertension—including poverty, distrust of the medical system, genetics and the prevalence of high-salt, high-fat diets.

A lack of trust that keeps many men away from the doctor is one of the biggest issues.

C. Adair Blyler, PharmD, a Cedars-Sinai pharmacist who saw patients in the Barbershop L.A. clinical trial, says the role of local barbers as “champions” of health was critical because they have the respect of loyal patrons.

“There’s a different level of trust that’s earned when you meet people where they are, instead of in a hospital or clinic,” she explains.

Cedars-Sinai also is breaking down other barriers to healthcare by sending teams of nurses to provide free health screenings in low-income areas across the city, including African-American churches in South L.A., senior centers in Koreatown and West Hollywood, public housing apartment complexes in Watts and the annual, daylong Telemundo health fair at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

Q & A

Clarence Shields Jr., MD, an orthopaedic surgeon at the Cedars-Sinai Kerlan-Jobe Institute, gained a firsthand view of how athletic trainers prevent injuries and boost performance when he served as team doctor for the Los Angeles Rams for more than two decades. In 1995, he and his wife, Barbara, began building TeamHEAL (Helping Enrich Athletes' Lives). Cedars-Sinai supports the program, while the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) partners with TeamHEAL in supervising the athletic trainers at participating schools. Here, the couple talk about the program's history, benefits and future.

Why did you create TeamHEAL, and who does it help?

BS: The program serves students at Westchester, Banning, Crenshaw, Dorsey and Carson high schools. Each school has a full-time, certified athletic trainer and a fully equipped rehabilitation center. The trainers teach the kids how to avoid getting hurt, help them recover from

Champions for Young Athletes

Clarence L. Shields Jr., MD, Co-founder and Medical Director, TeamHEAL

Barbara Shields, Co-founder and Executive Director, TeamHEAL



common injuries such as sprains and strains, and provide information about careers in healthcare. We also provide free preseason physicals that include orthopaedic exams, eye and dental exams, cardiac checkups and concussion tests.

How does TeamHEAL influence students' opportunities?

CS: Most of our students come from low-income families, and, with Medi-Cal, it can take months to get to the right specialist to treat a sports injury. Students can miss out on athletic scholarships if they can't keep playing. We help students get affordable medical care from orthopaedic specialists without delay to reduce the risk that an injury will interfere with their ability to reach their potential as athletes or to pursue their dreams for the future.

BS: Our athletic trainers are real mentors to these students, every day. Some of our graduates have gone on to play pro football and basketball, and a number of students have become athletic trainers, physical therapists and teachers.

Does one athlete's story in particular capture the impact of TeamHEAL?

BS: One track star at Westchester High sprained her ankle so badly she wasn't able to run. The trainer at her school rehabilitated her, and she went on to take first place in the city in the 100- and 200-meter runs. She received a TeamHEAL scholarship and a full ride at Cal State Fullerton. She transferred to USC and recently graduated. She plans to go into the health field.

"We wanted to give underserved student athletes the kind of support professional athletes receive while helping young people develop life skills. ... As I tell the kids, it's important to do the right thing even when nobody's looking."

Clarence L. Shields Jr., MD

How does the partnership with Cedars-Sinai make a difference?

CS: With Cedars-Sinai's support, we hope to eventually reach more schools. Cedars-Sinai doctors help provide comprehensive preseason physicals for about 500 students at Kerlan-Jobe in Culver City every spring. And Cedars-Sinai's partnership with LAUSD is also a great resource that strengthens our athletic training program.

TeamHEAL'S IMPACT

- ▶ TeamHEAL has helped nearly 50,000 students since 1995.
- ▶ \$113,000 in college scholarships has been awarded to 57 student athletes since 2008.
- ▶ 75% of students who participate in TeamHEAL go on to college.

SHARE & CARE

2017-18
AT-A-GLANCE

Cedars-Sinai Share & Care is a school-based, mental health early intervention program that uses art therapy to help children, teachers, families and other survivors cope with traumatic events and stressors.

GOOD TO KNOW

SHARE & CARE BEGAN IN
1981
as the
PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA
CENTER.

THERAPISTS WORK IN
30 schools
from elementary through
high schools.

In the 2017-18 school year,
COUNSELORS WORKED
WITH MORE THAN
950 students
IN GROUP ART THERAPY
SESSIONS.

In the 2017-18 school year, mental
health professionals logged
more than
30,500
CONTACTS WITH STUDENTS,
PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

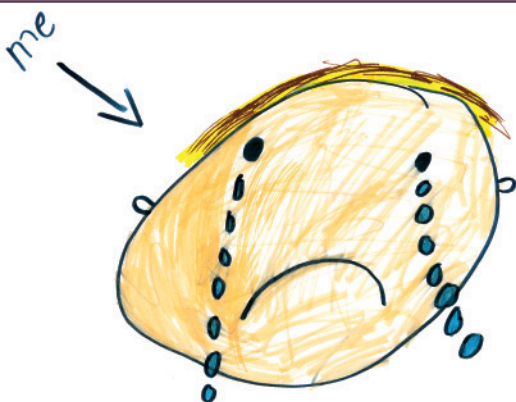


“Several times I’ve watched my dad beat up my mother. Now he is in jail. I sit in the bathroom alone a lot and cry. I often wish I could fly far away. Nowhere seems safe.”

5TH GRADER

HOW IT WORKS

Share & Care addresses the needs of students, teachers and families affected by trauma and/or stressors through crisis intervention, consultation, training and prevention. Counselors work with staff at school sites within the Los Angeles area to identify children who are at-risk emotionally and academically. This specialized prevention and early intervention program offers a series of 12-week art therapy groups that focus on social-emotional learning through various curricula. These groups provide a supportive, therapeutic environment that aids in the healing process and enhances the child’s ability to concentrate and become happier and more successful. Teacher and parent education training is a large part of the Share & Care school-based program.



“My mom and dad drink a lot; they start fighting with one another and then seem to turn their anger onto me. When I’m at school I’m mad all the time and get in trouble no matter what I do. ... No one likes me.”

2ND GRADER





CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENT AT HOME*

11%

said they know someone **INCARCERATED.**

14%

REPORTED GANGS in their neighborhood.

14%

SAID THEY FELT UNSAFE in their school.



CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR AT SCHOOL*

27%

WERE IDENTIFIED AS BEING BEHIND ACADEMICALLY.

42%

EXHIBITED DISRUPTIVE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR.

35%

HAD POOR CONCENTRATION.



"I told my [Share & Care] counselor that I missed my mom and brother; they are both in jail. The best part of school is going to Share & Care."

9TH GRADER

THE SHARE & CARE EFFECT



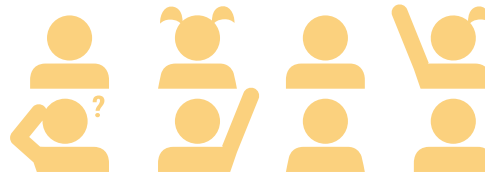
WHAT TEACHERS REPORT*

74%

of students showed an improvement in their **SELF-ESTEEM.**

89%

of students showed improvement in their **BEHAVIOR.**



"Share & Care brings peace to children. When they are at peace, they are able to learn." ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

WHAT PARENTS REPORT*

79%

said they felt more confident in their **ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE** more openly with their child.

74%

felt more confident in their ability to address their **CHILD'S BEHAVIORAL ISSUES.**

75%

felt more confident in their ability to help **IMPROVE THEIR CHILD'S SELF-ESTEEM.**



"My 6-year-old sister was shot and killed when she was playing in the front yard. I get scared sometimes and really miss her. It seems like things don't get better around my house. Even after my sister was shot, no one was arrested and no one seems to care. This makes it hard to sleep at night, because I feel sad and lonely."

4TH GRADER

*All statistics are from the 2017-18 school year.

Program Updates



Cancer Survivor Pays It Forward

Nearly 90 men participated in a free prostate cancer education and screening event at Cedars-Sinai in September. Many were greeted by Bin McLaurin, 50-year-old patient service representative at the Cedars-Sinai Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute, who was diagnosed and treated at Cedars-Sinai. He founded Men Actively Creating Healthy Outcomes (MACHO) to promote cancer support services for men (macho4life.org).

Jobs Help Youths Find Career Paths

For 19-year-old Bryan Rodriguez, working in Cedars-Sinai's Outpatient Rehabilitation Services department for six weeks over the summer was a chance to get a firsthand glimpse of the physical therapy career he wants to pursue. "It's amazing to see people recuperate," says Rodriguez, who was one of 20 students in paid summer jobs at Cedars-Sinai as part of HIRE LA's Youth, a city of Los Angeles program to help low-income young people find a career path.

More of a Good Thing

Cedars-Sinai Healthy Habits has added six Koreatown schools to its lineup of Los Angeles Unified School District elementary schools where children learn how to integrate good nutrition and physical activity into their daily lives. Cedars-Sinai's community health educators have trained six public health graduate student interns to lead the 10-week Healthy Habits workshops, now offered in 22 elementary schools.

Stronger Safety Net

Through grants that directly support and expand the capacity of community health centers, Cedars-Sinai is strengthening the safety net for more than 1.6 million underserved Los Angeles residents. Cedars-Sinai Community Clinic Initiative grantees include the Los Angeles Christian Health Centers; the Korean Health, Education, Information & Research Center in Koreatown; Venice Family Clinic; Eisner Health; Planned Parenthood; and the Saban Community Clinic.

Workouts Spark Healthier Lifestyles

Healthy Habits exercise in the park drew more than 125 people to Westside Neighborhood Park and Vineyard Recreation Center over the summer to get their heart rates up with Zumba workouts and strength training. The program has inspired many participants to exercise year-round, adopt a healthier diet and lose weight.

Helping Seniors Stay Healthy

Hy Arnesty has been attending the Healthy Seniors Fair at Plummer Park in West Hollywood since it began 17 years ago. He also goes to other sites where Cedars-Sinai nurses provide free health screenings throughout the year. He follows the nurses' advice to keep moving. Still going strong at age 95, Arnesty starts each day with a half-hour workout on a stationary bike.

Reducing Cancer Risk

Cedars-Sinai was among 11 organizations and individuals recently honored by the *Los Angeles Business Journal* for making strides in improving healthcare in the city. Cedars-Sinai was recognized for reducing cancer risk among underserved residents by providing free screenings and education as well as training community clinicians in the latest screenings and treatments for colorectal cancer; and providing the HPV vaccine to teens.

Bloodmobile Attracts Donors at Farmers Market

Sixty people stepped up to provide potentially lifesaving blood donations on June 14, when Cedars-Sinai's bloodmobile was stationed at the Farmers Market in honor of World Blood Donor Day. The Cedars-Sinai COACH for Kids® team—a program of the Maxine Dunitz Children's Health Center—was also on hand to give children a chance to dress up as doctors and nurses, and offered families information on nutrition and dental health.

Health Outreach Bridges Barriers to Care

A Cedars-Sinai team that included 16 Korean-speaking nurses recently brought free blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes and dental screenings as well as health education to the Koreatown Senior and Community Center. Cedars-Sinai provides services and referrals in the heart of the nation's largest Koreatown several times a year, bridging language and other barriers that prevent older immigrants from getting needed care.



Walk This Way

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Safety and Services on Summer Nights

Cedars-Sinai COACH for Kids® joined L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti's Summer Night Lights initiative, which kept 32 parks and recreation centers open late to offer free family activities and community resources. Now in its 10th year, the initiative aims to reduce gang violence by creating a safe space for families to gather on summer evenings. In July, COACH for Kids offered healthcare services such as nutrition and dental education and immunizations at two sites: Green Meadows Recreation Center and Ross Snyder Recreation Center.



with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Step and sweat is adapted from the Arthritis Foundation's evidence-based Walk with Ease program.

"This new program is a great way to get people who are sedentary to begin making exercise part of their lifestyle," says Healthy Habits Associate Director Carolyn Buenaflor, MPH. "The parents have been really responsive. It makes a big difference to be part of a group of moms who support each other."

Pascuala Ruiz, a 43-year-old mother of three, is one of the parent "champions" who've been trained to lead the walking groups. The groups are part of the Healthy Habits for Families educational program for parents that Cedars-Sinai offers at many of the schools where its health educators teach workshops on nutrition and fitness for children.

Each step and sweat session includes a 1-mile walk around the school's neighborhood. The groups begin and end with stretching exercises and take time at the halfway mark to do some calisthenics.

"I like helping people exercise for their health," Ruiz says. "Walking is easy and fun, and it has helped me relieve stress. It makes me feel better."

Ruiz says the parents in her group at Johnnie L. Cochran Jr. Middle School enjoy the twice-a-week, 8:30 a.m. step and sweat walks so much that they have started getting together on their own to increase their steps on other days.

Reaching More Schools

A grant from Cedars-Sinai allowed LAUSD to bring a similar program to some 45 schools through the district's Healthy Start program, which links low-income children and families to a wide range of support services. In addition, Cedars-Sinai provided training to expand the Healthy Habits for Families program to about 10 Healthy Start centers.

"We're thrilled to collaborate and help spread the great work Cedars-Sinai is already doing."

WILLIAM CELESTINE,
DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS
PROGRAMS FOR LAUSD

Community Events

Cedars-Sinai participates in hundreds of community events across Los Angeles throughout the year, partnering with local organizations to offer free health services and information to those in greatest need. These events include:

Taste of Soul

WHAT: The Cedars-Sinai COACH for Kids® team provides health education and clinical screenings at this annual street festival, which includes food, live music, art, and booths featuring local businesses and organizations.

WHERE: Crenshaw Boulevard, between Stocker Boulevard and Rodeo Road, Los Angeles

WHEN: Annually, in the fall

WHO: General public

NOTABLE: This event, presented by the *Los Angeles Sentinel* along with the city of Los Angeles and other partners, was created to highlight positive aspects of African-American life and foster community pride and respect.

Flu Shots and Screenings

WHAT: Cedars-Sinai nurses provide free flu shots as well as blood pressure screenings and health education.

WHERE: Holman United Methodist Church, 88th Street Temple Church of God in Christ and Second AME Church, South Los Angeles

WHEN: Annually, in October, November and December

WHO: Local adults and seniors, many of whom live on fixed incomes

NOTABLE: This event is part of a longstanding partnership with African-American churches to support underserved communities.

Watts/South L.A. Housing Development Community Center Clinics

WHAT: Cedars-Sinai COACH for Kids offers free neighborhood health screenings to monitor weight, body mass index and blood pressure for parents, grandparents and other adult participants—and to provide education on diabetes, heart disease and other health topics.

WHERE: Watts, South Los Angeles

WHEN: Monthly

WHO: Residents of Jordan Downs, Imperial Courts, Nickerson Gardens, Gonzaque Village, Avalon Gardens and Pueblo del Rio housing developments, and nearby neighborhoods where COACH for Kids provides free health services for children and families on a regular basis

NOTABLE: Participants report that they are eating better, exercising more and losing weight.

Pan Pacific Monthly Health Screenings

WHAT: Cedars-Sinai nurses provide free blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes (blood glucose) screenings as well as education, counseling and referrals.

WHERE: Pan Pacific Park Senior Activity Center, 141 S. Gardner St., Los Angeles

WHEN: 10–11:30 a.m., third Thursday of each month, September through June

WHO: Seniors

NOTABLE: Nurses provide services for seniors and homeless individuals at this community site.

Angel City Celebration

WHAT: The Cedars-Sinai COACH for Kids team provides health education and clinical screenings for children and families, and the Cedars-Sinai bloodmobile collects blood donations.

WHERE: Various parks in South Los Angeles

WHEN: Annually, in December (this year Dec. 8, 7 a.m.–4 p.m.) at Franklin D. Roosevelt Park, 7600 Graham Ave., Los Angeles

WHO: Children and their families

NOTABLE: This event, a partnership between the LA5 Rotary Club of Los Angeles and the city and county parks departments, focuses on improving quality of life for underserved families with young children.



CEDARS-SINAI®

It's in our DNA. For more than a century, Cedars-Sinai has demonstrated a deep commitment to improving the community's health. The driving force behind our efforts is a passion for helping others that extends far beyond the borders of our campus.

As part of our mission to provide compassionate, quality healthcare, Cedars-Sinai offers financial assistance to eligible community members who cannot afford to pay for their care. To receive copies of our Financial Assistance Application and Financial Assistance Policy, visit cedars-sinai.org/fap or call Patient Financial Services at 323-866-8600.

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