



The Wonder Fund Commits Major Investment into First Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing Wonder Ecosystem in Los Angeles

Unified Youth to fund grassroots organizations while partnering with the Headspace Training Institute to train a new peer mental health workforce

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, October 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On World Mental Health Day, national nonprofit Unified Youth announced Los Angeles as the home of its first Wonder Ecosystem, powered by The Wonder Fund™. By investing in grassroots creativity and training a locally rooted mental health workforce of young people in partnership with the Headspace Training Institute, Unified Youth is turning Los Angeles' creative energy into infrastructure for joy, resilience, and lasting community change.

The launch comes at a moment when rates of youth anxiety, depression, and suicide are at historic highs, as federal and state cuts to education and arts programs have stripped millions of students of creative outlets proven to reduce stress, build resilience, and expand opportunity. Unified Youth is working to fill that gap by treating creativity and play not as extras, but as essential infrastructure for youth wellbeing and future readiness.

Unified Youth will seed the pilot with 5-figure grants to a select group of grassroots organizations that anchor young people's daily lives. Early investments will focus on communities including Leimert Park and the Crenshaw corridor, creating safe, inspiring "third spaces" where youth can connect, create, and heal.

Alongside these investments, Unified Youth has partnered with the Headspace Training Institute to train the next generation of mental health coaches. The Headspace Training Institute provides a 20-week immersive training to prepare students to earn a Certificate in Mental Health Coaching (CMHC). Young people nominated by local partners will complete the coaching program and supervised practicum process before being placed in schools, healthcare settings, and community organizations. While the pilot will begin with a small cohort, it is designed as the foundation of a workforce that can grow to reach thousands nationwide, embedding trusted, culturally responsive support directly into the environments where young people already are.

"Headspace is proud to partner with Unified Youth to train the next generation of mental health coaches," said Shelby Garay, Program Director, Headspace Training Institute. "Together we are equipping young people with practical tools to care for themselves and their peers, expanding access to support where it's needed most."

The LA Wonder Ecosystem™ is expected to reach more than 2,000 youth in its first year and deliver measurable outcomes, including improved mental health scores, reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression, stronger self-regulation, and increased skills and confidence. Lessons from Los Angeles will create a blueprint for rapid replication in cities across the country.

“Los Angeles is one of the most creative cities in the world. By investing directly in communities like Leimert Park and training youth themselves to become peer coaches, we’re proving that creativity is not a luxury—its infrastructure for health and resilience,” said Dr. Wizdom Powell, CEO of Unified Youth. “This is just the beginning. What starts in LA will grow into a nationwide ecosystem for youth mental health and wellbeing.”

The launch of the LA Wonder Ecosystem marks the beginning of a movement. Unified Youth is inviting foundations, corporations, and everyday donors to join in building a network of Wonder Ecosystems nationwide—turning a moment of crisis into a movement for possibility.

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About Unified Youth

Unified Youth is a national organization reimagining youth mental health and wellbeing by restoring imagination, creativity, connection, and play as the foundations of development and future readiness. Through the Wonder Fund, Unified Youth fuels regional Wonder Ecosystems, strengthens grassroots partners, and builds creative capabilities that prepare young people to thrive in an uncertain world.

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