



SASHA CENTER

SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES FOR
HOLISTIC HEALING AND AWARENESS

2727 Second Ave. Suite 162
Detroit MI 48201

The founder and executive director of the SASHA Center is Kalimah Johnson, LMSW, ACSW, LCSW. She has been a sexual assault therapist for 20+ years and a licensed clinical social worker since 1995.

SASHA Center has been positively supported for being culturally specific but also challenged by it. We are creating safe spaces for black women to do their own work in healing as it relates to sexual assault and abuse. However, ALL women of any race can participate.

Our groups are “geared” towards the African American female, 16 years of age or older, the groups are “peer educational” and we advise participants to also engage in “one on one individual counseling” and support with a therapist of their choice in addition to attending our group sessions. We do not provide individual counseling or therapy. It is not required, but we support and encourage survivors to get all the help needed in addition to our group sessions. This group is not ideal for clients who have untreated mental illness. We can provide referrals and we have strong relationships with WCSAFE and other agencies that can provide individual counseling as well as mental health services.

The open group that is currently running once a month at the Wellness Plan is for any female over the age of 16 who is a supporter or survivor of sexual assault. This means that different members may be there at each and every meeting. Currently, this is the only open group we have running and we will increase them as we secure more funding. Consider making a donation to help us!

Our “closed” groups are in conjunction with other organizations and the general public can’t join those groups as they are for specific populations only and ALL women of various backgrounds participate.

We encourage survivors to reach out by calling our 1-888-865-7055 number to pre-register for the open group and that is when we provide them with all pertinent information regarding how the group is ran and how it operates and we answer any questions or concerns they may have as well as acknowledge their own strength in making contact with us. We know that disclosing can be tough for survivors and we validate their strength in reaching out.

Because our groups are geared for black women and while we have had women who are not black participate-we try our best to model and teach empathy, mutual respect and understanding. It can be challenging-but we have been successful with all individuals involved who are open and who address and acknowledge bias, discrimination, racism and privilege. Our facilitators are very skilled at making participants feel comfortable, but sometimes it can be tough for a person who is not a descendant of enslaved people to talk about this. If slavery is not a part of her experience or history (and we do talk about the impact of slavery on healing from and after a sexual trauma) then it may not resonate or impact her the same way. For some this is difficult, and thus this group may not be a good fit because being and learning to heal with others who are different than yourself can be a challenge.



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We are aware that some might not be comfortable with this format, but it has worked for several reasons. Black women have been almost invisible in the sexual assault movement and black communities rarely have a space to be free and discuss trauma, which is why we are formatted this way.

Non-black women do well in the groups knowing that the focus is on the nuances that exist for black women and healing as well as environmental factors that exist that actually serve as barriers to that healing. Non-black women actually can become allies while in the group-as long as they are able to learn and use the tools for their own healing. We inform ALL potential participants of this fact and allow her to decide if she wants to attend.

If it is not a good fit for her we will refer to other supporting agencies in this area to assist.

Because of our orientation towards culturally specific centered principles we also recognize that this group may not be for everyone. Survivors get to choose if our program is something that can help them no matter their racial background.

We need volunteers to assist us with some administrative duties, event planning and fundraising. We ask that all volunteers attend an open group for six sessions, attend training on sexual assault and apply after that for consideration if they want to work with group participants or facilitate. They don't have to have a college degree to facilitate and we will partner them with a licensed clinical social worker whenever possible.

Also, as a practitioner looking to determine if our programming is appropriate for your client you may feel free to join us and participate in our open group. You must be willing to participate (not observe) and we never ask people to disclose during the session and you can attend as a supporter of survivors.

If you have more questions or need clarification please give us a call to discuss in more detail and we will be happy to take your call!

1-888-865-7055

We are not a crisis agency and we do not have regular business hours as we have no funding to pay for an administrator and our infrastructure can't support that way of operating at this time. For any inconvenience related to this we apologize.