



Cartwheel

**Supporting the mental health
and academic success of
DeKalb students**

Board of Education Meeting

December 8, 2025

www.cartwheel.org





Mental health is at the heart of Dekalb's biggest goals

Promote the academic, social, and emotional growth of each student by fostering a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment

Absenteeism

Students with a mental health disorder miss **twice** as many school days²

Anxiety is the leading cause of absenteeism^{3,4}



Behavior

Unaddressed mental health issues lead to more suspensions, missing more days⁵

Graduation

Students with a mental health disorder are **44% more likely** to dropout of school¹

1. [Society for Research in Childhood Development](#) 2. [ACER](#) 3. [EdWeek survey](#) of 1,034 high school students, 4. [Los Angeles Trust](#) for Children's Health 5. [Columbia University](#)



Who we are

Cartwheel is the leading partner for schools on mental health, attendance, and behavior

325+

District and statewide partners



92%

Our students improve in mental health outcomes

96%

School staff recommend Cartwheel to a peer



Not all mental health partners are the same

What makes Cartwheel a great fit for Dekalb?



Cartwheel is uniquely designed to improve mental health, attendance, and behavior

- Reduce **waitlists** for care
- Serve students regardless of **insurance**
- ✚ Expand **clinical hours** (8am-8pm)
- ▲ Meet diverse **language** needs
- ◆ Involve **parents & families** throughout

Support **school staff**
and reduce overwhelm



For Dekalb students

Evidence-based telehealth for students and families

- 1-1 evidence-based therapy
- Psychiatric evaluations
- Medication management
- Parent guidance
- Family therapy
- *Rapid access, multilingual, all insurances, extended clinic hours*



For Dekalb families & staff

Wraparound supports for your families & staff

- **Family support:** Care coordination for every family referred for services
- **School support:** Dedicated Program Manager to consult on student cases
- **Skill-building webinars**
- **Therapy for faculty & staff** (optional)

Our proprietary Specialty Programs improve mental health and educational outcomes

Cartwheel's proprietary Specialty Programs



School Avoidance

Address root causes, such as social anxiety, and develop strategies to return to school



ADHD & Executive Functioning

Improve executive functioning and receive medication management (if appropriate)



Multilingual & Newcomer

Care in the student's native language and mental health education for parents



Social Media & Screen Time *(coming soon in 2026)*

Develop healthy boundaries, manage impulsivity, and build social skills



Grief & Loss *(coming soon in 2026)*

Help students process grief and loss and build healthy coping skills



Positive Classroom Behavior *(coming soon in 2026)*

Build emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and anger management skills

Our Data Platform makes it easy to refer, track student progress, and show impact to the Board

The screenshot shows the 'Student Profile' for Johnette Stokes, a 6th grader, 10 years old, from Higley Unified School District. The profile includes fields for Student ID (HUSD-00142), Preferred name, Date of birth (April 17, 2013), State (MA), Primary language (English), Pronouns (He/Him), Age (10), and Care coordinator (Unassigned). A 'Recent Activity' log shows updates to referral details and profile information. A 'Cartwheel Services' section lists 'Parent Guidance' and 'School Info Needed' with an assigned clinician, Charline Klein.

The 'Impact metrics' dashboard provides a comprehensive overview of referral data. It features a 'Referral volume' section with three key metrics: 78 approved referrals this year, 60% of schools referring students, and 80% of school staff referring students. A bar chart shows the top reasons for referral, including Anxiety (20), Depression (18), and School avoidance (15). A seasonal bar chart displays referral volume from July to June, with October showing the highest volume. A progress bar indicates that 33% of the contract is utilized, with 40 first sessions scheduled out of a total of 120.

School staff easily **submit referrals**, follow student **progress**, and view **outcomes** (HIPAA/FERPA compliant, parent consent)

District and school leaders **see trends and outcomes data**: Clinical impact, student engagement, parent satisfaction, educational outcomes, and more.

Our 1-1 care coordinators and technology platform deliver 3x higher follow-through among families

Within 5 minutes, families complete all onboarding paperwork (multilingual)

Each family has a 1-1 Care Coordinator (bilingual)

9:41 📶 🔋

cartwheel.org/get-started/...

Cartwheel
Greenlands Elementary School

First, let's get to know the student who will be receiving care.

Please provide the following:

Student's first name

Student's last name

Student's date of birth

Continue >

"Cartwheel was a game changer for my daughter's life."
Kim, Cartwheel Parent

9:41 📶 🔋

cartwheel.org/get-started/...

Cartwheel
Sun Valley Middle School

What times work for Diego to meet with us?

Example: Everyday from 11-11:45am during school lunchtime, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4pm - 6pm

Tip: For the quickest and best care, please provide at least 5 hours of availability per week. If your times are unavailable, we'll work with you to find a time that works.

Sessions are video-based.
For students under 18, a guardian **MUST** be present for the first session. However, you can participate remotely - no need to be physically with Diego during the session.

Continue >

9:41 📶 🔋

cartwheel.org/get-started/...

Cartwheel
Greenlands Elementary School

Now, please upload a photo of your insurance card.

Services are free for families who have Medicaid; however, a card is still required. For those with private insurance, standard copays and/or deductibles apply, and a cost estimate will be provided before your initial session.

Front of card

Back of card

Information is kept private and secure.

Continue >

Don't have your insurance card?

Enter details manually >



Anonymized student: Tony, grade 10

Tony missed 25 days of school. He's been struggling to adjust to the new school since moving from out-of-state and feels anxious about entering the school building. He is coping with some alcohol use.



Referral

Counselor talks to Tony and mom and uses the Cartwheel Portal to make a referral into the School Avoidance Program

Assessment

Within a week, a therapist conducts a 1-hour intake session with Tony and mom

Personalized care

Tony engages in 1-1 weekly therapy via Zoom with a specialty trained clinician

Mom sees a clinician weekly on strategies to support Tony

Tony and his mom see a child psychiatrist for a medication eval

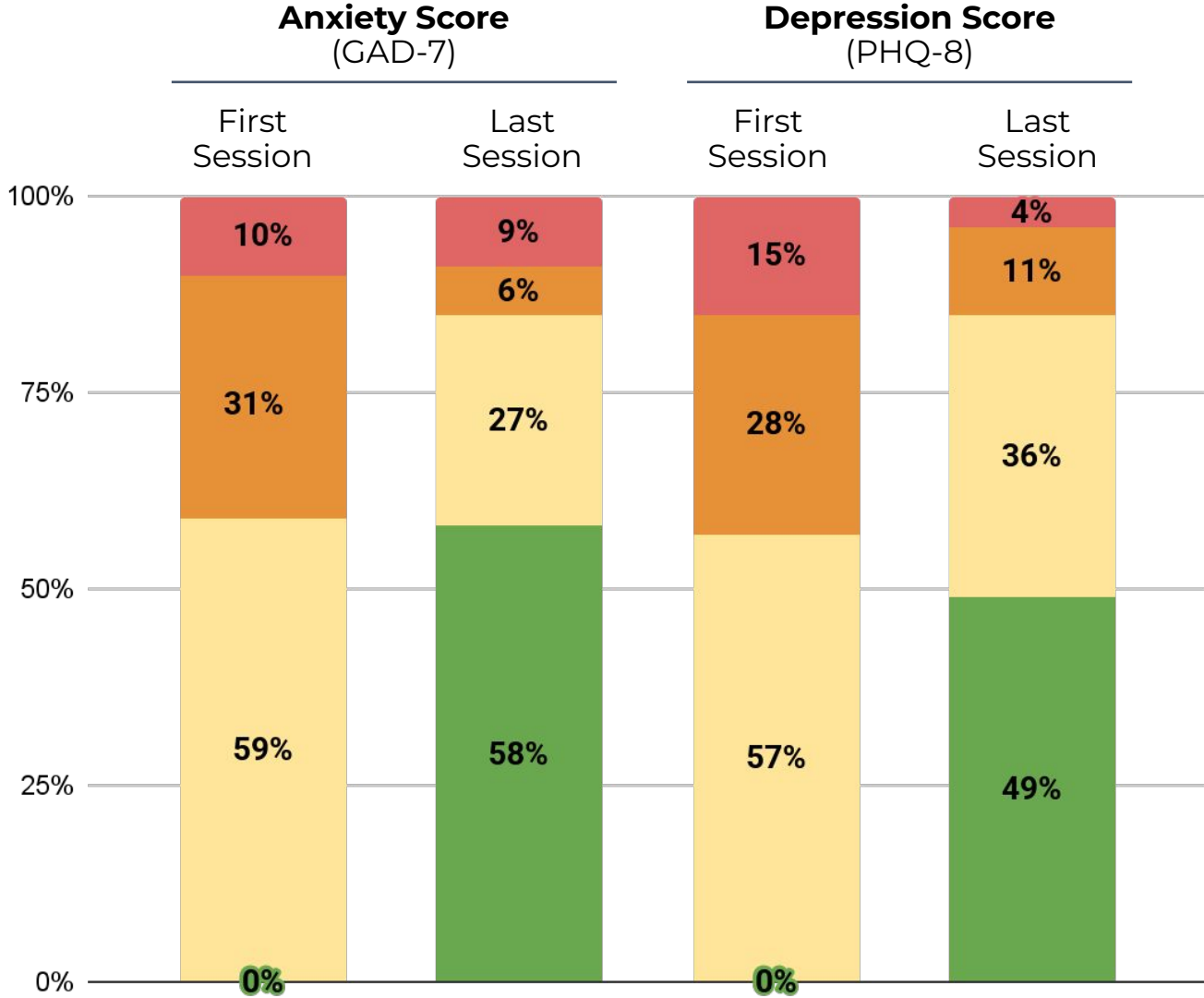
Ongoing support

After 4 months, Tony is regularly attending school and more effectively coping with social anxiety

Cartwheel collaborates with the school counselor throughout care

We deliver 2x stronger clinical outcomes than traditional care

- Moderately Severe/Severe (15+)
- Moderate (10-14)
- Mild (5-9)
- Minimal (0-4)



58%
experience full remission in anxiety

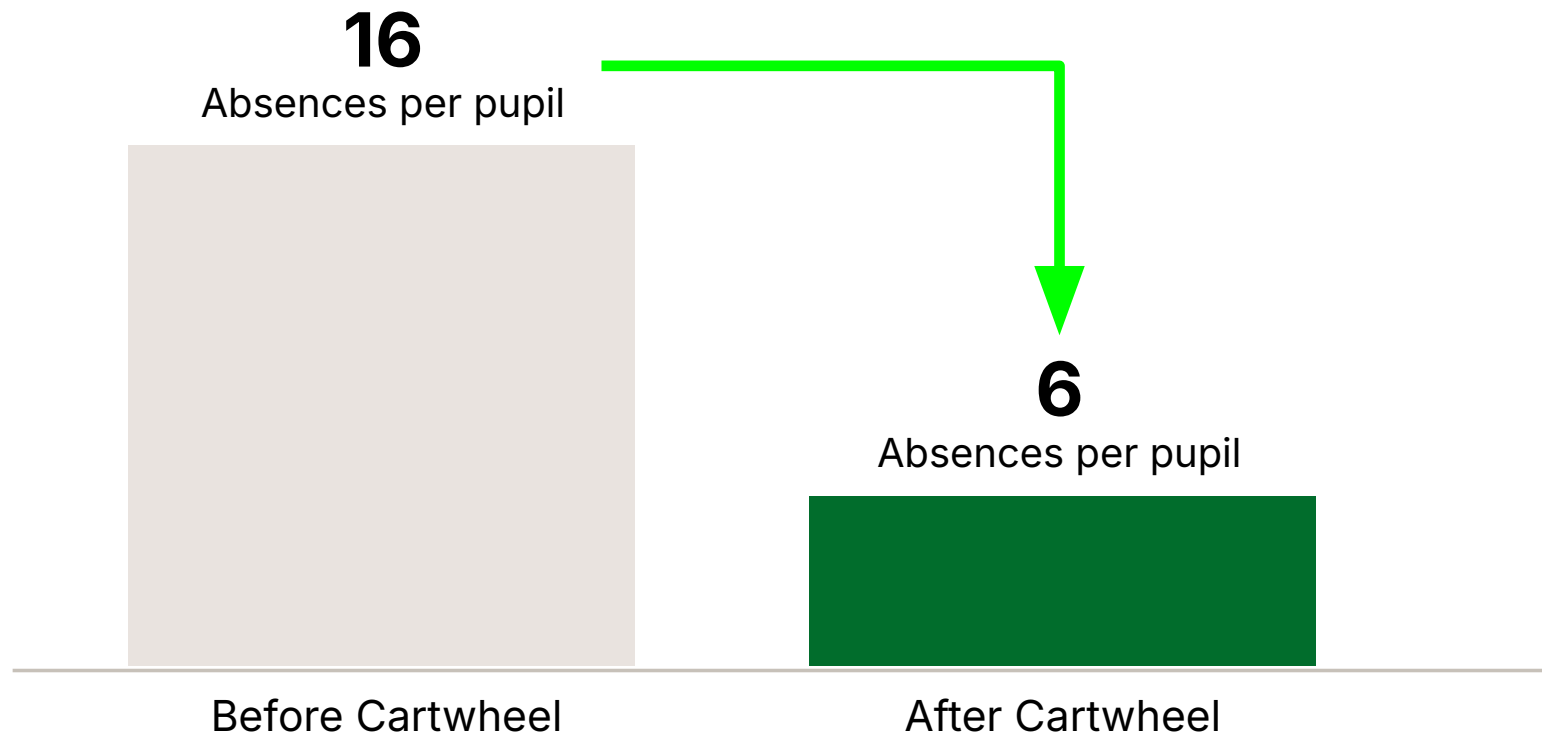
3x
reduction in kids with moderate to severe depression

Sample: Includes students ages 12+ graduating from Cartwheel during 2023-24 school year and referred from 13 high-need districts in Massachusetts. Data gathered in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Sample restricted to students with elevated anxiety and/or depression symptoms at intake (score of 5 or higher on PHQ-8 and/or GAD-7 at intake) who complete a follow-up screening at graduation.

Case Study: 62% reduction in absences per student for students receiving Cartwheel telehealth



Absences per student before and after Cartwheel services



Sample size: n=141 students who engaged in Cartwheel telehealth services in a 13,000 student urban district (75% free/reduced lunch) during the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 school years. First bar shows the average number of absences per pupil in the year they were referred for services. For the same cohort, the second bar shows the average number of absences per pupil in following years.

"Over the past two years, Cartwheel has become an indispensable partner in addressing absenteeism."

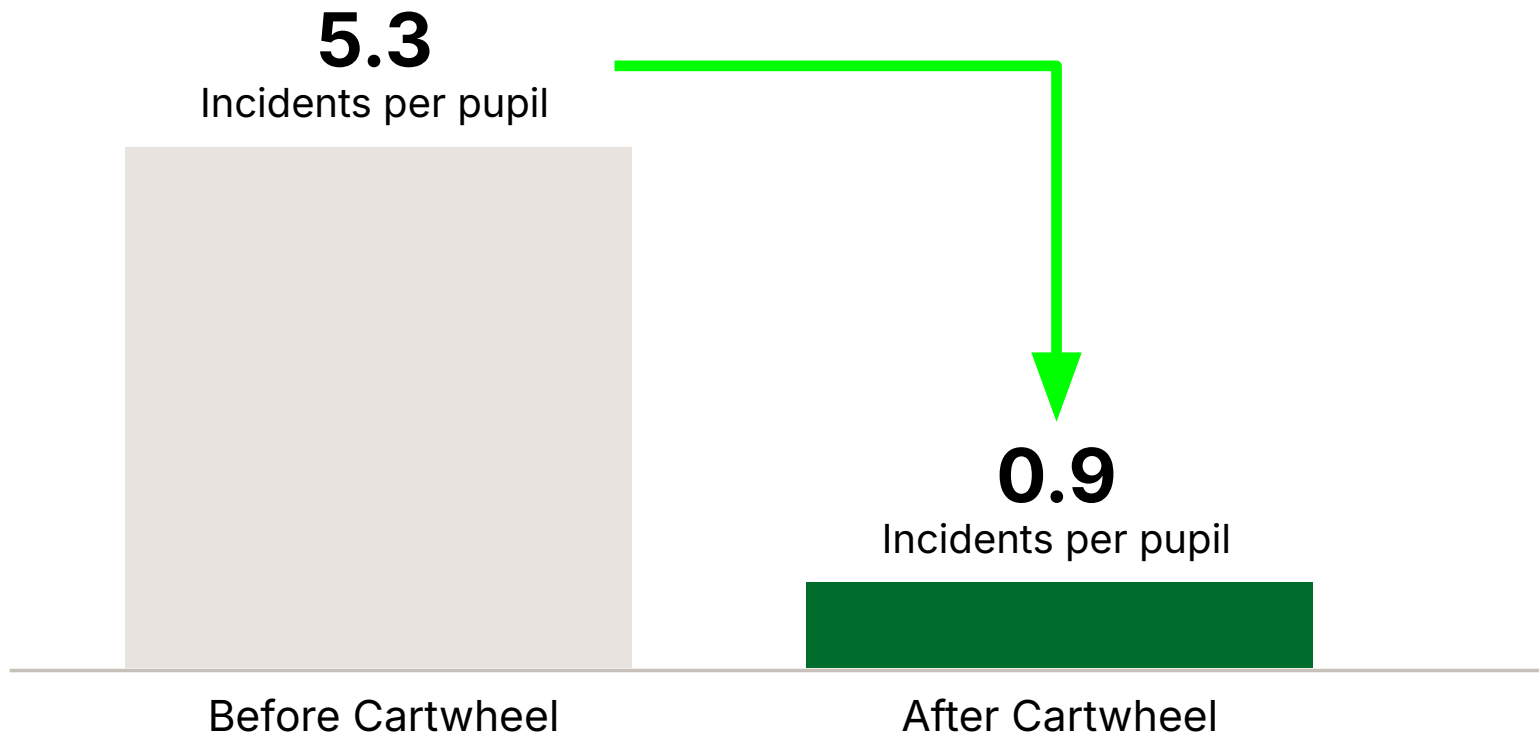
Peoria Public Schools

Comparison group:
Students who did not receive Cartwheel services did **not** see improved attendance

Case Study: 84% reduction in behavioral incidents, increasing instructional time per student



Behavioral incidents per student per year before/after Cartwheel



Sample size: n=594 students who were referred to Cartwheel telehealth services in a 5,000 student suburban district (12% low income) during the 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26 school years. Of these students, 72 committed behavioral incidents and attended sessions with Cartwheel. First bar shows the average # of incidents per year before starting treatment with Cartwheel for the 72 students. For the same cohort, the second bar shows the average # of incidents per year after starting services with Cartwheel. Incident defined a code of conduct violation requiring documented administrative response, such as bullying or physical aggression.

“We have seen firsthand how Cartwheel’s model can transform student outcomes”

Acton-Boxborough School District

Comparison group: Students who did not receive Cartwheel services did **not** see fewer incidents per year

What our partnership will deliver



- ▲ 100% accessible, evidence-based care
- ◆ 90% reduction in waitlists for families
- 3x better family engagement with less burden on your school team
- Specialty Programs to move the needle on your attendance and behavior goals
- + Nation's leading data collection and impact reporting platform to show ROI





Cartwheel

Thank you!

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www.cartwheel.org

