✳ Cartwheel

Salem Students Receiving Cartwheel Services See
45% Drop in Chronic Absenteeism

45% reduction in chronically absent students receiving care from Cartwheel. 50% reduction in unexcused absence rate. 64% of students with prior out-of-school suspensions had none after Cartwheel. Measurable results for students and schools.

As one of Cartwheel's first district partners, Salem Public Schools recognized that many students couldn't access the mental health support they needed. Rising chronic absenteeism and behavioral incidents signaled a growing need—but systemic barriers like long waitlists, transportation challenges, and scheduling conflicts were keeping students from getting timely care.

Salem needed a partner who could expand access quickly, deliver high-quality care, integrate seamlessly with school teams, and provide data to demonstrate impact. Over four years of partnership, Cartwheel has delivered.

> *Chronic absenteeism isn't just an attendance problem—it's often a mental health problem. Before Cartwheel, we were seeing the consequences of untreated mental health needs play out in our attendance data. Cartwheel helped us address those root causes—and the 45% reduction in chronically absent students shows what's possible when mental health support is accessible and integrated with schools."*

Ellen Wingard
Executive Director of Student Support Services,
Salem Public Schools

District Spotlight

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
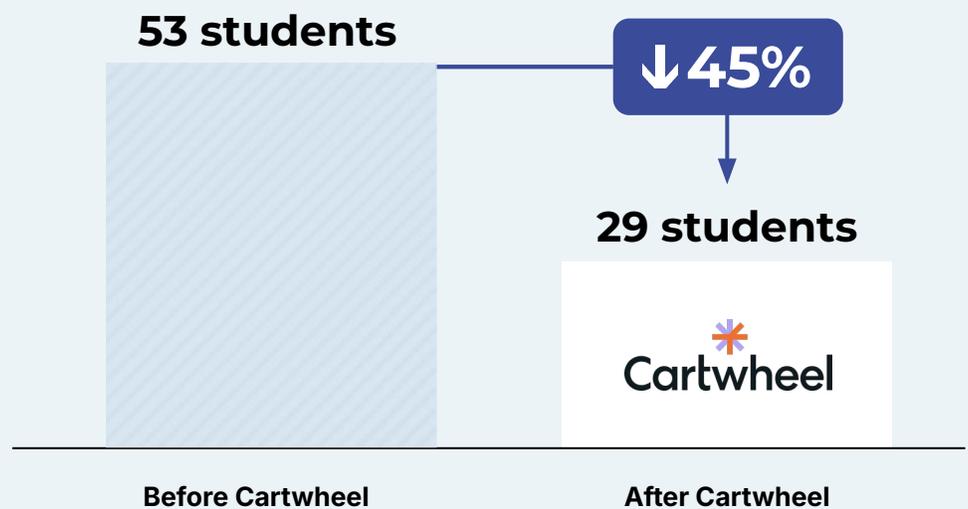*Where belonging leads to opportunity.*

Salem, Massachusetts

3,800 students across 11 schools

60% low income

Sample size: n=334 students who were referred to Cartwheel telehealth services in a 3,800 student suburban district (60% low income) during the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 school years. First bar shows number of students who were chronically absent in the school year prior to receiving services. For the same cohort, the second bar shows number who were chronically absent in at least one subsequent school year. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent of school days within an academic year.

Chronically Absent Students
Before vs. After Cartwheel

53 students

↓45%

29 students

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Before Cartwheel   **After Cartwheel**

↓ 45%
Reduction in number of chronically absent students

↓ 50%
Reduction in unexcused absence rate

↓ 64%
Of students with prior out-of-school suspensions had none after Cartwheel

Clinical outcomes that support academic success

66%
Students
who completed care or are 90+ days in care achieved clinically significant symptom reduction

~5,500
Sessions
Sessions delivered since the start of our partnership

92%
Students
enjoy meeting with their therapist

87%
Students
find it helpful to meet with their therapist

What Makes Cartwheel Different

Specialized for school outcomes
Therapy, psychiatry, and family support focused on school avoidance, anxiety, depression, and behavioral challenges.

Rapid access to care
Students are matched with clinicians in 7–10 days instead of waiting months.

Integrated with school teams
Ongoing collaboration with counselors and social workers, shared strategies, and real-time progress updates.

Sustainable through insurance
No costs for families on Medicaid; in-network with military and commercial insurers.

Multilingual care
Students are matched with a clinician who speaks their native language.

✳ Cartwheel

Learn more about how Cartwheel can help your district measurably improve attendance, behavior, and academic engagement.

www.cartwheel.org

Student Success Story: Dani, Grade 8

Dani* had been struggling with school avoidance, peer relationships, and conflict. The year she was referred to Cartwheel, she had 31 absences (27 unexcused).

After completing a teletherapy program with Cartwheel, **Dani's attendance improved by 32%** with 21 absences (1 unexcused) the following year.

After 1 year of individual therapy, parent guidance, and psychiatry sessions, Dani's mental health improved significantly and she graduated from the Cartwheel program.

*Student name has been changed to preserve anonymity