



# Staff FAQs



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# REFERRING STAFF FAQs

## Getting Started with Cartwheel

### **As a DeKalb school staff member, how can I have the opportunity to refer a student to Cartwheel?**

If you are a DeKalb staff member, like a school counselor, social worker, MTSS Specialist, and mental health coordinator, who has the opportunity to refer a student to Cartwheel, you can submit a referral through the Cartwheel portal at [app.cartwheel.org](https://app.cartwheel.org).

Once the referral is approved by your area mental health coordinator, the Cartwheel team will reach out to the student's parent/guardian (or directly to the student if they are 18 or older or otherwise legally authorized to consent to care) to begin next steps.

### **Can a student or parent sign up for support directly?**

Parents and guardians may seek support directly for their middle or high school students [here](#). Submitting this simple [interest form](#) notifies the school of the family's interest. The school team then reviews the request and, if appropriate, approves a referral through district processes before care begins.

If a student reaches out for care with Cartwheel, please tell them to connect with their parent/guardian to fill out the [interest form](#) or reach out to their school counselor or social worker to [make a referral](#) directly. Students cannot self-refer to Cartwheel unless they are over 18 years old. All referrals must come through a parent/guardian or school staff, and Cartwheel will not communicate directly with students to solicit referrals.

### **How quickly can a student be seen?**

Once a referral is approved, Cartwheel will reach out to the family within 24 hours and aim to connect students with a licensed clinician within one week from first contact with the family. This is dependent upon family responsiveness and insurance verification.

Sometimes it can take longer (for example, we need the family's insurance information in order to confirm coverage). Our care coordinators guide families through the process and facilitate scheduling virtual appointments with us as soon as possible and when convenient for the student and family.

### **Have other questions?**

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

[Click here for Family FAQs](#)

## **I've referred a student and the referral was approved. What happens next?**

Once a referral is approved, the Cartwheel team begins outreach to the family to get connected to care.

We will:

- Reach out directly to the family, typically within 24 hours of approval
- Communicate with families via text, email, and/or phone to introduce services and explain next steps
- Support families with insurance verification, paperwork, and scheduling

At this stage, timely follow-up from the school can help families stay engaged and move forward.

## **How can DeKalb's school staff support families during the outreach process?**

School staff play an important role in helping families connect to care after a referral is approved. To support timely engagement, staff should:

- Follow up with the family within the first 48 hours to confirm they have seen Cartwheel's communication
- Share Cartwheel's [family information flyer](#) so families know what to expect
- Offer support, such as helping families complete forms or answer questions during a meeting or phone call
- Encourage families to respond to Cartwheel's outreach so care can begin promptly

## **How does Cartwheel's outreach process work?**

After a referral is approved, Cartwheel begins outreach to help the family get connected to care. Outreach typically includes:

- Multiple contact attempts using text, email, and phone
- Early follow-up, with initial outreach usually beginning within 24 hours of approval
- Ongoing outreach until the family responds or the referral is paused in alignment with district guidance
- Direct support for families, including help completing intake forms, verifying insurance, and scheduling the first appointment

### **Have other questions?**

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If a family does not respond to outreach, Cartwheel may connect with the school team to align on next steps. The school team is notified after the 3rd and 6th outreach attempts, as well as if the referral is ultimately closed.

## **How can I check the status of a student's referral?**

Staff members who have the opportunity to refer have access to the Cartwheel portal and can:

- View the student's referral status
- See whether outreach is in progress or care has been scheduled
- Use this information to guide appropriate follow-up with families

For questions about a specific referral or help navigating next steps, staff members who can refer can contact their Cartwheel Customer Success Manager, [Emily Tardif](#) or reach out to [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org) for specific questions around insurance, outreach, scheduling, etc.

## **What are Cartwheel's hours of operation?**

Our office staff is available Mon-Fri 8am to 8pm, and Saturday 8am to 4pm, at 1-617-272-7439 or via email at [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org).

Our therapists and psychiatrists provide care before, during, and after school, Mon-Fri from 8am-8pm and Saturdays from 8am-4pm. We are also able to continue care throughout school vacations including summer break.

## **Can DeKalb students attend their virtual appointments during school hours?**

At this time, DeKalb's partnership with Cartwheel does not include in-school therapy sessions. All services are delivered virtually, outside of the school day.

## **What kinds of mental health needs can Cartwheel help with?**

Cartwheel supports middle and high school students and families with a wide range of mental health needs, especially when challenges begin to affect a student's well-being, behavior, or school engagement.

- Drops in grades, attendance, or interest in school or friends
- Increased irritability, anger, or emotional outbursts

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- Ongoing sadness, hopelessness, or flat mood
- Anxiety, panic, persistent worry, or symptoms of depression
- Trouble concentrating, low motivation, or difficulty completing work
- Excessive screen or technology use to avoid responsibilities or social interaction
- Risky behaviors, substance use, or mention of self-harm

Cartwheel commonly supports concerns such as anxiety, depression, academic stress, school avoidance, family or relationship issues, grief, trauma, self-esteem challenges, sleep problems, unhealthy technology use, and more.

## **What mental health needs are NOT appropriate for a Cartwheel referral?**

Mental health-related needs NOT appropriate for a referral to Cartwheel include:

- Primary substance use disorders
- Primary eating disorders
- Significant acuity indicating higher level or more specialized care is needed

In these cases, Cartwheel can often refer students to a partner PHP or IOP. Please indicate on the referral if this is of interest, or contact your Customer Success Manager, [Emily Tardif](#).

If a student has one of the below needs as a co-occurring condition, we may be able to still work with the student to treat the condition(s) within our scope of services. For any needs we are not able to address, we can help families figure out next steps.

- Severe intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Needs requiring speech or occupational therapy
- Needs requiring urgent care or emergency care

If a student has an acute crisis requiring emergency evaluation and/or higher level of care over the course of Cartwheel treatment, Cartwheel will facilitate the student connecting with the appropriate evaluation and/or support.

If a student has had a recent suicide attempt, multiple concurrent hospitalizations, is in an out-of-district placement or there is other perceived risk for which a virtual model would not be indicated, that may also not be appropriate for Cartwheel treatment.

If there are any questions about the appropriateness of a referral, please speak with your identified school leadership and/or your Cartwheel Customer Success Manager, [Emily Tardif](#).

## **Have other questions?**

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## **What kinds of students would be a good fit for Cartwheel services?**

Students who are beginning to show early [signs of mental health concerns](#), such as dropping grades, decreased attendance or anxiety/depressive symptoms are strong candidates for therapy. **The earlier we can work with a student, the better the long-term outcomes.**

Students dealing with eligible mental health needs as outlined above who are interested and able to engage in a virtual therapy program would likely be good candidates for referral to Cartwheel.

Previous therapy experience is not required. However, having some desire and/or openness to therapy is recommended as this supports a student's regular attendance and overall engagement with us, which in turn support the best outcomes.

In terms of technology needs, students should have access to a computer, smartphone or tablet, a reliable Wifi connection, and the ability to have some degree of private space during their virtual therapy sessions.

## **Clinical Services**

### **What services does Cartwheel provide?**

- Mental health assessments and individual therapy
- Parent guidance support for parents/caregivers
- Family therapy
- Family involvement and school collaboration throughout care
- School avoidance program
- Medication evaluation and management (if needed, in addition to therapy)
- Rolling psychoeducational webinars for parents/guardians, families, and staff
- Support finding community providers to address longer-term needs
- Therapy for school district staff

### **Is Cartwheel 100% telehealth?**

Yes! From our survey data, about 93% of students and families we work with say they either prefer telehealth over in-person or don't have a preference.

### **Have other questions?**

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

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## What grades does Cartwheel serve?

Through DeKalb's partnership with Cartwheel, services are currently available to students and families in middle and high school (grades 6-12).

For students, Cartwheel offers:

- **Individual therapy** for the student, delivered virtually
- **Parent or caregiver guidance**, as appropriate, to support the student's progress
- **Family involvement and school collaboration** as part of care
- **Medication evaluation and management** (if needed, in addition to therapy)

Parent or caregiver guidance may be provided:

- Alongside a student's individual therapy
- As a standalone service

For students outside of the middle and high school grade levels, school teams should follow existing district support pathways.

## What is parent guidance? How does it work?

Parent guidance involves a therapist (child development specialist) working directly with a parent/guardian (either alongside or independently of a student's individual therapy) to provide psychoeducation and parent coaching support.

Parent guidance can be helpful in addressing a range of challenges and concerns, including anxiety, school avoidance, depression, OCD, emotional/behavioral dysregulation, anger, oppositional behaviors, attention, motivation, self-esteem, grief, academic and/or family stressors, unhealthy screen use, substance use, self-harm, and/or parent-child relationship conflicts.

Parent guidance interventions can be tremendously impactful in helping students of all ages and is the primary intervention in most cases for children of younger ages.

## How long are sessions?

- **Therapy sessions** are typically 55 minutes
- **Parent guidance sessions** are typically 30 minutes
- **Medication follow-up visits** are usually 20-30 min after an initial 60-90 min assessment
- All of our sessions are offered **virtually**

## Have other questions?

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## Is there a cap on the number of sessions?

While Cartwheel does not cap the number of sessions a student can receive, Georgia Medicaid does cap the number of reimbursable psychotherapy sessions at 24/year per Georgia Medicaid member. Though most students will complete care ahead of this cap, this cap could impact some students and Cartwheel will work with each student to ensure continuity of care.

Where appropriate, Cartwheel therapists can also refer internally to a Cartwheel psychiatrist for medication and/or diagnostic evaluation.

For longer-term and/or more specialized needs, we work with families to find ongoing care in the local community, whether through a primary care provider or specialist, to ensure continuity of care.

Starting in July 2026, students receiving pro-bono care will transition from an indefinite number of sessions to a structured 10-session model that focuses on building coping and resiliency skills. Here's why: evidence shows that many students experience meaningful clinical improvement within about 10 sessions, and this structure allows us to expand access so more students and families can be seen sooner—while maintaining the same quality of care.

## Who is on Cartwheel's Care Team?

Our team consists of therapists, medical providers (psychiatrists & psychiatric nurse practitioners), care coordinators, external referral coordinators and customer success managers.

- **Therapists** provide assessments, individual therapy, family therapy, and parent guidance support.
- **Psychiatrists and nurse practitioners** provide diagnostic and medication evaluation, as well short-term medication management while students are enrolled in Cartwheel treatment. (Note: Students cannot be referred for MD-NP evaluation without participating in Cartwheel's individual therapy program or without parents/guardians being enrolled in parent guidance.)
- **Care coordinators** introduce families to Cartwheel, guide families through the care process, manage scheduling and logistics, and serve as general administrative supports throughout the care journey.

## Have other questions?

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- **External referral coordinators** work directly with families to support them by providing resources for care outside of Cartwheel, when recommended by the student's clinician, helping families identify the appropriate next steps.
- **Customer Success Managers (CSMs)** work with your school and district teams to help you successfully launch and use Cartwheel's mental health resources effectively to serve the most students and families we can. They'll share practical tips for getting started, help you fit Cartwheel into your existing routines, and serve as your main contact for questions and support. Most of our Customer Success Managers have experience working in schools, so they understand your daily challenges.

Our therapists and clinicians are highly trained and state-licensed to provide clinical services. They have experience working with children, adolescents, and families using evidence-based approaches.

Cartwheel's Care Team reflects a range of backgrounds and lived experiences, and many of our clinicians provide culturally responsive care informed by the communities they serve. Clinicians and care team members speak multiple languages, and we work to match families with providers who can best meet their clinical, cultural, and communication needs whenever possible.

Our care coordinators and external referral coordinators have extensive experience supporting families through the care process and can assist in English, Spanish, and other languages. All Care Team members go through a rigorous vetting process to ensure high-quality, compassionate care.

## **Do students and families work with the same therapist throughout?**

Cartwheel aims to provide continuity of care whenever possible, and many students work with the same therapist throughout their time in care.

In some cases, a change may be needed due to clinical recommendations, changes in family or clinician availability, or a student's evolving needs. If a change occurs, Cartwheel will work closely with the family to ensure a smooth transition and identify a new clinician who is a good fit.

If a match isn't working, Cartwheel would work with the family to identify a new Cartwheel therapist for the student and/or family.

## **Does Cartwheel work with families?**

Absolutely. Mental health care is often more effective when parents and caregivers are involved, and we engage and support families throughout the care process.

## **Have other questions?**

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We support parents with parent guidance sessions, which can be a great option for parents of students who are too young or otherwise unwilling or not able to participate in telehealth themselves. We also offer family therapy where the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) participate in therapy alongside one another.

### **Does teletherapy work?**

Yes! Teletherapy has been shown to be helpful in various contexts, for people of all ages, and for a number of mental health conditions.

According to the [American Psychological Association](#), a number of studies have found teletherapy to be just as effective as in-person therapy for depression, anxiety, and other mental health needs. Teletherapy also comes with additional benefits, including reduced commute times for patients and access to a broader range of therapists. Some people also prefer being in their home environment compared to an office setting.

Our team at Cartwheel is committed to constantly improving the virtual care experience. For example, we use evidence-based assessment tools and monitor student progress.

### **I have a student and family who is only available or may only be interested in short-term support. Does short-term therapy work?**

Yes! Short-term teletherapy has been shown to be helpful in various contexts, for people of all ages, and for a number of mental health conditions.

According to the [American Psychological Association](#), recent research indicates that on average 15 to 20 sessions are required for 50 percent of patients to recover as indicated by self-reported symptom measures. There are also a growing number of studies that have found that treatments of moderate duration and even **single sessions** can result in clinically significant improvements.

Our team at Cartwheel uses evidence-based assessment tools and skills-based treatments (e.g., CBT, DBT, SFBT) to support student progress.

### **Can students be re-referred?**

This is a case-by-case decision, but yes, students can typically be referred more than once (for the same health concern and/or if a different one comes up).

If the student would benefit from specialized support, Cartwheel also works with the family and school to identify potential referral options to best meet the needs of the student and/or family.

### **Have other questions?**

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

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## **Does Cartwheel prescribe medication?**

Yes, our team of licensed child and adolescent psychiatrists and nurse practitioners can prescribe medications as clinically indicated to address various needs.

We are not able to prescribe controlled substances such as stimulants (e.g., Adderall, Ritalin) or benzodiazepines (e.g., Xanax, Ativan, Klonopin).

We are not able to continue prescriptions begun by an alternative provider as a bridge, but we are able to provide second opinions about a student's medication regimen.

## **How can Cartwheel offer care without waitlists?**

By partnering with schools, we can estimate the number of students we will be working with throughout the year and plan ahead to avoid waitlists.

Since we're telehealth-based, we can work with a larger number of mental health professionals than in-person clinics and match them to students more effectively.

## **Does Cartwheel handle emergencies and crises?**

**Emergency during a Cartwheel visit (at home):** Our clinicians are highly trained in performing risk assessments. If there's an emergency during a session, we will take appropriate steps to ensure an urgent evaluation is performed by a mobile crisis team or by having the student brought to the emergency department.

**Emergency outside a Cartwheel visit:** We don't provide on-demand or on-site crisis services. If an emergency happens outside of a session, school staff should follow school policies and families should call 911 or go to the emergency department.

## **Have other questions?**

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[Click here for Family FAQs](#)

# School Avoidance Program

## What is Cartwheel's School Avoidance Program?

Cartwheel's School Avoidance Program is a **specialized mental health intervention** designed to support students whose anxiety, stress, or emotional distress makes it difficult to attend or engage in school consistently.

The program goes beyond attendance tracking. It focuses on the **emotional and psychological factors** driving avoidance and provides coordinated support through therapy, parent guidance, psychiatric evaluation, and collaboration with school teams.

## What students are a good fit for this program?

Students may be a strong fit if they:

- Frequently struggle to get to school or stay in school
- Experience anxiety, depression, or emotional distress linked to attendance
- Have physical complaints that appear mainly on school days
- Have caregivers who recognize attendance as an ongoing concern
- Have families willing to participate in weekly therapy and guidance sessions

## Why should we refer students to the School Avoidance Program?

Students in the School Avoidance Program receive specialized, intensive support that standard therapy alone may not provide. The program's unique approach includes:

- **Dual-service model:** Both individual therapy and parent guidance sessions to address the issue comprehensively.
- **Clinical assessment:** Students complete the School Refusal Assessment Scale (SRAS) to identify the core reasons for avoidance which guides targeted treatment.
- **Evidence-based interventions:** Specialized techniques designed specifically for school avoidance challenges.
- **Psychiatric evaluation:** All students receive a comprehensive psychiatric evaluation to assess for any underlying conditions that may contribute to school avoidance

## How long does the program typically last?

### Have other questions?

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

[Click here for Family FAQs](#)

Students typically participate in the School Avoidance Program for 2-6 months, though duration varies based on individual needs and progress. The intensive nature of the program (weekly individual therapy and parent guidance) is designed to create meaningful, lasting change in school engagement.

## **How can I refer a student?**

**District Referral:** Use the [referral form](#) and select "school avoidance" as the referral reason.

**Family Interest Form:** Families can request support directly via a simple [interest form](#).

[Learn more](#) about the impact Cartwheel's School Avoidance Program has had on chronic absenteeism.

## **Cost & Insurance**

### **How much does Cartwheel cost families?**

Our team provides a cost estimate prior to the first visit based on the family's insurance.

There is no out-of-pocket cost for students and families who are covered by Medicaid. For those who are uninsured, the school may be able to provide financial aid.

For commercially insured families, we are in-network with major insurance plans and a standard deductible and/or copayment will apply. If we are out of network and the family is commercially insured, we charge a discounted out-of-pocket fee (\$40 per session).

For families and students who are underinsured or facing financial hardship with commercial insurance, we do have payment plans available to defer costs of care over time.

### **Does Cartwheel take insurance?**

Yes, we are in-network for Georgia Medicaid and most commercial insurance plans. For specific questions about insurance, families can call 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org).

**Commercial plans currently in network in Georgia include:**

### **Have other questions?**

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- Anthem BlueCross BlueShield of GA Commercial
- Anthem BlueCross BlueShield of GA Medicaid Plans
- UnitedHealthcare / Optum (including GEHA)
- Cigna / Evernorth
- Aetna

#### **Medicaid coverage:**

- **All Georgia Medicaid plans are accepted.**
- If Cartwheel is still in the process of becoming in-network with a specific Georgia Medicaid plan, **care is still provided at no cost to the family.**

#### **Additional commercial plans Cartwheel is working to be in network with include:**

- Kaiser Permanente (HMO and PPO)
- Alliant Health Plans / HealthOne Alliance
- TRICARE East

Cartwheel verifies insurance directly with families before care begins and will review any copays or deductibles in advance.

For plan-specific questions, families can contact Cartwheel at 1-617-272-7439 or **[billing@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:billing@cartwheelcare.org)**.

#### **Do you accept Medicaid as secondary insurance?**

Yes, as long as we are in network with both plans. For example, if a family has a primary Commercial plan and a secondary Medicaid plan, we can accept both as long as we are in network with both plans.

#### **How are families charged?**

We will charge a debit or credit card on file (HSA/FSA cards accepted).

## **Cancellation Policy**

#### **What's Cartwheel's cancellation policy?**

*Note: This is shared with students and families prior to their first visit.*

#### **Have other questions?**

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

[Click here for Family FAQs](#)

We work hard to offer appointments without a waitlist and expect students and their family members to consistently attend sessions. Missed or cancelled sessions can delay a student's progress, prevent other families from accessing care, and be disruptive for therapists and school counselors.

**24 Hours' Notice:** If families need to reschedule a visit, we require them to provide 24 hours' notice by either calling 1-617-272-7439, emailing [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org), or sending a message through our secure portal.

### **Is there a cancellation/no-show fee?**

**\$80 Cancellation/No-Show Fee:** If a session is missed or cancelled with less than 24 hours notice, we will charge \$80.

**Exceptions:** Fees are not charged when prohibited by law. We also recognize that serious illnesses, family emergencies, and other things come up from time to time. Some students working with us might find it hard to always show up for their sessions, and we get that. We'll collaborate with families on a case-by-case basis with these exceptions in mind. If a student's therapist is not a good fit for any reason, please let us know and we will work with the student and family to find a solution.

### **What happens if students miss or cancel sessions?**

If a student misses or cancels an appointment, we will do our best to get in touch with families to help them continue care. We will also reach out to the referring school counselor for support contacting families.

We may pause treatment if the student is not consistently joining their therapy sessions. Pausing treatment means holding off on scheduling future sessions with a student until Cartwheel can reconfirm the student and family can consistently join sessions. If we pause treatment, we'll reach out and collaborate closely with the school team.

Typically this will be in situations in which missed or cancelled sessions are seriously impacting engagement in care.

### **Can a family restart treatment?**

If a family previously paused or stopped treatment but is interested in restarting, they or their school counselor can reach out to [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org).

We will make our best effort to re-connect the student and family with their previous therapist and appointment time, but may not always be able to do so based on the

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clinician's availability. Cartwheel will work with the family to match them with another therapist from our Care Team who can meet the family's clinical and scheduling needs.

## **Privacy & Confidentiality**

### **What information does Cartwheel collect from students and families?**

Like other healthcare providers, we ask for standard demographic information and patient and family medical history. We also ask families to sign consent forms to access telehealth services and sign up for our patient portal so we can communicate with them.

### **How does Cartwheel protect student privacy? Do you share health info with the school?**

Cartwheel protects student and family confidentiality, and our practices comply with our obligations under all applicable information privacy laws, including HIPAA.

Collaboration with school staff is an important part of care with Cartwheel and we believe it benefits students and families. With consent from a student's legal guardian, Cartwheel can discuss student health needs with appropriate school staff. (We may obtain consent directly from students if they're of adult age or emancipated minors.)

If a parent/guardian or student of the adult age specifically requests that clinical information not be shared with school staff, we would honor that request and proceed with treatment without sharing information back with the school.

### **Have other questions?**

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# **ALL STAFF FAQs**

## **What is Cartwheel?**

Cartwheel is a virtual mental health provider and a partner of DeKalb County School District.

Through this partnership, Cartwheel provides middle and high school students, families, and all staff with access to licensed mental health clinicians.

### **Which students can receive Cartwheel services?**

Through DeKalb County School District's partnership with Cartwheel, services are currently available to middle and high school students.

If a student is outside of these grade levels, school teams should follow existing district support pathways.

## **Getting Support for Students**

### **What kinds of concerns can Cartwheel help with?**

Cartwheel supports students experiencing a range of mental health challenges, including:

- Anxiety or stress
- Depression or low mood
- School-related challenges, including difficulty attending or staying engaged
- School avoidance
- Emotional distress or difficulty coping
- Changes in behavior, motivation, or engagement

These concerns may be related to academic pressure, social challenges, family stressors, or life transitions. Our services focus on supporting students' emotional well-being and helping families access appropriate care.

### **How do I know if a student might benefit from Cartwheel?**

Some signs that a student may benefit from additional mental health support include:

### **Have other questions?**

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- Changes in mood or behavior
- Increased anxiety or emotional distress
- Difficulty attending or staying engaged in school
- Withdrawal from peers or activities
- Declining academic performance

These signs don't always mean a student needs therapy, but they can be helpful indicators to share with your school's student support team.

## **I'm concerned about a student. What should I do?**

If you're concerned about a student's mental health or well-being:

- Share your observations with your school's designated student support staff, such as a school counselor, social worker, MTSS Specialist, or mental health coordinator
- Discuss what you're seeing and any patterns you've noticed. The student support team can help determine appropriate next steps, which may include a referral to Cartwheel or other supports

You are not expected to diagnose or determine eligibility. Your role is to raise concerns and connect students to the right support.

## **Can I refer a student to Cartwheel myself?**

Only designated school staff have the opportunity to submit referrals to Cartwheel.

If you believe a student may benefit from Cartwheel's services, please connect with your school's counseling or support team to discuss whether a Cartwheel referral may be appropriate.

# **Working With Families**

## **Can I talk to families about Cartwheel?**

Yes! School staff are encouraged to share general information about Cartwheel so families know support is available and how to take the next step.

Staff are encouraged to:

## **Have other questions?**

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- Let families know that mental health support is available through Cartwheel
- Encourage families to either speak with their school's counseling or student support team if they have questions or are interested in next steps OR complete this simple [interest form](#).
- Direct families to learn more or submit an interest form at [cartwheel.org/dekalb](https://cartwheel.org/dekalb)

Staff are not expected to assess eligibility or answer clinical questions. The school support team and Cartwheel will guide families through the process.

## **Can a student or parent seek care directly?**

Yes. Parents and guardians can complete the [Family Interest Form](#) to express interest in services.

Submitting this form lets the school know the family is interested in care services. The school team then reviews the request and, if appropriate, approves a referral before care begins.

## **What happens after a student is referred?**

If a referral is approved, Cartwheel contacts the family directly to help them get connected to care. Services are delivered virtually and coordinated with families and, when appropriate, school teams.

Outreach, scheduling, and care coordination are handled by Cartwheel and the school's referring staff.

# **Services**

## **What kinds of support and services does Cartwheel provide?**

Cartwheel provides mental health support for middle and high school students.

Services may include:

- Mental health assessments and individual therapy
- Medication evaluation and management (if needed, in addition to therapy)
- Guidance support for parents/caregivers
- Family therapy

## **Have other questions?**

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- Family involvement and school collaboration throughout care
- Psychoeducational webinars for parents/guardians, families, and staff
- Support finding community providers to address longer-term needs

Cartwheel works directly with families to determine the most appropriate type of care for each student.

## **Is Cartwheel 100% telehealth?**

Yes! From our survey data, about 93% of students and families we work with say they either prefer telehealth over in-person or don't have a preference.

## **Does teletherapy work?**

Yes! Teletherapy has been shown to be effective for many mental health conditions across age groups, including anxiety and depression.

Our team at Cartwheel is committed to constantly improving the virtual care experience. For example, we use evidence-based assessment tools and monitor student progress.

# **Cost & Insurance**

## **How much does Cartwheel cost families?**

Cartwheel works with most insurance plans, and costs vary based on a family's coverage.

- **Families with Medicaid:** There is no out-of-pocket cost
- **Families with private insurance:** A copay or deductible may apply, depending on the plan
- **Uninsured families:** Schools may be able to offer financial assistance

Before care begins, Cartwheel verifies insurance and provides families with a cost estimate so they know what to expect.

## **Does Cartwheel take insurance?**

Yes. Cartwheel is in-network with **Georgia Medicaid** and most insurance plans.

Cartwheel handles insurance verification directly with families and will review any copays or deductibles in advance.

## **Have other questions?**

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

[Click here for Family FAQs](#)

For plan-specific questions, families can contact Cartwheel directly:

- **Phone/Text:** 1-617-272-7439
- **Email:** [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

## **Privacy & Confidentiality**

### **Is Cartwheel therapy confidential?**

Yes. Cartwheel services follow all applicable healthcare privacy laws, including HIPAA.

### **What information is shared with the school?**

Clinical details are not automatically shared with schools. Information is shared only when a parent/guardian (or eligible student) provides consent, and families can choose how much information is shared.

When consent is given, shared information may include high-level updates that help schools support the student (such as confirmation of engagement in care), not therapy session content.

### **Does Cartwheel therapy go on a student's academic record or transcript?**

No. Cartwheel services do not appear on a student's transcript or academic record.

### **What information does Cartwheel collect from students and families?**

Like other healthcare providers, we ask for standard demographic information and patient and family medical history. We also ask families to sign consent forms to access telehealth services and sign up for our patient portal so we can communicate with them.

### **Have other questions?**

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

[Click here for Family FAQs](#)

# STAFF THERAPY FAQs

[Learn more about Staff Therapy here](#) or visit [cartwheel.org/dekalb](https://cartwheel.org/dekalb)

## About Staff Therapy

### What is Cartwheel Staff Therapy?

Cartwheel Staff Therapy is a mental health benefit available to all DeKalb County School District staff members. It provides short-term, confidential, virtual therapy with licensed clinicians to support staff well-being during periods of stress, burnout, or personal challenges.

The program is designed to make mental health care easy to access while protecting employee privacy.

### Why is the district offering Staff Therapy?

The mental health needs of educators and school staff have grown significantly in recent years. Academic recovery efforts, the youth mental health crisis, and ongoing changes in education have contributed to increased stress, burnout, and turnover across school systems.

By offering Staff Therapy, the DeKalb County School District aims to support the well-being of staff and help ensure they have access to care while continuing their important work with students and families.

### Who is eligible for Staff Therapy?

Staff Therapy is available to school staff in participating DeKalb County School District schools and departments.

Eligibility details are shared directly by the district. Staff members can confirm eligibility during the sign-up process.

### Have other questions?

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

[Click here for Family FAQs](#)

# How Staff Therapy Works

## How does Staff Therapy with Cartwheel work?

Staff members can [sign up directly](#) with Cartwheel, separate from any student services.

After signing up:

- A Cartwheel Care Coordinator reaches out to the staff member directly
- Insurance and cost of care are reviewed
- The staff member is matched with a licensed clinician
- The first appointment is scheduled

Care is provided via secure telehealth and follows the same high-quality clinical standards as Cartwheel's student services.

## What types of concerns can Staff Therapy help with?

Staff Therapy can support a wide range of mental health concerns, including:

- Stress and burnout
- Anxiety or depression
- Work-related challenges
- Life transitions
- Emotional well-being and resilience

Therapy is not limited to work-related topics.

## When are appointments available?

Staff Therapy appointments are available:

- Weekdays from 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM (local time)
- Saturdays from 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM (local time)
- Throughout the school year, vacations, and summer months

This flexibility is designed to fit around work schedules.

## Have other questions?

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

[Click here for Family FAQs](#)

## **Are services available in languages other than English?**

Yes. Cartwheel works to match staff members with clinicians who can meet their communication and cultural needs whenever possible.

Clinicians and care team members speak multiple languages, and care coordination support is available in English, Spanish, and other languages.

## **Privacy & Confidentiality**

### **Is Staff Therapy private?**

Yes. Staff Therapy is confidential.

- No identifying information is shared with district leadership or school personnel
- Participation in Staff Therapy is not visible to supervisors or administrators
- Care is protected under standard healthcare privacy laws, including HIPAA

Care is provided via secure telehealth and follows the same high-quality clinical standards as Cartwheel's student services.

## **Cost & Insurance**

### **Is Staff Therapy covered by insurance?**

Yes, we are in-network for Georgia Medicaid and most commercial insurance plans. For specific questions about insurance, staff can call 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org).

#### **Commercial plans currently in network in Georgia include:**

- Anthem BlueCross BlueShield of GA Commercial
- Anthem BlueCross BlueShield of GA Medicaid Plans
- UnitedHealthcare / Optum (including GEHA)
- Cigna / Evernorth
- Aetna

#### **Medicaid coverage:**

### **Have other questions?**

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

[Click here for Family FAQs](#)



- **All Georgia Medicaid plans are accepted.**
- If Cartwheel is still in the process of becoming in-network with a specific Georgia Medicaid plan, **care is still provided at no cost to the family.**

**Additional commercial plans Cartwheel is working to be in network with include:**

If we are out of network and the staff member is commercially insured, we charge a discounted out-of-pocket fee (\$40 per session). Out of network providers include:

- Kaiser Permanente (HMO and PPO)
- Alliant Health Plans / HealthOne Alliance
- TRICARE East

Cartwheel verifies insurance directly with families before care begins and will review any copays or deductibles in advance.

For plan-specific questions, families can contact Cartwheel at 1-617-272-7439 or [billing@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:billing@cartwheelcare.org).

## **What if a staff member does not have insurance?**

If a staff member is uninsured or has questions about affordability, Cartwheel's Care Coordinators will discuss available options during the intake process.

## **Does the district know which employees are engaged in care?**

No. The district does not receive:

- Names of staff who sign up
- Participation data
- Clinical or billing information

Staff Therapy is entirely private between the staff member and Cartwheel. Only high-level, non-identifying information may be shared for program administration (for example, overall utilization numbers).

No personal, clinical, or identifying information is shared.

## **Who should staff contact if they have questions?**

Staff can contact Cartwheel directly:

### **Have other questions?**

Call us 1-617-272-7439 or email [office@cartwheelcare.org](mailto:office@cartwheelcare.org)

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