



Hudson Public Schools connected 6% of its student body to mental health services in first year of Cartwheel partnership



Despite robust mental health and social-emotional programs, Hudson Public Schools (HPS) in Massachusetts faced a surge in student needs post-pandemic.

“Coming off the pandemic, the mental health issues are so much harder and bigger for kids and families that it’s kind of scary.”



Catherine Kilcoyne
Director of Student Services

HPS, with a student body of 2,340, saw many students struggle with social and emotional development due to pandemic-related isolation. While the district had invested and developed a strong multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), counselors couldn’t meet the increasing demand for individualized attention. Families were faced with long waitlists for therapy in the community and income and language barriers were making therapy inaccessible to many.



HPS is located in Hudson, Massachusetts, about 30 miles east of Boston.

At a glance

2,340

Students across five schools

54%

Students that report having high needs

36%

Students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals

17%

Students that are English language learners

The challenge

Counselors were at capacity and unable to provide individualized attention, while students couldn't access therapy in the community due to high demand.

The solution

Cartwheel clinicians provided the intensive care overburdened school counselors couldn't, using a telehealth model that ensured students received care outside school while staying engaged during the school day.

**“We are not a mental health facility.
Schools are not built to be the clinicians
that come between home and school.”**

Catherine Kilcoyne Director of Student Services

HPS learned about Cartwheel when their consulting psychiatrist attended a mental health conference. Initially hesitant about telebehavioral healthcare, HPS found Cartwheel's flexible model could provide the intensive care that counselors could not, allowing students to remain engaged in school.

**“In order to help kids be successful,
you have to provide services.”**

Catherine Kilcoyne Director of Student Services

Since partnering with Cartwheel, HPS has connected students to individualized mental health care, allowing counselors to focus on broader support needs. Cartwheel also coordinates with school staff to ensure seamless care for both insured and uninsured students. Its multilingual clinicians serve HPS's diverse population, and in addition to student therapy, HPS benefits from Cartwheel's parent guidance service to support families.

In the 2023-24 school year, HPS referred over 140 students and families to Cartwheel, primarily for anxiety, relational issues, and stress. Among those referred, 14% of students and 26% of guardians spoke a non-English language at home. Students typically completed 12 sessions, reflecting strong engagement.

After a strong first year, HPS plans to continue partnering with Cartwheel to provide access to mental health services for all its students, and in particular looks forward to enhancing support for English language learners.

Impact

140+

Students referred for clinical care

6%

Student body receiving clinical care

1 day

Average time to outreach

12

Average therapy sessions per student (double the engagement of other telehealth programs)

26%

Students and/or families received care in a language other than English

Top referral reasons

Coping, relationships, anxiety, family issues, anger, stress, self-esteem, depression, school avoidance, trauma, anger, executive functioning challenges

Interested in exploring a partnership?

- Visit contact.cartwheel.org/intro or scan the QR code to schedule an intro
- Email our Partnerships Manager at alvin.padolina@cartwheelcare.org

