



How the Power of Community Drives a Leading Private School's Employees to Better Health and a Culture of Wellbeing

Founded in 1833, Suffield Academy is a coeducational, independent secondary school in Suffield, Connecticut, serving a diverse community of more than 400 day and boarding students. Its more than 90 faculty members and administrative staff wear many hats outside their day-to-day roles on campus, including coaching teams, running school programs, and serving as student and dormitory advisors. Additionally, there are more than 40 staff employees that work hard every day to maintain Suffield Academy's challenging but nurturing academic environment and world-class facilities.

The "why"?

Suffield Academy's Chief Financial Officer Patrick Booth manages health insurance at the school. A firm believer in the WellSpark mantra "the health of your employees equals the health of your business," he was familiar with WellSpark's life-dimensional approach to employee wellbeing and its customizable programming through his spouse's employer. So, he sought a compliance program for Suffield Academy that tied wellbeing program participation to a preferred health care premium for employees.

"I knew in my heart that working with WellSpark would be a good

decision for the health of our people and, as a result, a good decision for the Academy's culture," said Booth. "It would incentivize our employees to take preventive care seriously, which in turn keeps them happier and healthier while also reducing everyone's long-term health care costs."

Suffield Academy formally partnered with WellSpark in July 2022. From the onset, the program's goal has been to help employees and their spouses be accountable for their health by completing widely accepted and effective preventive care screenings and providing support and guidance to those with chronic conditions.

The "how"?

As part of the open enrollment process, Booth made sure employees knew they would miss the opportunity to save money on their health insurance premiums if they didn't participate in the program.

"We are a relatively small, tight-knit community, so the group in our Business Office was very proactive in personally connecting to those who weren't enrolled to encourage them to participate," said Booth. "We told them this is something we hope will help you and your spouse; and that we were

offering employees substantial credits to their premiums for participation. If they did have specific questions, we would connect them with Wendy Paquin, our WellSpark Wellness Account Manager, who is always accessible, hands-on, and provides tremendous service overall. WellSpark makes participation easy, and its platform is very user-friendly—it's a great tool for employees."



As Suffield rolled out the program, it enrolled 84% of its employees and 80% of spouses. This is a significant level of engagement on both fronts.

WellSpark's program for Suffield Academy includes Individual Health Coaching for one-on-one support from coaches for all of life's challenges, including the onset of chronic disease. The focus of the incentive portion of their program is on completing recommended preventive care screenings.

"Many people weren't aware of which preventive care appointments they needed. They feel healthy, so they don't go to the doctor," said Beth Bailey, Assistant Business Manager at Suffield Academy. "People were missing crucial screenings because they didn't know which ones were recommended for them. WellSpark lays it all out for them, and they are more educated now on what they need to do and are attending their appointments. It lifts their spirits—many come in and thank us because they're doing things with the WellSpark program they wouldn't normally do."

Additionally, Suffield and WellSpark incorporated group challenges like step goals into the programming and featured incentives such as gift cards and raffles for participating. Suffield Academy always had a positive campus culture, but there was even more interaction and camaraderie between employees participating in the challenges.

"It was a friendly competition, and employees got to know new people through the challenges," said Michele Kertanis, Human Resources Specialist at Suffield Academy. "Teachers would talk to maintenance staff about their number of steps since they noticed maintenance staff were walking more during the day. There was even a big competition between the mailroom and Dean of Students—the Dean would walk around his driveway at midnight to stay in first place!"

Suffield Academy also sees the partnership with WellSpark as a way for the school to promote its culture of wellbeing and attract talent.

"New employees coming aboard have access to WellSpark as part of their employment package," said Kertanis. "It's a great incentive and message for new hires and to attract new folks to our team."

Results

As of August 2023, Suffield Academy's preventive care completion rates ranged from 79% up to 90% for WellSpark program participants.

These high percentages are a testament to WellSpark's program success and the incredible leadership at Suffield Academy. It's evident that the Academy genuinely cares about its

"There was even a big competition between the mailroom and Dean of Students—the Dean would walk around his driveway at midnight to stay in first place!"

Requirements	% of Completion
Preventative Visit	89%
Cholesterol Screening	80%
Diabetes Screening <i>Blood Glucose or A1C</i>	80%
Breast Cancer Screening	80%
Cervical Cancer Screening	90%
Colorectal Cancer Screening	83%
Spouse Compliance	79%

employees' mental and physical wellbeing; working with WellSpark has bolstered an already strong community and helped support a culture focused on employee wellbeing.



Helping employees find a path to wellbeing is good business. Learn more about how WellSpark can help cultivate a culture of wellbeing that achieves results at wellsparkhealth.com