

11 Texas Schools, Superior HealthPlan & The Centene Foundation Create a Culture of Belonging Through National No One Eats Alone® Day - Mar 7, 2024

*More than 2,000 schools nationwide participated in this year's event.*

EL PASO, Texas, March 7, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- For the eighth year in a row, [Superior HealthPlan](#) ("Superior"), a leading managed care organization in Texas and wholly owned subsidiary of [Centene Corporation](#) (NYSE: CNC), supported [No One Eats Alone® Day](#), a prevention initiative aimed at fostering inclusion and a culture of belonging in schools. Eleven Texas schools hosted events throughout February, with the help of Superior, reaching thousands of students across Texas. [Centene Foundation](#), the philanthropic arm of Centene Corporation, sponsored the event.

"At Superior, we're committed to supporting the health and well-being of children all across Texas, and that includes providing them with the skills and resources they need to support each other," said Mark Sanders, Superior HealthPlan president and CEO. "We are proud to partner with Beyond Differences to celebrate No One Eats Alone Day and shine a light on the social issues that affect students in Texas and beyond."

The twelve participating schools in Texas were:

- Ojeda Middle School, Austin
- Dobie Middle School, Austin
- Cunningham Middle School, Corpus Christi
- Sam Houston Elementary, Houston
- Boys and Girls Club of Deep East Texas, Lufkin
- Cavazos Elementary, Odessa
- Arnold Elementary, San Antonio
- Robert R. Rojas Elementary, Socorro
- Communities in Schools, Waco
- Rudy Silva Elementary, Weslaco
- All Hands Community Center, Wichita Falls

According to [public health research](#), social isolation has been found to have a negative impact on the mental wellbeing of children, leading to issues such as depression, anxiety, self-harm, thoughts of suicide, and higher chances of engaging in substance abuse. A [study](#) by Beyond Differences indicated that when students are provided programs to learn about social isolation and given the tools to connect with classmates, nearly 85 percent of the students felt empowered to be leaders and create a culture of acceptance and belonging at their school.

The nonprofit organization [Beyond Differences®](#) established No One Eats Alone as an initiative to combat social isolation. This year, more than 1 million students were expected to participate in activities designed to teach them about social isolation and the negative impact it can have on health and academic performance. With in-class lessons, interactive exercises and a creative art project that focuses on growing social connections, students worked together to make their school more welcoming and accepting for everyone.

"This year's No One Eats Alone theme, Let's Grow: Planting New Connections, was inspired by the U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on social connection where he spotlights the negative health effects of social isolation and emphasizes that connections need to be nurtured like a garden," said Laura Talmus, co-founder and executive director of Beyond Differences. "Our curriculum dives deep into recognizing emotions, understanding social isolation and gives students tools to be social isolation disruptors and ambassadors of belonging."

#### **About Superior HealthPlan**

Founded in 1999, [Superior HealthPlan](#) is a managed care company that delivers quality healthcare throughout Texas. Committed to transforming the health of the community, one person at a time, Superior supports active local involvement in all 254 Texas counties with more than 3,200 employees throughout the state. Superior is a wholly owned subsidiary of [Centene Corporation](#), a leading healthcare enterprise that is committed to helping people live healthier lives. For more information visit [www.SuperiorHealthPlan.com](http://www.SuperiorHealthPlan.com).

#### **About the Centene Foundation**

The [Centene Foundation](#) (the "Foundation"), a private nonprofit focused on investing in economically challenged communities, is the philanthropic arm of [Centene Corporation](#) (NYSE: CNC) ("Centene"). The Foundation supports projects and initiatives strategically aligned with Centene's mission-driven culture and enhances the work Centene is doing to remove the barriers to wellness underserved and low-income populations face. The Foundation is committed to addressing social determinants of health and improving health equity in three distinct areas of focus: healthcare access, social services, and education. To learn more, visit the Centene

Foundation's [website](#).

### **About Beyond Differences**

Nonprofit Beyond Differences' mission is to inspire students to end social isolation in middle schools and create a culture of belonging for everyone. Founded in 2010, Beyond Differences has created year-round programs to tackle a wide range of issues that lead to social isolation. When educators register for National Programs -- No One Eats Alone, Know Your Classmates®, Be Kind Online® -- they also get access to Community-Inspired Curriculum written by Beyond Differences' National Teen Board. These include Queer Visibility, CIRV (Centering Immigrant and Refugee Voices), and Stand Up for AAPI Youth. All curriculum and activity kits are provided free for schools. Currently, more than 10,000 schools have used Beyond Differences programs and materials. For more information, visit [nooneeatsalone.org](https://nooneeatsalone.org).

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