

# The future of workplace wellbeing: trends to watch in 2024



## Are employers and employees out of sync on wellbeing?

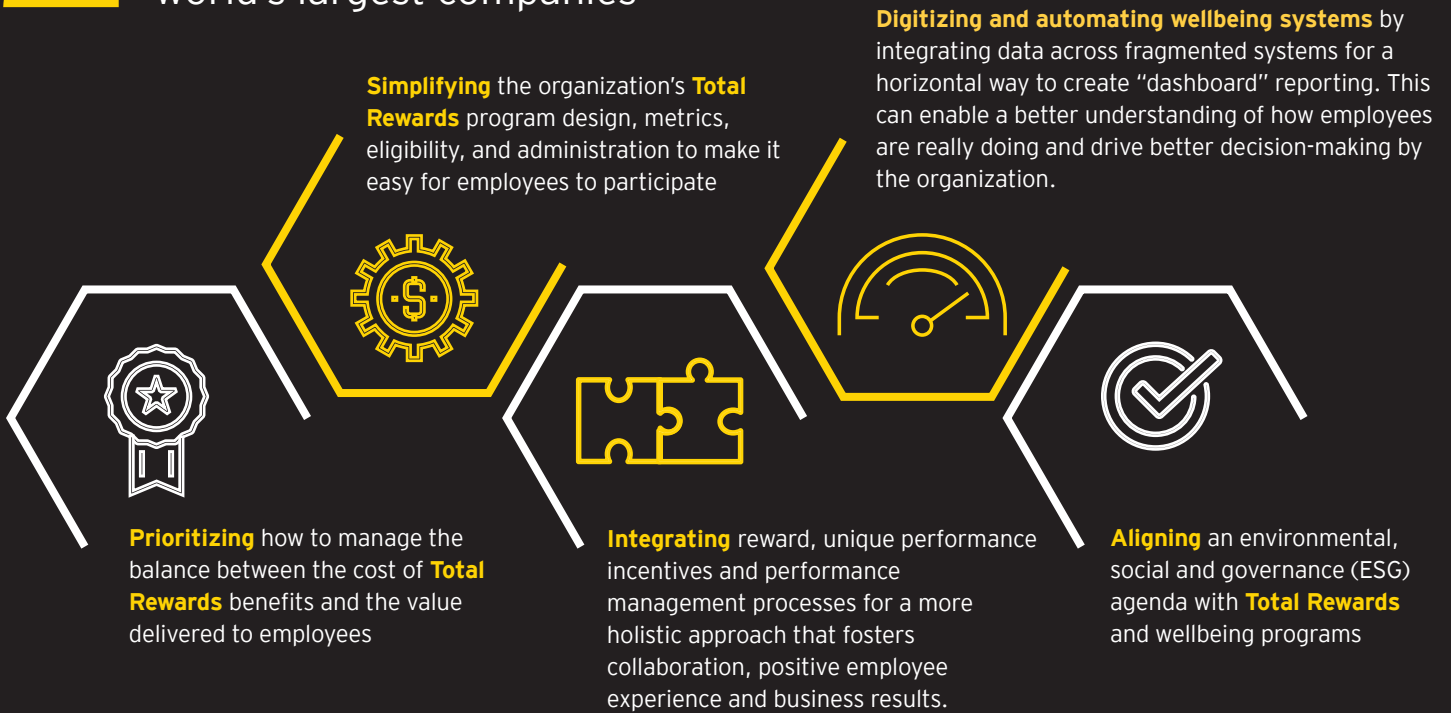
Investing in employee wellbeing has emerged as a critical strategy for businesses striving to cultivate a thriving and sustainable workplace environment. Recognizing that employees are the cornerstone of organizational success, companies are increasingly prioritizing initiatives that support the physical, emotional, social and financial health of their workforce. In the recent EY webcast, [“The future of workplace wellbeing: trends to watch in 2024,”](#) we discussed the state of workplace wellbeing and how companies can attract top talent, enhance workplace satisfaction, and drive long-term success by fostering a culture of wellbeing.

As we pointed out during the webcast, employers and employees may not be of the same mind when it comes to workplace wellbeing. Here’s a summary of the most need-to-know findings presented during the webcast.

### 1 Focus on holistic wellbeing

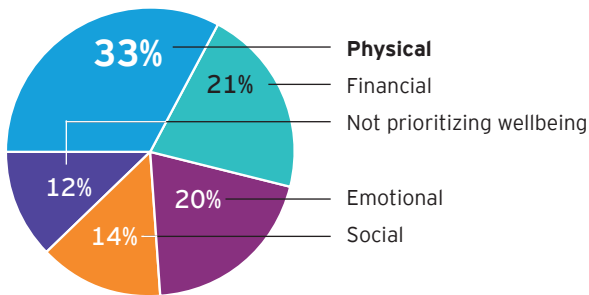


# 2 Global Total Rewards trends<sup>1</sup> for the world's largest companies

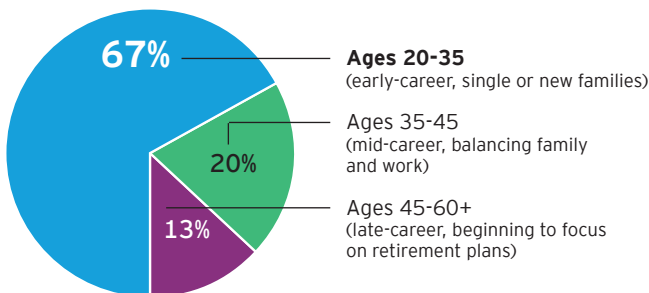


# 3 What senior leaders and HR managers are saying about their financial wellness programs<sup>2</sup>

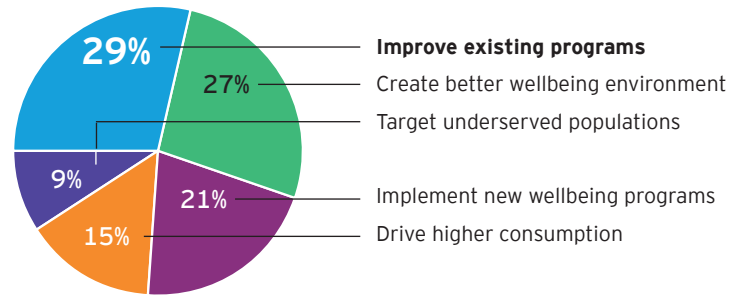
1. Which wellbeing practice are you prioritizing?



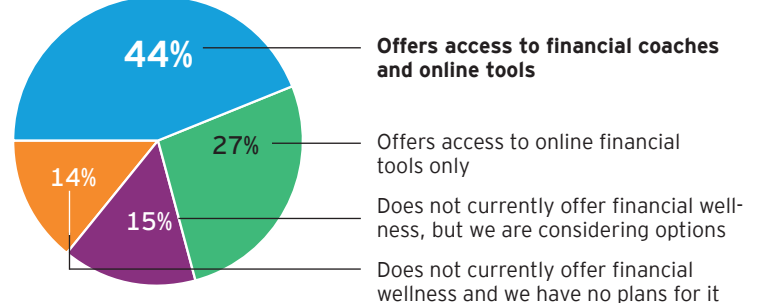
2. Which age range is the hardest to successfully engage?



3. Describe your highest wellbeing priority for 2024.



4. What is the current status of your wellness program?



<sup>1</sup>Source: EY proprietary analysis of World's Best Workplaces™ 2023 (WBW), a ranking compiled annually by Great Place to Work®

<sup>2</sup>We surveyed approximately 5,000 senior HR leaders and benefits managers about their wellbeing programs.

# 4

## Do employers and employees see eye-to-eye on wellbeing?

While employers may be investing in wellbeing programs and resources, employees may have different expectations and want more from their employers. It's important to:

- Talk to your employees about needs and aspirations
- Understand what your organization is doing well
- Define what can be done to improve the employee experience

### Wellbeing is a business imperative



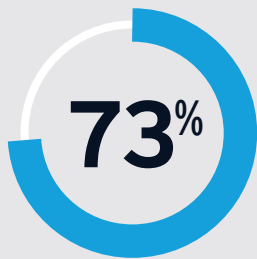
Employees have diverse needs across mental, physical, social and financial health—meet them where they are and help them feel empowered to make decisions.

The employee work experience is defined by those they work most closely with—evolve teamwork to ensure employees feel connected, productive and valued.

By focusing on individual wellbeing, organizations can elevate individual performance and ultimately elevate business outcomes as a result.

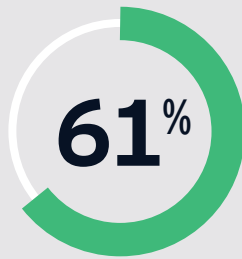
# 5 Americans are struggling with their finances

The recent pandemic, inflation, high interest rates, and other financial realities have taken a toll on Americans' mental and financial health. Research reveals that people are more stressed about money than about politics, work and family.



of employees named finances as their top cause of stress, ahead of **politics, work and family**

Source: Capital One Credit Wise survey, 2023



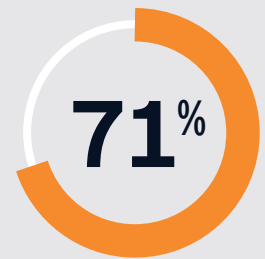
of employees are living paycheck to paycheck

Source: The Paycheck to Paycheck Report, PYMNTS and Lending Club, December 2021



of Americans struggle to pay their bills in full

Source: United States Census Household Pulse survey, February 2023



of employees who are struggling with financial stress have **not reached out for financial help or support**

Source: TELUS Health's Mental Health Index, March 2023

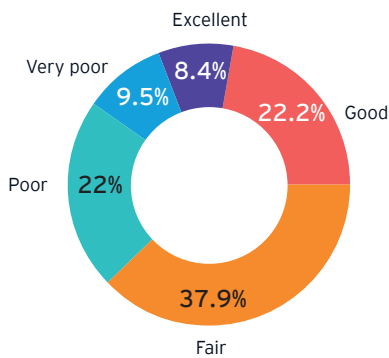
# 6

## Gen Z<sup>3</sup> is worried about their financial security

Gen Z has come of age in an era of seemingly constant turbulence and uncertainty, shaping their views on how the world is supposed to work. What Gen Z does and how they think are already dramatically influencing organizations, shifting societal norms and demanding that businesses venture into uncharted territory.

### Stress continues to increase for Gen Z

More than 2/3 of Gen Z rate their current financial situation as "fair" or worse



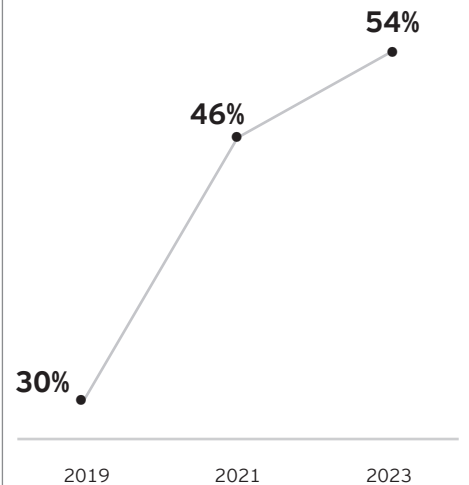
Over half of Gen Z report feeling excessive levels of anxiety or worry that is difficult to control

**47%** of those who are **unable to stop or control worrying** say they feel that way more than half the days or nearly every day

**56%** of those who **feel nervous, anxious or on edge** say they feel that way more than half the days or nearly every day

Source: 2023 EY Gen Z Segmentation Study

Percentage of Gen Z feeling moderately, very or extremely worried across a variety of topics



<sup>3</sup>People born between 1997 and 2007 (age range 16 to 26 years old)

# 7

## The link between mental health and financial health

Mental stress can lead to poor financial and health decisions and several studies have shown a cyclical relationship between financial stress and mental health issues experienced by an individual:

- ▶ People with debt are **three times** more likely to have a mental health issue, especially depression, anxiety and psychotic disorders.<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ **46% of people with debt** also have a mental health diagnosis.<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ Financial strain is a **significant risk factor** for suicidal ideation and suicide attempts.<sup>6</sup>



<sup>4</sup>3 Vicious Cycles: Links among financial, physical, and mental health, *Forbes*, June 2018

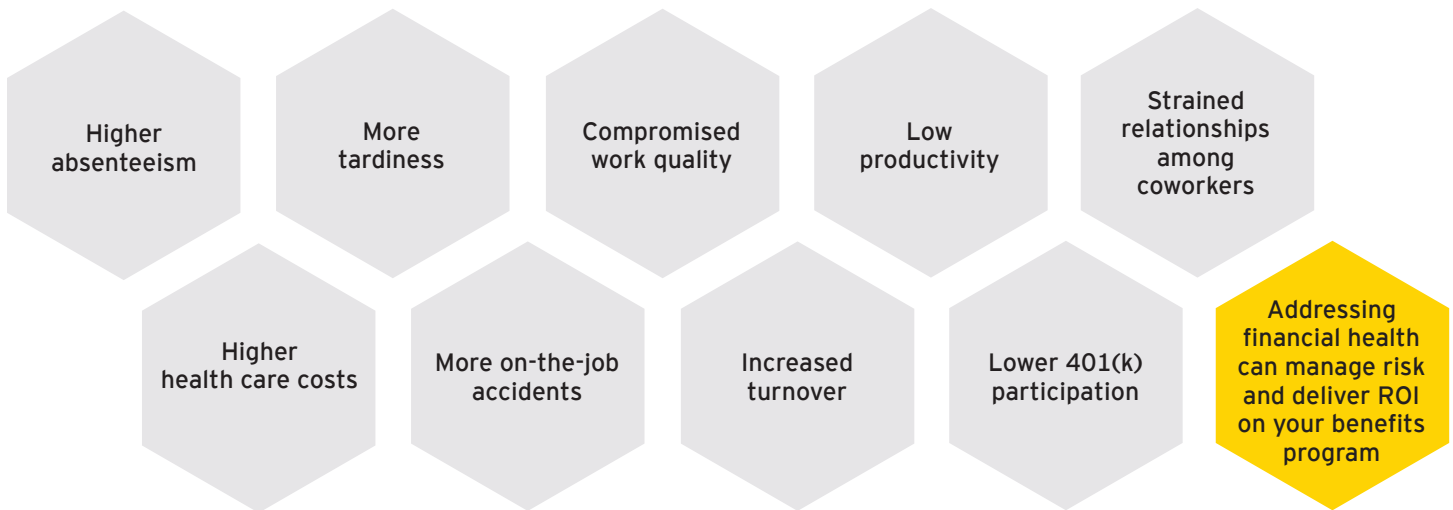
<sup>5</sup>Money on your mind, A Money and Mental Health Policy Institute, 2016

<sup>6</sup>Financial Strain and Suicide Attempts in a Nationally Representative Sample of US Adults, *American Journal of Epidemiology*, Volume 189, Issue 11, November 2020



## When your employees are unwell, so is your organization

When your employees are preoccupied with financial concerns, their overall wellbeing may be compromised and potential consequences for your organization include:



Job stress is estimated to cost American companies more than **\$300 billion per year** due to absenteeism, poor performance and health-related costs.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Workplace stress, The American Institute of Stress, 2024

## Summary and recommendations

- ▶ Wellbeing programs are a critical component of your organization's health - these programs can help you acquire and retain employees, build loyalty and improve ROI.
- ▶ Focus on the quantitative metrics and data to provide insight, help identify needs and determine where to focus your organization's attention.
- ▶ Establish a network of wellbeing champions to actively and openly discuss wellbeing services, advocate for your programs, share stories, and be a point of contact for feedback.
- ▶ Include financial wellness as a key component of your wellness program. By providing access to comprehensive financial education comprised of financial coaches, group learning and online support, you can help employees take control of their finances and get the support they need.

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