ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Help Your Child Succeed in School: Build the Habit of Good Attendance

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school and about themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they know right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Good attendance is an important skill that will help children do well in high school, college and a job.

Did you know?

✓ Starting in kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.

✓ Missing 10 percent or about 18 days of the school year in kindergarten can lower achievement in 1st grade and, for some students, through 5th grade.

✓ Students can still fall behind if they keep missing just a day or two every few weeks.

✓ Tardiness in the early grades can predict poor attendance later.

✓ Absences can affect whole classrooms if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.

✓ Schools lose money for educational programs because funding is based on attendance.

When Do Absences Become a Problem?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chronic Absence</th>
<th>18 or more Days</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warning Signs</td>
<td>10 to 17 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>OK Attendance</td>
<td>9 or fewer absences</td>
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Note: These numbers assume an 180-day school year
What can you do?

✓ Set a regular bed time and morning routine.

✓ Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.

✓ Find out what day school starts and make sure children have the required shots.

✓ Introduce your children to their teachers and classmates before school starts to help them transition.

✓ Don’t let children stay home unless they are truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.

✓ If your children seem anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counselors or even other parents to figure out how to make them feel comfortable and excited about school.

✓ Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on another family member, neighbor or parent.

✓ Don’t plan medical or dental appointments during the school day.

✓ Avoid extended trips when school is in session.

✓ Reach out for help if you have problems with transportation, housing, jobs or your health. School officials, afterschool providers, community agencies can help.