

Attendance Tips for Parents

Let children know that good attendance is important:

- Attendance is a parent and child's responsibility. Let your child know that you think attending school daily is important. Show them you are interested in their school activities and tell them that you want them to do well in school.
- Good attendance habits start at an early age. Make sure your child goes to school regularly and on time. This helps them to develop a positive view of the school and the importance of attendance.
- Discuss with your child that arriving to school on time is important.
- Become involved in your child's school life and school activities.
- Take an interest in your child's school work. Check homework for accuracy and completeness.
- Read the school newsletter. Post notes on the refrigerator, or other prominent location to highlight school activities.
- Do not provide inappropriate excuses for your child to miss school. Do not let them take time off from school for minor ailments - particularly those which would not prevent you from going to work.
- Don't expect or let older children stay at home to babysit younger siblings.
- Set good examples and enforce rules. Speak well of the school and support staff.
- Make a contract with your child to improve his/her attendance. Reward positive improvements.

Establish a routine:

- Give yourself and children enough time to get ready. No TV on school mornings.
- Provide children with their own alarm clock. Teach kids to set and use their own alarm clock or clock radio.
- Set clock 30 minutes earlier for students who need more time to get ready for school.
- Plan ahead the night before: such as identifying and pre-prepping breakfast, have kids choose clothes and shoes the night before, and pack their school bag with completed homework and snacks/water. Parents can prepare for work the night before too.
- Set regular bedtime schedule. Age should be a factor.
- Get proper rest and go to bed early.
- Have your child go to bed 10 minutes earlier and get up 10 minutes earlier.
- Have kids bathe or shower in the evening.
- Help your child relax before bedtime with a story, instead of the stimulation of television.
- Have schoolwork and lunch ready and laid out, ready to go. Provide regular study times and a quiet, clean area for doing homework, if possible.
- Have your child walk to school with another child who is always on time.
- Limit and balance extra-curricular activities.
- Have a back-up plan for cold weather for cars not starting.

Show interest in student's activities:

- Attend parent teacher meetings.
- Assemblies and parent meetings.
- Volunteer in the classroom or PTA events.
- Make education a family priority.
- Encourage your child to get more involved with their school. Sign them up for extra-curricular activities they like. Studies show the more involved a child and parents are with their school, the better their attendance and success is.

Keep open lines of communication with your children, teacher, and school office:

- Let school know in advance if your child is going to be absent or if you have any concerns about your child's attendance or school performance.
- Report all absences on the day your child will miss school by calling the school.
- If your child does not want to go to school, find out why and work out with your school and child to address concerns. Let your child know he/she must attend school.
- If you notice your child is avoiding a particular class or is having difficult time in one subject area, discuss this with your child and his/her teacher. Offer extra support at home. This will prevent your child from developing a behaviour of avoidance in school when things become difficult.
- Get to know your children's friends and their families and make connections with other families that value school attendance.
- Contact your child's school for help if it is needed to support your child or family.
- Ask teachers and staff at your child's school and other family members for advice on how to keep your child going to school-on time, every day!
- Check your child's school bag daily. Occasionally important letters (such as a medical issue) can become lost in a full school bag. Organizing its contents daily improves your chances of finding these documents while they are still useful.
- Keep a school year calendar. This is an excellent way to track all of the important dates, holidays, and events at your child's school. It is also a convenient place to document absences (who was absent, why and how you cleared it/date cleared), phone calls/conferences with school staff, and all of your other important school related information.
- Make sure your child knows you do not approve of him/her being late or absent. Talk to your child about issues that may be making them late for school.
- Help your child understand the state law and school attendance policies.
- Do not let your child persuade you into making an excuse for him/her. Don't give up. Reward good behaviour and take it one day at a time.