

As a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher. When parents and families are involved in their child's schools, the children have better feelings about going to school and perform better academically. **In fact, many studies show that what the family does is more important to a child's school success than how much money the family makes or how much education the parents have.**

Attending school is your child's first job, and regular school attendance is critical to academic success. Children who are chronically absent fall behind academically and are also more likely to become involved in substance abuse and crime. In fact, the majority of chronically absent students usually do not graduate. As a parent or guardian, you can play a big role in making sure that your child is on the path to success.

- Good attendance starts the night before. Children need about 9 to 11 hours of sleep, according to the National Sleep Foundation. When children go to bed all media should be turned off.
- Provide a positive evening routine that allows time for your child to complete homework. Being prepared can help lessen your child's anxieties when it comes to attending school the next day.
- Don't promote or tolerate your child being absent from school. Talk to your child about the importance of attending school every day.
- When family assistance is needed, reach out to friends and neighbors, your place of worship, a local community organization or other networks of support instead of allowing your child to miss school.
- Consult with your school social worker, school counselor or other professionals if you have concerns related to your child's mental health. Health is a priority and that means mental health too. Don't be afraid to ask how your child is doing or whether he/she is feeling depressed. You can also call 211 a confidential resource.
- If your child is missing 2 or 3 days of school per month, he/she is already on the wrong track. This will end up totaling more than one entire month of lost school by the end of the year. **Sending your child to school is required by law.**
- Please remember to take an opportunity to talk to your child about the importance of attending school on time every day.
- Children value their parents opinion and it important for you to be involved in their lives by asking them about their classes, friends and schoolwork.
- As a parent you can help your child to develop good habits like going to bed early and finishing their homework.
- Parents can help their child by getting them involved in clubs or other after-school programs.
- Please try and plan your appointments and vacations when school is not in session. If your child is absent remember to call and send in a note (with the reason for the absence) to your child's school.