



# RESOURCE GUIDE

Saving Students One Absence at a Time





## 1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem like much but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling thats..
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

## How about 10 minutes a day? Surely that won't affect my child?

He/she is only missing just...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling thats..
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1.5 weeks per year	Nearly half a year
20 minutes per day	1 hr 40 min per week	Over 2.5 weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 minutes per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years

### EVERY DAY COUNTS

If you want your child to be successful at school, then YES, attendance does matter!

*Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow*



Saving Students  
One Absence at a Time

## REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION #21

Franklin, Johnson, Massac & Williamson Counties  
roe21.org

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Regional Superintendent of Schools

## How to Stop Truancy: Tips for Parents

As a parent, you want the best for your child's future. You also have a legal responsibility to make sure your school-registered child attends school. If your child misses too much school, you risk being fined or even being jailed. School attendance is serious business. What you do as a parent can make a big difference in your child's life.

1. Obtain a copy of the school districts policies and procedures regarding attendance and truancy. Attendance and truancy information is often contained in the student conduct section of a school districts policy manual and is likely to be found in the Student Handbook issued by many schools. Some school districts place their policies on their Web sites.
2. Know your child's school attendance policy, the time school starts, the difference between an excused and unexcused absence, and share the information with your child.
3. Contact the administrator of the school, or the school district administrator responsible for attendance or truancy.
4. Talk to your kids about the role education plays in future/ life success. Let them know that you do not approve of them missing school. Refuse to write an excuse for unacceptable reasons. Review acceptable and unacceptable behavior with your child. Discuss homework rules.
5. Ask your child his/her thoughts on truancy.
6. Tell him/her your views on truancy.
7. Be sure that your child knows if he or she misses school, there will be consequences to pay such as losing television or video game time, limiting time with friends, or the loss of other privileges.
8. Discuss with your child the reasons why he/she doesn't want to attend school.
9. Ask your child how you can help. Think about what situations he or she might face and talk about ways to handle these situations before they occur.
10. Investigate what's going on at school. If it's an issue of bullying, parents need to find out what's really going on. Once parents know whether the child's complaint is a valid one, it's easier to work with your child about the issue, both in and outside of school.
11. Look for alternatives. If your child tells you he or she is bored at school, pursue support outside the school such as music lessons, sports clubs, neighborhood or church-related youth groups, or mentors. Seek out and enroll your child in a tutoring program, if necessary.

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Vienna, IL 62995  
Phone: 618.658.3381  
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Massac County  
1102 W. 10th St.  
Metropolis, IL 62960  
Phone: 618.524.3736  
*By appointment only*

Williamson County  
502 W. Jackson  
Marion, IL 62959  
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12. Look for early signs of your child's decision that school is not worthwhile. Monitor changes in friendships, teachers, or classrooms or even the loss of a pet or family member. All these things contribute to reasons why kids dread going to school.
13. Look for negative behavior changes such as alcohol use or staying out late. Seek a counselor if your child's behavior becomes, distant, withdrawn, anxious, depressed, delinquent, or aggressive.
14. Make it less fun to be at home. If your child knows he/she can sit at home and play video games during the school day, the incentive to stay home is greater than the incentive to be at school.
15. Prepare your child for school with required supplies and clothes. If you need assistance, contact your local social services agency.
16. Set a time for your child to go to bed, wake up, have a healthy breakfast, arrive at school, and complete his/her homework. Monitor things in your home such as family routines that may prevent you or your child from keeping to the schedule.
17. Encourage your child to take an active role in the school by joining clubs or participating in sports. Teach them when and how to ask for help.
18. Check your child's school portal to determine how they are performing at school and if they have any missed or late assignments
19. Don't ask for a change of teacher or classes.
20. Don't focus on your child's anxiety.
21. Don't give mixed messages by giving in sometimes.
22. Don't suddenly change expectations as new demands will precipitate anxiety.
23. Understand what your child is expected to learn at each grade level. Find out what goals your child's teacher has for the year and how your child will be graded.
24. Give the consistent message, "You will go to school."
25. Have consistent expectations. Relaxing the rules for even one assignment or day can give a mixed message. Make sure that all your kids live up to the same standards.
26. Sign up and attend parent teacher conferences.
27. Plan visits to the doctor or dentist after the school day ends. If you must take an appointment during the school day, allow the child to miss only time needed for that appointment.
28. Always talk with the school before you plan your holiday or vacation.
29. Establish an incentive program and reward your child for good attendance.
30. Speak to other parents and guardians who have experienced the same issues and problems. This can be a great way to get valuable advice and information.
31. Seek outside assistance and consider counseling if you, the parent, cannot resolve the issue on your own.



# Health Guidance for Going to School

**Showing up to school every day is critical for children's well-being, engagement and learning.**

**Make sure to send children to school if they are:**

- Generally healthy and well.
- Participating in usual day-to-day activities.
- Children can even go to school if they:
  - Have a mild cold, which may include a runny nose and/or cough.
  - Have eye drainage without fever, eye pain or eyelid redness.
  - Have a mild stomachache.
  - Have a mild rash with no other symptoms.
  - Have head lice. Though they are annoying and should be treated, lice are not a reason to exclude a child from school.
  - Haven't had a fever overnight and they have not taken fever-reducing medicine during that time.

**Avoid keeping children at home unless they are too sick to participate. Please see the back of this handout for details. Note that in most situations, a health-care provider's note is not needed to return.**

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**Children may also avoid school due to anxiety (symptoms may include decreased appetite, feeling tired, stomachache, headache etc). If you are worried that your child may be suffering from anxiety, talk with your teacher, the school nurse, social worker or other school staff to discuss the challenge and identify what can help your child stay in school.**

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**If your child has a compromised immune system or is at high risk for complications from common illnesses, please talk to your school (school nurse if available) about developing a plan with you and your child's health-care provider to keep your child healthy and safe while attending school.**

*Please note: This document is not meant to take the place of local health department/school district guidance including about contagious illnesses such as Covid-19 and the flu.*



# Reasons to keep me home from school and what needs to happen before I can return

What is my symptom?	When should I stay home and when to seek medical care?	When can I return to school?
<b>Fever</b>	I have a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher. <b>Seek medical care</b> if I have fever and any of the following: ear pain, sore throat, rash, stomachache, headache or tooth pain.	If I have not had a fever overnight without the use of fever-reducing medication and I am feeling better.
<b>Vomiting and/or diarrhea</b>	If I have vomited 2 or more times in the last 24 hours. If my stool is watery and I may not make it to the toilet in time. <b>Seek medical care</b> if I have stomach cramping and fever, I have bloody or black stool, or I am showing signs of dehydration (tired and sleepy, dry mouth and not urinating at least once in the last 8 hours).	If I did not vomit overnight and I am able to drink liquids without throwing up. If my diarrhea has improved.
<b>Persistent cough or trouble breathing</b>	<b>Seek medical care</b> if I have a persistent cough, difficulty breathing or trouble catching my breath or if I develop a fever with the cough. These symptoms may be signs of Covid-19 or flu and should be evaluated by a health-care provider.	Once I am feeling better and I have been cleared for return by my health-care provider. If my symptoms were due to asthma, please make sure that I have permission to use breathing medication at school.
<b>Rash</b>	<b>Seek medical care</b> if the rash has blisters, is draining, is painful, looks like bruises and/or if I develop a fever.	Rash has healed or I have been cleared for return by my health-care provider.
<b>Eye irritation</b>	<b>Seek medical care</b> if I have eye swelling, eye pain, trouble seeing or an eye injury.	Once I am feeling better.
<b>Sore throat</b>	<b>Seek medical care</b> if I have drooling, trouble swallowing or a fever and/or rash.	Once I am feeling better. If I was prescribed an antibiotic by my health-care provider, then I can return 12 hours after the first dose, if I am without fever and I am feeling better.

*If you don't know whether to send your child to school or have specific concerns regarding your child's health, contact your child's health-care provider, a local urgent care or the school nurse.*