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

School success goes hand in hand with good attendance!

DID YOU KNOW?

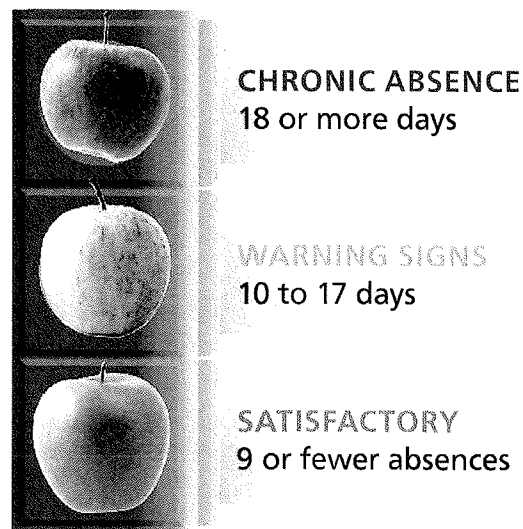
- Starting in kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days) can make it harder to learn to read.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.

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

WHAT YOU CAN 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 your child has the required shots.
- Introduce your child to her teachers and classmates before school starts to help her transition.
- Don't let your child stay home unless she is 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 child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counselors, or other parents for advice on how to make her feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

When Do Absences Become a Problem?



Note: These numbers assume a 180-day school year.

What Will My Child Do In Kindergarten? Parent Guide #9

If your child has gone to a preschool or child care center, kindergarten could be a “big change.”

- The kindergarten program will be more formal than preschool. Schools today have more teaching time to meet certain goals.
- Local schools are allowed to choose programs that meet those goals for learning. Schools also choose the daily routine in kindergarten.
- The state of Michigan has goals for what children should have learned by the end of the kindergarten year.

Ask your child’s teacher to share the kindergarten daily routine with you. Then you can talk with your child about parts of the day, such as:

- Large and small group time.
- Time for children to work alone on projects or in “centers” around the room.
- Snack time.
- Lunch in the cafeteria.
- Active and quiet activities.
- Extra classes such as gym, music, art, library and computers.

No matter what the kindergarten routine looks like, the most important thing is the variety and types of learning opportunities.

- Good teachers know that kindergartners need lots of learning opportunities. Activities in typical subject areas are blended with social/emotional and physical development experiences.
- By talking with the teacher, you can learn about what your child is doing. This is important during changes as you work together to help your child adjust.
- When this works, your child looks forward to school each day!

Growing up - Changes from the preschool years. Differences your child may experience in the classroom:

- More structured time and more teacher-directed activities.
- More group projects and less free play.
- More inside activities, less outside time.
- More writing letters and numbers.
- More school-wide rules.
- More children in the class.