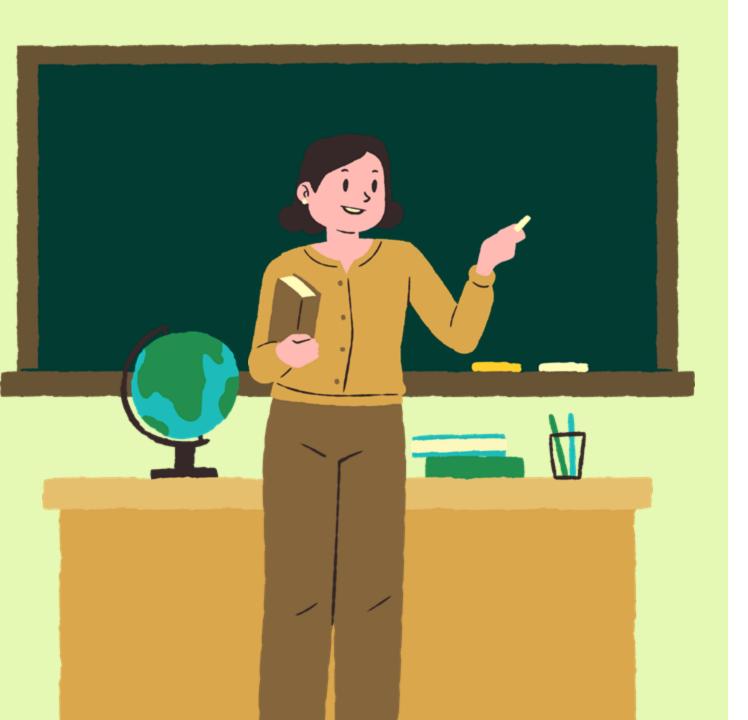


Mona Roberts, DO, FAAP Mary Beth Miotto, MD, MPH, FAAP

September 25, 2024 6-7 PM



Housekeeping

Stay on mute but use the chat function to make your "voice" heard

CME/MOC2 Credit

MOC 4 Credit
Opportunity:
Contact
chaggerty@mcaap.org

Recording and Slide Deck will be posted



Dr. Roberts and Dr. Miotto have no relevant actual or potential conflicts of interest or financial relationships with the manufacturers or providers of any commercial product to disclose.

No off-label use of medications will be discussed.

Disclosures

Learning Outcomes

- Understand current data around chronic absenteeism and why it matters
- Describe health-related causes and implications of chronic absenteeism for well-being
- Identify evidence-based physical and mental health interventions that can improve attendance and reduce inequities
- Discuss how schools and healthcare providers can collaborate to promote school attendance



I feel that we can't educate children who are not healthy, and we can't keep them healthy if they're not educated. There has to be a marriage between health and education. You can't learn if your mind is full of unhealthy images from daily life and confusion about right and wrong.

— Joycelyn Elders —

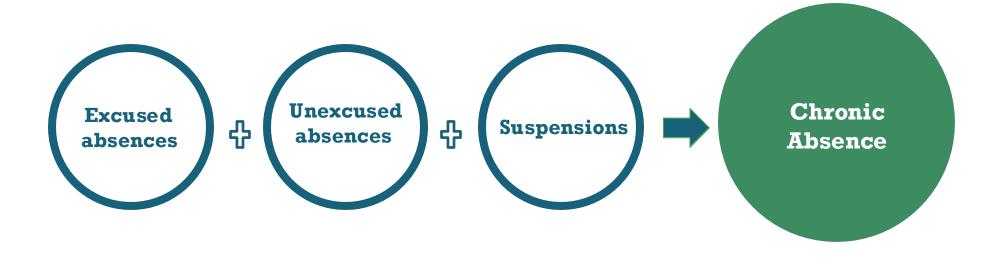
AZ QUOTES



What is chronic absence?

Chronic absence is missing so much school for any reason that a student is academically at risk.

Chronic absence is defined as missing 10 percent or more of school for any reason.



Chronic absence is different from **truancy** (unexcused absences only) or **average daily attendance** (how many students show up to school each day).



What's the difference between ADA, truancy & chronic absence?

Average Daily Attendance (ADA)

- School level measure (not student level)
- Notices aggregate attendance at certain point in time (e.g., half-days, holidays, bad weather)
- Masks individual student chronic absences

Truancy

- ▲ Counts ONLY unexcused absences
- ▲ Emphasizes individual compliance with school rules
- ▲ Uses legal, typically more blaming and punitive, solutions

Chronic Absence

- Missing 10% counts ALL absences (excused, unexcused, & suspensions)
- Emphasizes impact of missed days and the benefits of being present
- Uses preventative, problem-solving, traumasensitive strategies
- Cultivates family and student engagement

The United States Faces an Attendance Crisis

- Pre-pandemic: 8 million (1 out of 6) students were chronically absent (missing 10% or more of school for any reason: excused, unexcused, suspension)
- Chronic absence is higher than ever, especially in early elementary and all throughout high school. By the end of school year (SY) 2021-22, data from multiple states showed chronic absence often doubled and affected more than 1 out of 4 students. Early district and state SY 2022-23 data show rates remain high.
- Economically disadvantaged students and families as well as Native American, Black, Latino/Hispanic, and Pacific Islander students are disproportionately affected.





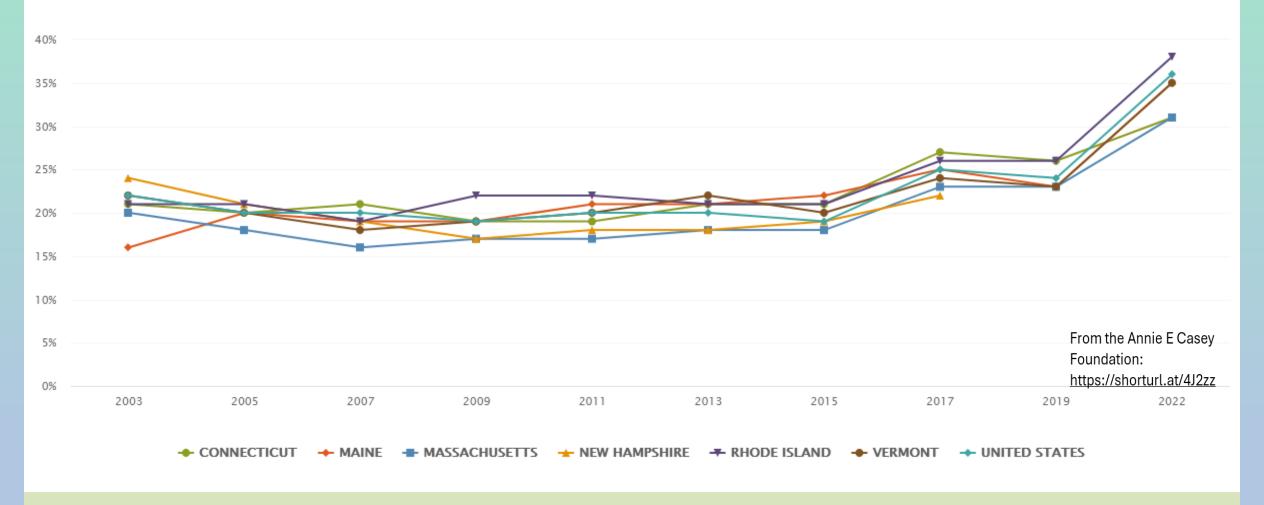
American Fourth Graders Who Are Chronically Absent From School



Tracking the Nationwide Trends from 2003-2022

From the Annie E Casey Foundation: https://shorturl.at/4J2zz

FOURTH GRADERS WHO ARE CHRONICALLY ABSENT FROM SCHOOL (PERCENT)

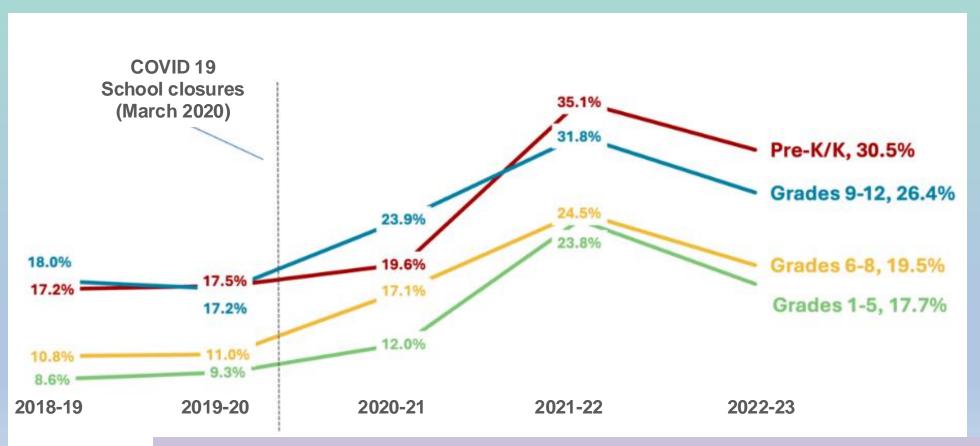


How Are We Doing: The New England States and the Nation 2003-2022

From Annie E Casey Foundation

Massachusetts Data Trends by Grade Span

Chronic absenteeism is highest in PreK/K and high school



Additional Insights

Chronically absent kindergarteners have lower attendance and lower achievement in future grades.

More than half of students who drop out were chronically absent 3 years prior.

Students in classrooms with high chronic absence feel a **spillover effect**; for example, lower test scores.

From MA Department of Education Presentation, August 2024

Do We See Disparities in Chronic Absenteeism?

Black students

Students with Disabilities

Native
American and
Pacific
Islander

Students
Experiencing
Housing
Instability

New Residents

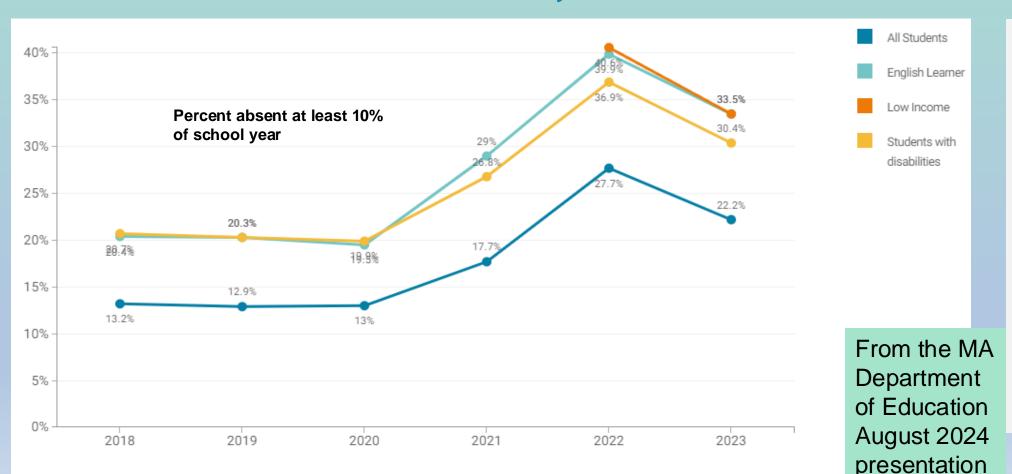
LatinX students

Low Income Students

English Language Learners

Massachusetts Trends by Specific Student Groups

Chronic absenteeism rates are higher for English learners, low-income students, and students with disabilities



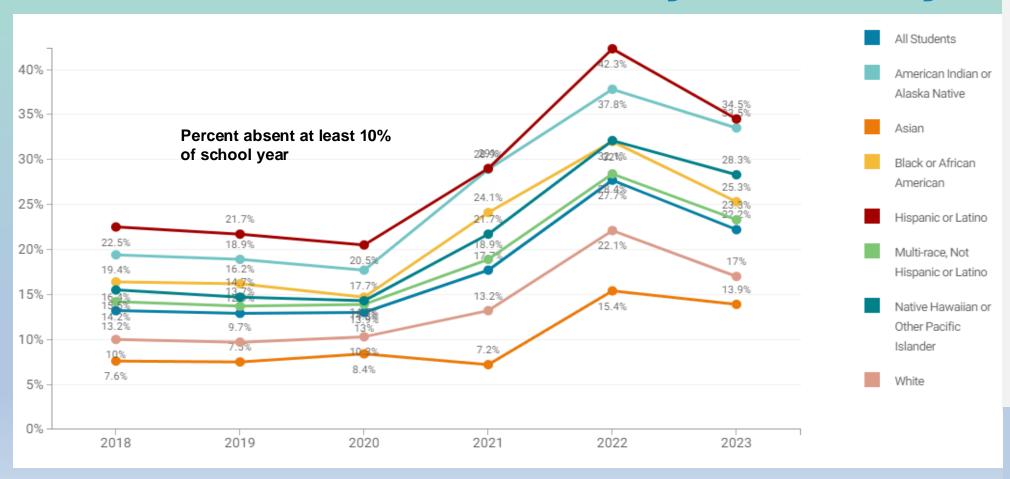
Additional Insights

National research shows the negative effects of school absences are larger for low-performing, lowincome, and English learner students.

Almost half (47%) of high school English Learners missed 10% of school in 2022-2023.

Massachusetts Trends by Race/Ethnicity

Chronic absenteeism varies by race/ethnicity



Additional Insights

2 out of 5 Hispanic high school students miss 10% of school or more

More MA districts impacted:

- March 2024: 338
 districts and 1486
 schools (10%+)
- 2018-19: 198 districts and 913 schools (10%+)

From MA Department of Education August 2024 presentation

Health-Related Barriers to Learning



















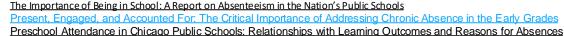




The Link Between Chronic Absence and Health

- Chronic absence is a warning sign that a health-related condition or a social determinant of health may need to be addressed.
- Children with acute and chronic health conditions are more likely to be absent from school.
- Students who are chronically absent from school are more likely to display behavior and discipline problems and engage in unhealthy activities.
- Chronic absence is an early warning sign that students are off track for reading by the end of third grade, completing middle school, and graduating from high school.



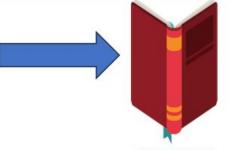


Chronic Absenteeism in Utah Public Schools

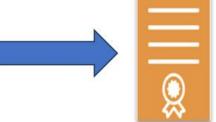


Why Chronic Absenteeism?

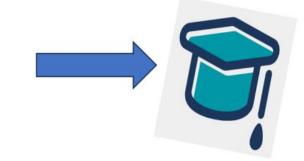
 Chronic absenteeism in early grades can lead to below grade-level reading in 3rd grade, which in turn impacts high school graduation rates



 By high school, irregular attendance is a better predictor of school dropout than test scores



 Not earning a high school diploma is associated with increased mortality risk or lower life expectancy



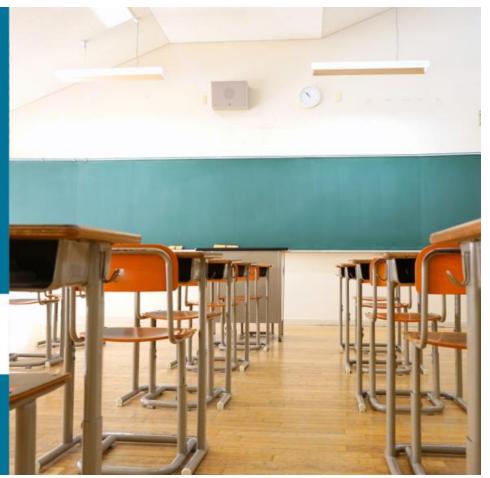
From : Heidi Schumacher, MD FAAP
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Univ of Vermont Larner
College of Medicine

Burlington, VT at AAP NCE Council Showcase 2023

Vital Signs for Pediatric Health: Chronic Absenteeism

A National Academy of Medicine
Discussion Paper

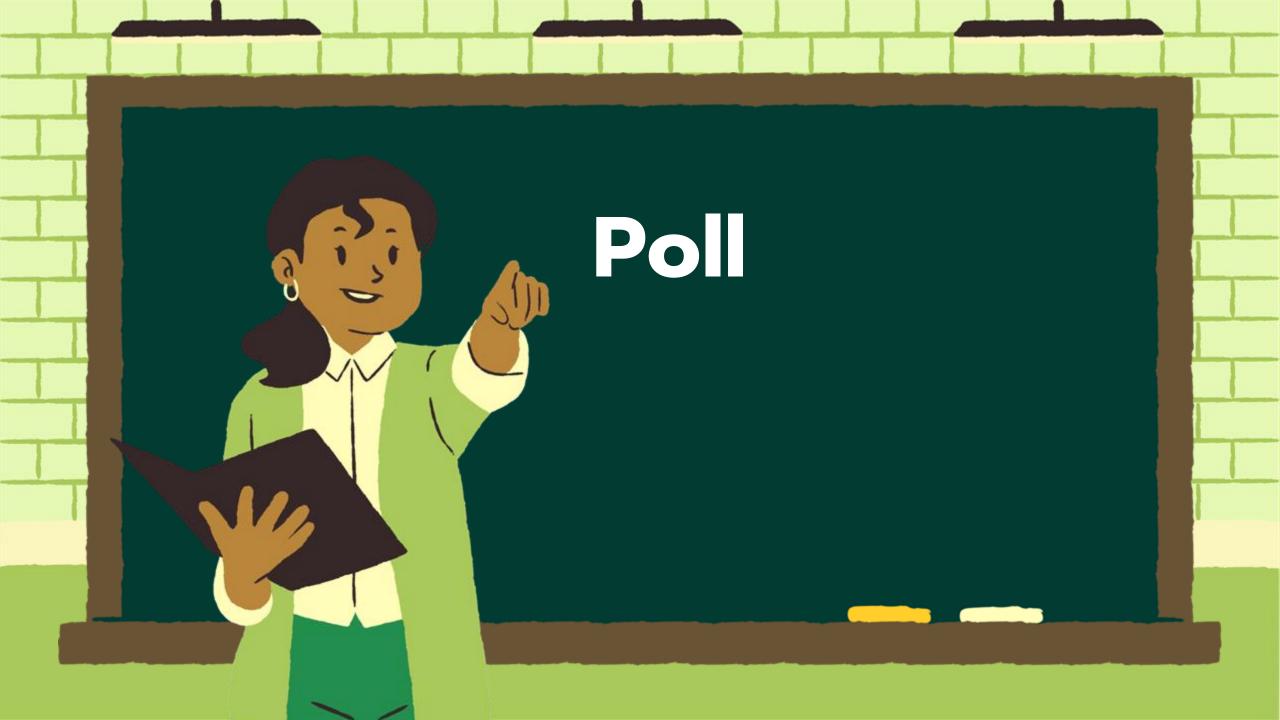
nam.edu/Perspectives



Absenteeism:

A vital sign for both individual youth and the health of the educational system?

https://nam.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Pediatric-Vital-Signs-Series-17.png



Reducing Chronic Absence Requires Addressing Underlying Causes of Absenteeism *Including Health Challenges and Social Determinants of Health*

Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services (including health)
- System involvement
- Lack of predictable schedules for learning
- Lack of access to technology
- Community violence

Aversion

- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Anxiety
- Biased disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or lack of disability accommodations
- Caregivers had negative educational experiences

Disengagements

- Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults in the school (especially given staff shortages)
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits
- Need to work conflicts with being in high school

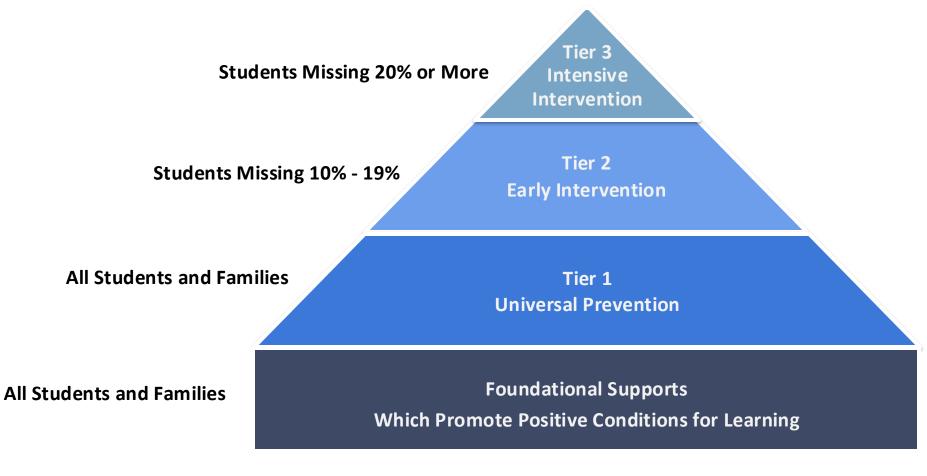
Misconceptions

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing 2 days per month doesn't affect learning
- Lose track and underestimate TOTAL absences
- Assume students must stay home for any symptom of illness
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence





Improving Attendance Requires A Multi-tiered System of Support







Evidence-Based Health Interventions Across Multiple Tiers That Improve School Attendance

School Policies

- Improving school climate and student connectedness can lead to improved attendance and a decrease in risky behaviors.
- A Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child approach can help promote student health and improve academic performance.

Infection Prevention and Screenings

- Support hygiene practices, school-based vaccination programs, and more.
- Implement screenings for vision, dental, behavioral health, chronic health issues, food/housing insecurity, etc.

School Nurses

• Have one full time nurse in every school! 95% of students who see a school nurse are able to return to class.

School-Based Health Centers

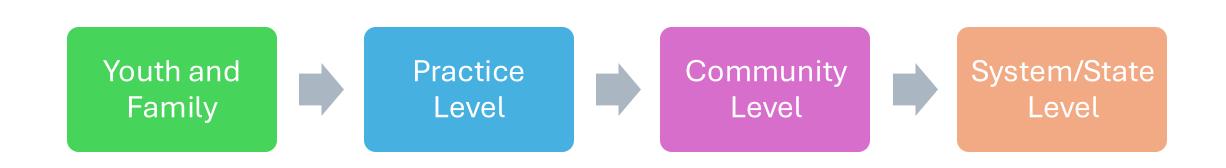
 There is a 25% decrease in tardiness and 50% decrease in absenteeism for HS students who received school-based mental health services.

Mental Health Services

 A trauma informed approach in schools can help decrease suspensions and improve attendance and school performance.



What can I do as a primary care pediatrician, family physician, or nurse practitioner?



Raise Office Staff and Parent Awareness

- Staff Awareness ("excuse notes")
- Family Awareness
- Start in PreK and K
- Tie topics like sleep, hygiene, and symptoms to school attendance.



Strong School
Attendance
Starts Young



Chronic
Absenteeism
Starts Early

Lay the Right Foundations from the Beginning:
Healthy Habits

Make the Case for Daily Attendance to Families



When is sick too sick for school?

A regular attendance routine is important for your child's well-being and learning. These tips can help you decide when to keep your child home when they don't feel well.



Send me to school if

- . I have a runny nose or just a little cough, but no other symptoms.
- I haven't had a fever overnight and haven't taken fever reducing medicine during that time.
- · I have a mild stomach ache.
- I haven't thrown up overnight and can drink liquids without throwing up.
- · I have a mild rash and no other symptoms.
- I have eye drainage without fever, eye pain or eyelid redness.



Keep me at home if

- I have a temperature higher than 100.4
- I have thrown up two or more times in the past 24 hours.
- . My stool is watery and I may not make it to the bathroom in time.



Seek medical care if

- I have a temperature higher than 100.4 and any of the following: ear pain, sore throat, rash, stomachache, headache or tooth pain.
- I have stomach pain and fever, I have bloody or black stool, or I am dehydrated (tired and sleepy, dry mouth) and/or I have not urinated in the last 8 hours.
- I have a persistent cough or trouble breathing, or have a fever with the cough.
- · I have eye swelling, eye pain or an eye injury.
- I have a rash that has blisters, is draining, is painful, looks like bruises, and/or I have a fever with the rash.

If you don't know whether to send your child to school, have specific concerns regarding your child's physical or mental health, or are worried your child will spread illness, contact your child's health care provider, a local urgent care or the school purse.

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

Find tips about how to keep your child healthy and in school on the Attendance Works website: https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/health-handouts-for-families/







Call Our Office so We Can Support You

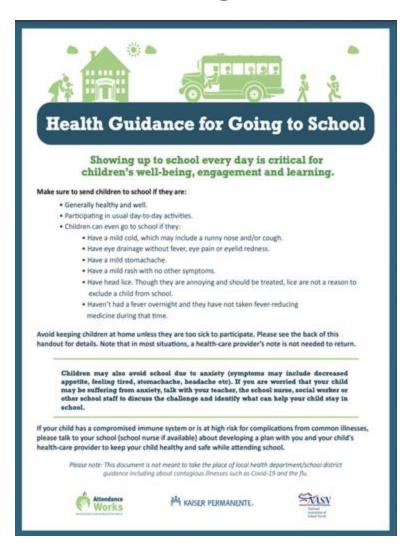
Give Parents Tools and Skills



- Handouts from Attendance
 Works and AAP
- Waiting Room Video at <u>https://www.attendancewor</u> <u>ks.org/resources/videos/brin</u> <u>ging-attendance-home-</u> <u>video/</u>

Raise Awareness and Prevent Illness during Well Child Visits, Urgent Visits, and with Chronic Condition Management







Parent Handout on Anxiety

This handout provides answers to key questions:

- What are the symptoms?
- When does anxiety become a problem?
- What can families do to support their child?
- How can schools and health providers help?
- Where can I find additional information?





Is your child missing school due to anxiety?

Definition of anxiety: Feeling of fear and uneasiness about everyday situations.

If your child is suffering from anxiety, you are not alone. The good news is that in most situations, anxiety is normal and temporary. Anxiety becomes a concern if it persists - it can impact relationships with family, peers and teachers, contribute to academic challenges, and lead to school avoidance/refusal. Addressing anxiety is important for a child's overall well-being, not just attendance.

In addition, if your child starts to complain of symptoms like a headache or stomach ache, it is important to *quickly determine* if this is related to anxiety or a physical illness which might require missing school. If the challenge is anxiety, then staying home may worsen the situation.



What are the symptoms of anxiety?

Persistent anxiety can present in many ways, making it difficult to recognize.

Symptoms may vary depending on the age of the child, and some children may keep worries to themselves or have difficulty explaining their feelings making it hard to identify symptoms. Anxiety symptoms can include, but aren't limited to, the following:

- · Feeling tired, irritable or easily tearful
- · Having trouble separating from parents
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- · Trouble getting out of bed or dressed for school
- Lack of appetite
- Trouble concentrating which may lead to difficulty starting tasks, problems with homework and falling behind in school
- Physical symptoms, including stomachaches and headaches
- Avoiding activities they previously enjoyed
- . Negative or continuous thoughts that something bad is going to happen



https://www.attendanceworks.org/take-action/community-and-agency-partners/health-care-providers/

www.attendanceworks.org 29



School Avoidance: Tips for Concerned Parents

School avoidance (sometimes called school refusal or school phobia) occurs in as many as 5% of children. Kids may outright refuse to attend school or create reasons why they should not go. They may miss a lot of school, complaining of not feeling well, with vague, unexplainable symptoms.

Many children who try to avoid going to school have anxiety-related symptoms over which they have no conscious control. They may experience headaches, stomachaches, hyperventilation, nausea or dizziness—



symptoms that happen most often on school days, and are usually absent on weekends. When these children are examined by a doctor, no physical illnesses (/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/school/Pages/When-to-Keep-Your-Child-Home-from-

School.aspx#%3a-%3atext=As%20general%20guidelines%2c%20keep%20your%2cenough%20to%20participate%20in %20class) are detected or diagnosed.

Here's what else to know about school avoidance and how to work with your child to help solve it.

School-related anxiety

Most often, school-avoiding children do not know exactly why they feel sick. They may have a hard time telling you what is causing their discomfort or upset.

When school-related anxiety (/English/family-life/family-dynamics/Pages/help-your-child-manage-fears-andanxieties.aspx)is causing school avoidance, the symptoms may be ways to communicate emotional struggle with issues like:

- · Fear of failure
- Increase in academic struggles
- · Problems with other children (for instance, being teased)
- · Anxieties over toileting in a public bathroom
- · A teacher's perceived "meanness"
- Online bullying (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Cyberbullying.aspx)outside of school hours
- . Threats of physical harm (as from a school bully) or actual physical harm

What to do when your child doesn't want to go to school

st step, an examination by your child's doctor can rule out physical illness. The doctor also can help you explore .ssures your child may be feeling and create a plan to help them get back to school.

The Challenge of School Avoidance

https://shorturl.at/JN4x7

Explain to Parents Why Attendance Matters in Prek through First Grade

- Across the nation, one in four kindergartners are chronically absent.
- 17% of children with chronic absenteeism in kindergarten AND first grade were reading at grade level in third grade.



Champion Strong Attendance and Health in Early Childhood Education



- Work with your local Head Start and other early education partners even if they don't have an official school nurse
- Build awareness that your office is on the "back to school" team
- Advocate for bidirectional communication. Reach out to the programs with questions about "return to school" protocols.
 - Offer education or handouts on safe return to school for infectious diseases.
- Be a resource for school nurse or teacher health questions.

AMERICAN ACABEMY OF PERIATRICS

Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools

A Quick Reference Guide, 3rd Edition



Susan S. Aronson, MD, FAAP Timothy R. Shope, MD, MPH, FAAP

American Academy of Pediatrics DEDICATED TO THE REALTH OF ALL CHILDREN'

Pediatricians can treat students AND educate our partners in education

CHAPTER'S DOCK TRANSPORTS SHEETS - 1 - 0.15



Hand-Foot-and-Mouth Disease

What is hand-foot-and-mouth disease?

A common set of symptoms associated with visid infotimes that are most despectly seen in the manage and full. Despite the search manner, this objects in respectably

What are the signs or symptoms?

- . They blinders in the month and on the france, unless of hands, inchedia, and onles of feet that had a littleheater than a week time, few, or all of these heaty sites may be unoked with the historic.
- May are common rold signs or symptoms with ferer, now threat, many more, and cough. The most transference finding to bistore to the squally whath make 8 difficult for the child to est or skeak. Other eagus or eposphoses, much an constitue and describes. coas access fruit are less frequent.
- · Stand for and mouth discourage care receiving

What are the incubation and contagious periods?

- · Contagues period: Virus stay be shed for terein to months to the steel after the infection starts, respenatury elseiding of the mass is usually limited to 1 to

How is it spread?

- · Responsively throughful reside: Contact with large shopiets that furni when a shift talks, roughs, or assesses. These descripts can land on or be subled tate the even more, or namely. The dissists do not stay to the air: they usually burel so more than 3 Set and Sdi onto the ground.
- · Contact with the respiratory secretario from or sitgests continuousled by statisties who corry these
- . Front-send courte. Contact with forces of citablese when are infected. This prescully torrobon as infected child. rive Communition There even Dealers, and then bisching on object that another chief touches. The shift who howhed the contaminated surface they note their fagers but their own mostly or mother services.





State and Advanced Institute and here

How do you control it?

* Prevent contact with resonatory socretions. Trucks challdren and administrat to every their speed and months when envented or coughing with a disposable factal theses, if possible, or with an upper usin sierce or effore if no facad those in ataliable in time Track resignate to resource any masses or defects on skin or other nations and perform band bygiven

cight affer using listed thence or haring constact with mucon to percent the spend of discose by containnated lands. Change or owns shifting with mores-

- times after each one.
- + Use-good basel ingines technique at all the times listed in Chapter 2, especially after disper changing

What are the roles of the educator and the family?

- + Named the Infection to the staff number description by the early elablished education assents to wheel for electron-making and action related to core of iff elabless. That person, is here, aloris sensibly responsed family and staff assessions to mixth for romed men.
- Encourage the locally to welk medical arbitre of the cloid in very uncomfortable with signs of filters from the todeston, much as an harbital to detell are not, or of the child seems year iff.

Exclude from educational setting?

- * The child in module to participate and staff mentions detectine that council one for the shift without compromising their shifts in case for the health and safety of the other clabbers to the cross. Excelsive drawling from mostly rosen singlet by a problem that stell mostlers will that difficult to stange for some children with that disease.
- * The statist mostle other curbaness orderts been Conditions Requiring Trasperary Eurhanius in

Readmit to educational setting?

Yes, when all the following criteria are met:

When exclusion extents are resolved, the child is able to participate, and educators determine they can care for the child without compromising their alidity to core for the levaltic and safety of the other children to the

Notes: Carlamor will set reduce disease framents man became some children may shed the steam withend becoming recognizably \$5 and other children who because the case wheel the vittee for treets to the stock

In some cases, the book health department any to seconds alternate face that dense after secolates empres star house to control on outbreck.

American Academy of Pediatrics



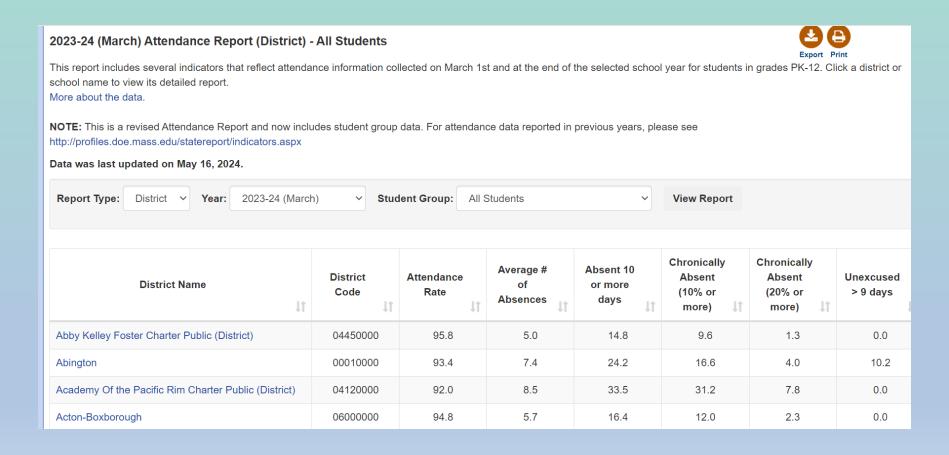
Build Partnerships with Schools and School Nurses

- Partner with school nurses on "get back to school" messages
- Educate yourself and school staff on and protocols (fever, emesis, pink eye).
- Utilize school health to administer acute and chronic medications.



- Respect FERPA and HIPAA while communicating with school health.
- Create workflows to keep school medication orders, school refills, and action plans updated.
- Offer help with IHPs & IEPs.

Understand What Absenteeism Looks Like in Your Community



https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/attendance.aspx



What Interventions Make Significant Differences?

School Nurses in the Building

95% of students who can see a school nurse get back to class. 83% of students who are in schools without a school nurse return to class on the same day.

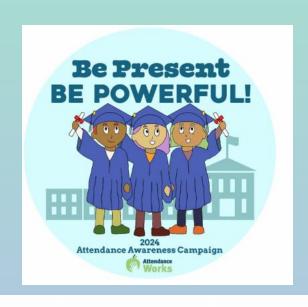
Improvement? One Step At a Time



School Attendance Is a Pediatric Vital Sign

Chronic Absenteeism is a Health Disparities Multiplier

Resources



https://www.attendanceworks.org/

https://nam.edu/vital-signs-for-pediatric-health-chronic-absenteeism/

The Link Between School Attendance and Good Health. AAP Policy Statement 2019.

AAP Council on School Health: School Health Learning Burst Library:

https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/schoolhealth/teams-enhancing-school-healthservices/learning-burst-library-school-health/

American Academy of Pediatrics

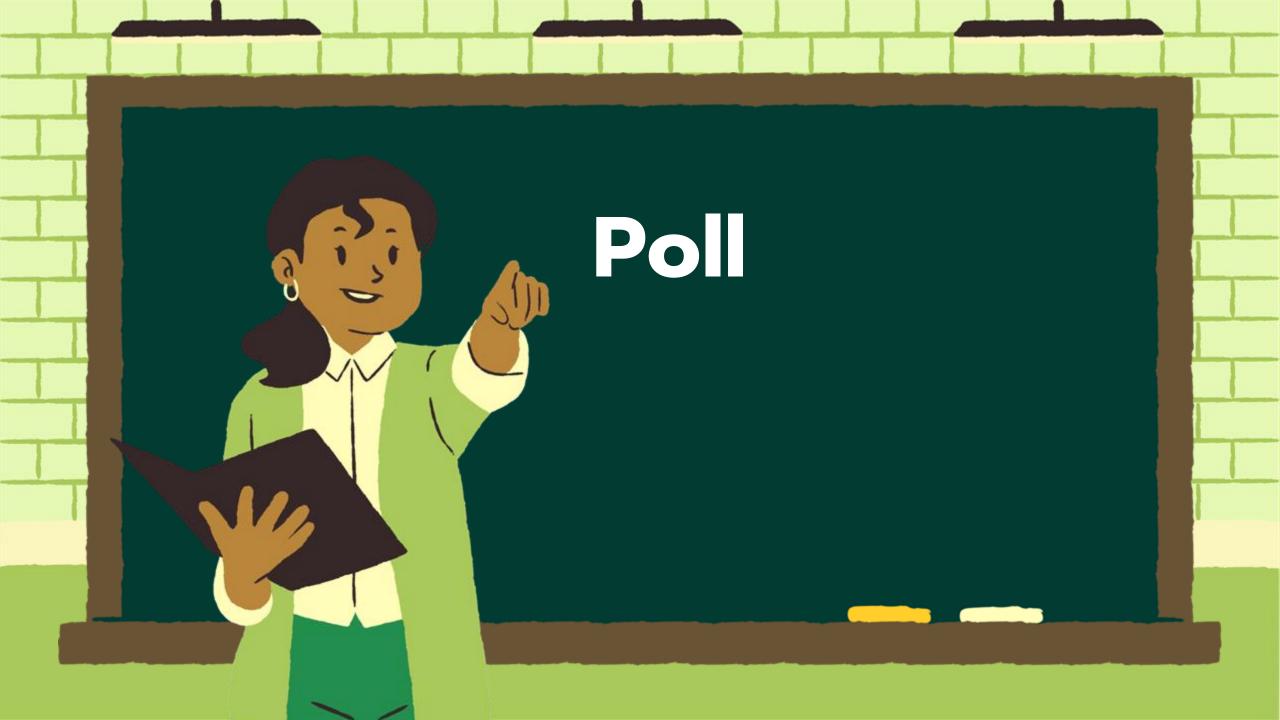


DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN"

"Getting Credit"

Complete the evaluation and assessment for CME and MOC 2 credit.

If you are interested in participating in a simple 3-month MOC 4 activity, check that box on your evaluation form or contact Cathleen Haggerty



Please Contact Us With Questions or to Join Our MCAAP Task Force on Chronic Absenteeism

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