

Supporting Your High Schooler's Attendance

Understand High School Attendance Policies

- Review the school's attendance policy at the start of the school year. The policy may be in a school handbook or on the school website. Know how many absences are allowed and how to excuse them.
- High school often has stricter rules, meaning that too many absences might lead to missing credits or missing sports or clubs.

Importance of Regular Attendance

- High school classes can be challenging, with many lessons building on what students have learned before. Many hands-on projects, class discussions, and labs often have in-class grades that teens can't make up later. Students can quickly fall behind in work and feel overwhelmed.

Addressing Attendance Issues

- If your teen starts skipping school or puts up a fight to go, talk with them to find out the real reason why. It could be as simple as having trouble waking up or something bigger like anxiety, bullying, friendships, or trouble with classes. Listen to how they feel, even if you don't quite understand. You can always reach out to school counselors, teachers, or staff to help.

Ways to Support

- Set Expectations: Talk with your teen about what you expect for attendance and why it is important. You can use personal stories or share what the school has told you about the rules.
- Prioritize Sleep: Make sure your teen gets enough rest to be alert and able to focus in class.
- Manage Morning Routines: Help them plan their mornings so they're ready on time without feeling rushed.
- Encourage Extracurriculars: Getting involved in clubs, sports, and other activities can give students more reasons to go to school.
- Promote Physical Activity: Exercise can improve mood, sleep, and mental health, making it easier to attend school.
- Stay Informed: Have regular chats with your teen to catch any signs of stress or avoidance before they become bigger issues.
- Signs of "Senioritis": During their last year of high school, seniors can become very "checked out" or seem not to care. Learn about “senioritis” and find tips to help.



Regular school attendance plays a crucial role in helping students excel academically, build friendships, and develop personally. With your support, they can navigate the challenges of high school and emerge prepared to face the world.