

# What K-5 Families Should Know About Attendance

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## **Why Attendance Matters in Elementary School**

- Kids build learning habits in these grades. Missing even a few days a month can cause them to fall behind.
- Students do many activities in class that can't be made up at home, like hands-on lessons, group work, or class discussions.
- Attending school every day helps your child build friendships and feel confident in their classroom.

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## **Understand the Attendance Policy**

- Your child's school will share how many days they can miss and how to send a note if they're sick.
- Ask the school about their "too sick for school" rules so you know when to keep your child home and when it's okay to send them.

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## **What If Your Child Resists Going to School?**

If your child resists going to school, try to find out why:

- They might need more time to get ready in the morning.
- They could be having a problem with another student or feel unsure about schoolwork.
- Talk to the teacher, counselor, or principal. They're there to help!

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### Stay In Touch with the School

- Use your school's messaging system to share updates or ask questions.
- Teachers and staff want to work with you — not just when there's a problem, but to celebrate progress, too!

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### Ways You Can Help at Home

- Set clear expectations: Let your child know that you expect them to be in school every day unless they're truly sick.
- Plan ahead: Have clothes, lunches, and backpacks ready the night before to reduce stress in the morning.
- Stick to a bedtime routine: Most K-5 children need 9-11 hours of sleep to be ready for school.
- Give them time: Some children don't like being late because they feel embarrassed when they enter the classroom or school late. Arriving late can cause distress. Stay calm as you help your child prepare for school.
- Find something that they love about school: Talk to your child about what they enjoy — like music, friends, or recess. Ask their teacher about clubs or programs they could join.
- Get moving: Encourage play and outdoor activities at home. It helps with sleep and reduces stress.
- Talk every day: A quick chat after school helps you spot problems early — before they become big issues.

*You are your child's first and most important teacher.  
Helping them build good attendance habits now prepares them  
for a lifetime of success.*