



Evidence-based Family Engagement

BIRTH THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL

Supporting Strong Attendance (PreK - Grade 12)



FACT: It's a big job for kids this age to head off to school each day. It's normal for this transition to bring big emotions. Having a goodbye routine can help.

TIP: Come up with a way to say goodbye at the start of school each day. For example, you and your child might share three hugs and a high five.

GROWTH: Now come up with a "hello" routine that you can share when you see each other after school. For example, doing a silly dance or asking a fun question.



FACT: Lots of learning happens every day in your child's classroom. Attendance matters! Routines make it easier for kids to show up on time and ready to learn.

TIP: Talk together about a morning routine. Ask, "What do you need to do to get ready?" Make a list and post it where your child can check it each morning.

GROWTH: Keep up the great attendance. If you're having trouble getting your child to school let the teacher know. There might be ways the school can help.



FACT: School attendance is critical. If your child doesn't want to go to school, talk about why. This helps you address concerns and support great attendance.

TIP: If your child says they don't want to go to school, ask about why. Are they tired? Feeling anxious? Remind them that you're there to listen and help.

GROWTH: Keep supporting attendance. If your child is often anxious about school, let teachers or counselors know. Knowing helps them offer support.



FACT: When teens feel a sense of belonging in high school it boosts their motivation and effort. Joining school clubs and activities helps build this connection.

TIP: Ask your teen if there are clubs or activities, they might be interested in. If they aren't sure try, "Is there a friend or teacher you could ask?"

GROWTH: Attending school events like games and concerts can help your teen discover activities they might want to join. Being in the audience can also boost belonging.

2

Attendance

Students are more likely to attend school regularly when their families give the school high ratings on family engagement.

Miller, E. & Gaumer Erickson, A. S., 2023



RELYING ON PARENTS TO SUPPORT ATTENDANCE

PARENTS



- Ensure access to transportation
- Support health and wellness
- Attain essentials- clothing, housing, food
- Track requirements & expectations
- Support routines
- Support personal motivation
- Support transitions
- Partner when challenges arise
- Ongoing communication about school



CONNECT: Great attendance leads to great learning-not just for your child but the whole class! Research shows that regular attendance leads to higher grades and higher graduation rates. Need to review Metro Nashville Public Schools' attendance policy? Click here: mnps.org/cms/one

Clearly Articulate Expectations The What, Why, When and How of Attendance

- ★ **WHAT** are the rules?
- ★ **WHY** do they matter?
- ★ **WHEN** do children need to be at school: regular days, half days, vacations...?
- ★ **HOW** will you support attendance: what supports are available?

Foster a **Strong Sense of Belonging** for Students and Families

- ★ **Welcoming, inclusive and accessible schools. Do families feel seen, heard, represented?**
- ★ **Strong Relationships**
- ★ **Link learning to personal interests and goals**



FACT: When teens feel a sense of belonging in high school it boosts their motivation and effort. Joining school clubs and activities helps build this connection.

TIP: Ask your teen if there are clubs or activities, they might be interested in. If they aren't sure try, "Is there a friend or teacher you could ask?"

GROWTH: Attending school events like games and concerts can help your teen discover activities they might want to join. Being in the audience can also boost belonging.



FACT: You are the expert on your child. Sharing insights with the teacher helps them welcome your child to school and meet your child's needs.

TIP: Let the teacher know about things your child loves to do. You might share about activities they love and things that make them happy and excited.

GROWTH: Now share about your child's emotions. Are there ways the teacher can tell if your child's feeling nervous? Things that help your child feel calm?



FACT: School attendance is critical. If your child doesn't want to go to school, talk about why. This helps you address concerns and support great attendance.

TIP: If your child says they don't want to go to school, ask about why. Are they tired? Feeling anxious? Remind them that you're there to listen and help.

GROWTH: Keep supporting attendance. If your child is often anxious about school, let teachers or counselors know. Knowing helps them offer support.



FACT: Bullying is a repeated aggressive behavior. If you think your child's experiencing bullying (in or out of school), it's always okay to tell the school.

TIP: Before reaching out to the school, chat with your child. Ask questions and listen. Sharing lots of details helps the school provide the right support.

GROWTH: It also helps to list any questions you have before reaching out. For example, "Is this affecting my child in class?" or "What are the next steps?"

Support **Strong** **Communication** Between Home and School

- ★ **Active listening at home and at school**
- ★ **Advocacy Support**
- ★ **Clear invitations to reach out for support**
- ★ **Clear communication and feedback channels**



FACT: Lots of learning happens every day in your child's classroom. Attendance matters! Routines make it easier for kids to show up on time and ready to learn.

TIP: Talk together about a morning routine. Ask, "What do you need to do to get ready?" Make a list and post it where your child can check it each morning.

GROWTH: Keep up the great attendance. If you're having trouble getting your child to school let the teacher know. There might be ways the school can help.

Support **routines** and **healthy habits**

- ★ **Nightly routines**
- ★ **Morning routines**
- ★ **A good nights sleep**
- ★ **Exercise and healthy eating**
- ★ **Well Visist**



CONNECT: It can feel great to go out in the community. You'll get to try new things. It's also a perfect chance to have fun with other families. Here's a list of fun and free events in Southern Maine:

<https://i.pp.com/a/3pOz>

CONNECT: It can be hard to parent when you are in need of things like housing, fuel, or food. Our community can help. Visit or call 2-1-1 Maine to speak with someone about your needs.

<https://i.pp.com/a/VkZX>

Connect families with the **people, places and things** that support strong attendance.

- ★ Warm Clothing
- ★ Food and housing
- ★ Transportation
- ★ Fuel Assistance
- ★ Friends and Neighbors



FACT: Knowing about different career paths helps your teen consider lots of career possibilities. Start by exploring careers connecting to things your teen likes doing. Click here for information on dozens of careers:
<https://parentpowered.com/career-explorations-high-school-shareable/>

TIP: Ask your teen, "What are things you can imagine doing every day and enjoying? Building things? Writing? Taking care of others? What else?"

GROWTH: When your teen is interested in a career, encourage them to research it. What's needed to have that career? An internship? Training program? College?

Relevance, motivation and academic socialization

- ★ **Knowing your adults care about school**
- ★ **Talking about goals and aspirations.**
- ★ **Understanding the role school plays in getting you where you want to go**

BEFORE



Subject: Absence

Hello it's MBE,
Your child is marked as absent today. Please contact us as soon as possible to let us know the reason for your child's absence.



Is the “ask” **ACTUALLY DOABLE?**
Or is more support necessary?

- Will they know about it in the first place—will they receive the ask? Is it in their home language? At an accessible reading level? Free of jargon?
- Do families have the background knowledge to understand and act on the task (s) I’m asking them to do?
- Is the” ask” culturally responsive and strength based?
- Do they have the required materials or a way to get them? Transportation? Time?
- Is it clear how to ask for help if needed?

AFTER



Subject: Absence

Hello it's Milton Brook Elementary.
Your child is marked as absent today. Please call 413-238-0967 as soon as possible. Leave us a message with your child's name and the reason for their absence.





AFTER

With Scaffolding

Hello it's Milton Brook Elementary.

Your child is marked as absent today. Please call 413-238-0967 as soon as possible. Leave us a message with your child's name and the reason for their absence.

We are here for you. If it ever becomes difficult to get your child to school please reach out. There may be ways we can help. Call 413-238-7789 and ask to speak with Will. If you need an interpreter let us know "I need a [Spanish] interpreter."



TALK ABOUT ATTENDANCE TOGETHER

It's key for your teen to know the requirements and just how important school is.



As a parent, it's totally normal to not always know what's required when it comes to attendance. You can likely find your **school's attendance policy** on the school website. You can also call the school to ask.

Make sure your teen knows the requirements too. Look at them together. **Does your teen have any questions or concerns?**

Talk about why great attendance is so important. For example, discuss how school is helping your teen reach their personal goals. These conversations boost motivation.



To stay on track, kids should not miss more than 9 days over the course of the whole school year.



PLAN FOR GREAT ATTENDANCE

Thinking in advance about obstacles to attendance helps your teen overcome them.



GETTING TO SCHOOL

Talk about the plan for getting to school every day and on time.



BACK-UP PLAN

Talk about what to do if the plan falls through. For example, if your teen misses the bus, who will they call for help getting to school?



ROUTINES

Support your teen in setting up routines that lead to great attendance. What time do they need to wake up? How much sleep helps them feel rested and ready?



APPOINTMENTS

Schedule medical and dental checkups after school or on non-school days.



COMMUNICATE WITH THE SCHOOL

If there are things that will make it hard for your teen to get to school, like work schedules or taking care of siblings, let the school know. They can help to come up with a plan so your teen can get to school.

1
2
3
4
5

Get Ready for Great Attendance!

Great attendance leads to great learning—not just for your child but the whole class!

It's so important that children attend school every day. Getting to school everyday and on time allows kids to keep up with school work and learn along with their peers.

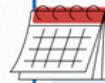
You can set your child up for a year of great attendance before the school year even begins. Just follow these steps to success!

In the United States, children are required by law to attend school from around the age of 6 to around the age of 17.

To see your state's school attendance laws click here:

bit.ly/attendance_school

Before school begins:



Print out a copy of the school calendar

so you know when school breaks and half-days happen—these can be great times to schedule appointments so your child does not have to miss school for things like well-visits or dental checkups.

Check the school website

to make sure you know the time school begins and ends.

Add the number for the school office

to your contact list. You can call to ask questions. You can call if you need help getting your child to school. And you **MUST** call if your child is ever absent.

Make sure you know how your child is getting to and from school everyday.

Are they riding the bus? Going by car? Walking or using public transportation? If you do not know, call the school to discuss your options. You can always ask for an interpreter if you need language assistance.



Routines ROCK!



Tips for Building a Just-Right Routine

Creating daily routines is powerful. Routines help kids know what to expect and what is expected of them. This helps kids feel more comfortable, secure, and confident. Routines also build independence and responsibility.

Creating the right get ready for school routine can make everyone's lives easier. What's the right routine for your family?

The right routine is:

- Simple
- Easy to follow
- Repeatable



Here are some tips and guiding questions you might use

Interested in learning more about ParentPowered's evidence-based family engagement program for birth through grade 12?



LET'S TALK!

We now offer educator professional learning to support all your family engagement efforts. Reach out to find out more.



info@parentpowered.com



<http://bit.ly/3LpI0N2>



FACT: The love and support you give your child helps them grow every day in every way! It's all the little things you do daily that make a BIG difference.

TIP: Today, think about your parenting superpower. It's something you're REALLY amazing at. Telling stories, giving hugs, or listening area few. What's yours?

GROWTH: Keep celebrating YOU. Now think about a proud parenting moment from the week. What made it special? Thinking about these moments celebrates YOU!