



# Attendance Tips for Parents

## Let Children Know that Good Attendance Is Important:

- Attendance is a parent and child responsibility. Let your child know that you think attending school daily is important. Show them you are interested in their school activities and tell them that you want them to do well in school.
- Good attendance habits start at an early age. Make sure your child goes to school regularly and arrives on time. This helps them develop a positive view of school and the importance of attendance.
- Discuss with your child the importance of arriving to school on time and not missing parts of the school day.
- Become involved in your child's school life and school activities.
- Take an interest in your child's school work. Check homework for accuracy and completeness.
- Read the school newsletters, letters and messages. Post the school calendar and notes on the refrigerator, or other prominent location to highlight school activities and important information.
- Do not provide inappropriate excuses for your child to miss school. Do not let them take time off from school for minor ailments – particularly those which would not prevent you from going to work.
- Don't expect or let older children stay home from school to babysit younger siblings.
- Set good examples and enforce rules. Speak well of the school and support school staff.
- Make a contract with your child to improve his/her attendance. Reward positive improvements.

## Establish a Routine:

- Give yourself and children enough time to get ready. No TV or computer games on school mornings.
- Provide children with their own alarm clock. Teach children to set and use their own alarm clock or clock radio.
- Set alarm clock 30 minutes earlier for children who need more time to get ready for school.
- Plan ahead the night before: such as identifying and pre-prepping breakfast, have children get out their clothes and shoes the night before, and pack their backpacks with completed homework and snacks/water. Parents can prepare for work the night before too.
- Set a regular bedtime schedule. Age should be a factor.
- Get proper rest and go to bed early.
- Have your child go to bed 10 minutes earlier and get up 10 minutes earlier.

- Have children bathe or shower in the evening.
- Help your child relax before bedtime with a story, instead of the stimulation of television or screen-based games.
- Have schoolwork and lunch ready and laid out, ready to go. Create a special folder for completed assignments.
- Provide regular study times and a quiet, clean area for doing homework.
- Have your older child walk to school with another child who is always on time.
- Limit and balance extra-curricular activities.
- Have a back-up plan for cold weather for cars not starting.

#### **Show Interest in Your Child's Activities:**

- Attend Parent Teacher Conferences
- Attend Parent Meetings
- Volunteer in the classroom, on field trips or during school events.
- Make education a family priority.
- Encourage your child to get more involved with their school. Sign them up for extra-curricular activities they like and discuss with them the importance of regular attendance. Studies show the more involved a child and parents are with their school, the better their attendance and success is.

#### **Keep Open Lines of Communication with your Children and Key School Staff**

- Let the school know in advance if your child is going to be absent or if you have concerns about your child's attendance or school performance.
- Report all absences early on the morning the child will miss school by telephoning, texting or emailing the school office.
- Provide doctor's notes to the school office when medical verification is available for a child's absences.
- Check your phone regularly for messages from school and ensure school has up-to-date contact information.
- If your child does not want to go to school, find out why and work with the school and your child to address concerns. Let your child know he/she must attend school.
- If you notice your child is avoiding a particular class or is having a difficult time in one subject area, discuss this with your child and his/her teacher. Offer extra support at home. This will prevent your child from developing a behaviour of avoidance in school when things become difficult.
- Get to know your children's friends and their families and make connections with other families that value school attendance.
- Contact school for help if it is needed to support your child or family.
- Ask teachers and staff at your child's school and other family members for advice on how

to keep your child going to school – on time, every day!

- Check your child's book bag regularly, ideally daily. Occasionally important information can become lost in a full bag. Organizing its contents regularly improves your chances of finding these documents while they are still useful.
- Keep a school year calendar. This is an excellent way to track all of the important dates, holidays, and events at your child's school. It is also a convenient place to document absences (who was absent, why and how you cleared it/date cleared), phone calls/conferences with school staff, and all of your other important school related information.
- Make sure your child knows you do not approve of him/her being late or absent. Talk to your child about issues that may be making them late for school.
- Help your child understand the law regarding school and relevant school policies.
- Do not let your child persuade you into making an excuse for him/her. Don't give up. Reward good behaviour and take it one day at a time.
- If you have any concerns contact school in confidence straightaway.

**December 2017**

