



ABSENCES ADD UP!

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills, as well as the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers. **As a new school year kicks off, learn about chronic absenteeism and raise awareness in your community.**

Learn more at YourUnitedWay.org/education-and-attendance



United Way of Greater
Richmond & Petersburg

WHY ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Preliminary data from a California study found that children who were chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade were far less likely to read proficiently at the end of third grade.

Who can read on grade level after third grade?

64%

of kids with good attendance in kindergarten and first grade
**Missed nine or fewer days both years*

43%

of kids with at-risk attendance
**Missed more than nine days both years*

41%

of kids chronically absent in kindergarten or first grade
**Missed 18 or more days both years*

17%

of kids chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade
**Missed 18 or more days both years*

WHAT FAMILIES CAN DO

- **Find out what day school starts** and make sure your child has the required shots.
- **Build regular routines** for bed time and the morning.
- **Talk about the importance of regular attendance** and about how your child feels about school.
- **Don't permit missing school** unless your child is truly sick. Use a thermometer to check for a fever. Remember that stomach aches and headaches may be signs of anxiety.
- **Avoid medical appointments and extended trips** when school is in session.
- **Keep a chart** recording your child's attendance at home. At the end of the week, talk with your child about what you see.
- **Develop back up plans** for getting to school if something comes up. Ask a family member, neighbor or another parent for help.
- **Seek support** from school staff or community groups to help with transportation, health problems or no safe path to school.

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