**Why Attendance Matters:**

* Regular school attendance is essential for children to learn the academic and social skills they need to succeed.
* Regular school attendance ensures children benefit from quality early education.
* Missing 10 percent of preschool (about 18 days in the school year) can:
  + Make it harder to develop early reading skills.
  + Make it harder to get ready for kindergarten and first grade.
  + Result in children developing a poor attendance pattern that is hard to break.
* Missing 10% of the school year can leave
  + 3rd graders unable to read proficiently.
  + 6th graders struggling with their coursework.
  + High school students off track for graduation.

**What can Parents and other family members do to help young children develop good attendance habits that lead to high school graduation and future success?**

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| * **Talk about the importance of regular attendance with your child.** * **Ask your child how he/she feels about school.**   + **Ask for help from teachers is your child is struggling, unhappy or feeling anxious or unsafe at school.** * **Have a regular bed time routine.**   + **Set out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.** * **Have a regular morning routine.** * **Make getting your child to school on time every day a priority.** * **Schedule appointments (doctors, dentists, etc.) for after school hours as much as possible.** * **Plan vacations for school holidays and summer time.** * **Have a back-up plan to get your child to school when something comes up.**   + **Can a neighbor or family member take them to school?** * **Don’t let your child stay home unless he or she is truly sick.** * **If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to his or her teachers, school counselors and others about how to make him/her feel more comfortable and excited about learning.**   **Where to go for more information:**  **Parent to Parent of Georgia** 770-451-5484 or 800-229-2038 or [www.p2pga.org](http://www.p2pga.org)  **Georgia Department of Education, Division for Special Education Services and Supports** 404-656-3963 or 800-311-3627 and ask to be transferred to Special Education <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/default.aspx>  **Additional resources:** Contact your child’s teacher, the school principal, and/or the Special Education Director for your school system.  **Credits:** www.Attendanceworks.org |
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