

Causes of absenteeism

[Profession](#), [Teacher](#)



Hb1 Causes of absenteeism Although patterns of chronic absenteeism vary, the most common pattern is for a student to miss a few days of school each week. The student's excuses may or may not have to do with an illness. An absentee problem should be considered chronic when it is not always related to a specific illness and involves an average of two days or more per month. Once cause of chronic absenteeism is a lack of initiative on the part of the parents. It's not uncommon to find children absent from school because their parents did not get them up and out the door.

In some cases, children may be kept home to take care of a parent or sibling who is not feeling well. Chronic absenteeism is often a family problem. When one child is absent, so are his or her brothers and sisters. Chronic absenteeism can also occur if parents are easily fooled into thinking the student is sick. Some parents are unable to determine whether their child is sick or not and, therefore, let the child stay home at the slightest complaint. Staying home and watching TV can be very reinforcing to some students. Chronic absenteeism may also occur if the classroom atmosphere is not reinforcing or is threatening to the child.

If the student is nervous or anxious about the classroom, he or she may try to avoid coming to school. This factor is usually combined with one of the other causes discussed above. Sometimes, the very young child will use illness as a means of avoiding what he or she thinks may be a new and frightening experience. The Plan: Step 1: Follow all of the procedures for handling absenteeism that are outlined by your district. All of the procedures discussed in this solution section should be implemented in addition to,

rather than in place of, the procedures specified by your school's administration.

Step 2: Discuss the problem with the school or district nurse. If you are uncertain whether the student actually has health problems, arrange for a physical. (Make sure that you follow distinct guidelines in making arrangements for a physical examination.) Request the school nurse or physician to give the parents some guidelines for evaluating whether the student has an illness that justifies being absent from school as often as has been the case. Step 3: Discuss the problem with the student's parents. Be sure to provide them with a record of their child's absences.

Parents often have no idea how frequently their child has missed school. Let them know that you only wish to help and that you share their concern for their child's welfare in school. Determine whether the student's problem is the result of the parents not being able to tell whether the child is fooling them. Point out that it's sometimes difficult to tell whether someone is sick first thing in the morning. If the parents have discussed the problem with a nurse or doctor, suggest that they follow the guidelines that were given to them by the professional.

Tell the parents that it's fine to send the child to school when they are unsure about health complaints. Reassure them that you will send the child home if he or she is actually sick. In addition, you can suggest to the parent that if the child is kept at home, he should be kept in bed all day. Reinforce the idea that sick time requires rest time. (Sometimes the child will learn to determine whether he is sick or not with this procedure alone.) Determine

whether the student's problem is the result of parents not caring whether the child is in school. If so, be understanding of the parents. They may have had negative experiences in school.

Let them know that you are there to help their child learn but that you cannot be effective unless the child is in school. Some parents may assume that the elementary school day is composed mostly of play. Let the parents know that this is not the case and that what the student learns each day and each year in school will help determine his or her future success. Sometimes just knowing you care will make a difference in the parents' attitude. If the child's attendance improves, be sure to follow up with periodic notes or phone calls to the parents to voice your appreciation to their assistance.

Step 4:

Discuss the problem with the student. Be very frank with the student about the severity of the problem. Show the student his or her attendance records. Let the student know that continued absences will make it more and more difficult for him or her to keep up with the other students. If the student can't tell how he or she feels in the morning, tell the student to come to school anyway. Tell the student that you will send the student home if he or she is really sick. If the student is chronically absent because the parents do not bother getting him or her up and ready, discuss ways the student can do this for himself or herself.

Consider having the student do some work around the school to earn an alarm clock. (Check with your principal to see whether there is money available for purchasing a clock.) Work with the student on how to

get up and get ready for school. (This will be a time-consuming procedure for you, especially if the student is young. So don't do this step unless you think you can motivate the student to make the effort.) Be sure to greet the student warmly each morning that he or she comes to school. Step 5: Make your classroom a positive and exciting place to be.

Reassure the student that the student has a secure place in your class and that you like having him or her there. When the student is in class, keep the student active and challenged so that he or she will not want to miss something by not being there. An increase in positive interactions will do much to improve the environment in your classroom. Step 6: If you've followed district procedure and all of the steps that are suggested in this solution sheet but without success, do the best job you can with the student when he or she is there.

Try not to worry about the problem, and don't feel guilty. When you've done everything in your power to get the student to school, don't blame yourself if the problem persists. Keep yourself open to the possibility of other solutions, but don't let the problem interfere with your effectiveness with the students who are in school everyday Hb2 Chronic absenteeism of young students often overlooked This term refers to truants, but also includes students in the elementary grades who have excused absences due to illness, family problems, or other reasons.

The National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) defines a chronically absent student as one who misses 10 percent or more of the school year, regardless of whether an absence is excused or not. Many causes The NCCP

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cites a number of factors that can contribute to high levels of absenteeism among young children, including poor communication with parents, insufficient monitoring of attendance, high mobility, parents who don't value education or feel welcome in school, poverty, and high levels of violence in the community.

A recent report by the Open Society Institute-Baltimore, *Missing School: The Epidemic of School Absence*, notes that people tend to blame individuals -- "neglectful parents and/or lazy, undisciplined youths" -- when students don't attend school. But it found school district policies have also "contributed unintentionally to the wide-spread problem of poor school attendance in Baltimore," where 34 percent of elementary students and 44 percent of high school students were chronically absent in 2006-07 school year. These include weak and indifferent attendance policies and practices, including lack of follow-up with parents.

And because frequently absent students tend to have low academic performance, the exclusive use of standardized test scores to measure school effectiveness offers schools little incentive for encouraging attendance. Hb3 Student Absenteeism - What's the Problem - and the Answer? Student absenteeism is a serious issue in public education. Concerted efforts have been expended aimed at engaging students and promoting active learning, but schools are still full of "clock-watchers" Many high schoolers regularly skip classes and, according to some inside reports, "the hallways are virtually empty some Friday afternoons. What's my initial response? When confronted with a growing problem of

absenteeism, Nova Scotia Education seems to be considering “ compulsory engagement” until age 18. With 7. 4% of students missing 20% or more of classes and 45% absent for 10% of their classes, it’s a deeply entrenched problem. First came the carrot (the elementary level behaviour modification (PEBS) program and high school exam exemptions), now we seem to be resorting to the stick (compulsory schooling to 18). What does the education research say? Student engagement is clearly more important than attending and simply occupying classroom seats.

Canada’s largest national school survey, Tell Them from Me, provided a clearer sense of the problem and identified the factors contributing to “ a sense of belonging at school. ” “ Improving school and classroom climate” are key to “ increasing engagement,” says CRISP Director Douglas Willms (MASS Journal, Fall 2008). Leading American expert, Deborah Meier (2002), sees school size as a critical factor — the smaller the school, the more likely students are to feel a sense of attachment; the larger the school, the greater the potential for standardization, alienation and absenteeism.

Hb4 Health woes cause drop-out, absenteeism - DepEd study Health problems are the leading causes of drop-out and absenteeism among public school students today, according to the Nationwide Oral Health Survey (NOHS), a study conducted by the Department of Education (DepEd), citing that of all health-related affliction, 97 percent involves tooth decay. In order to reduce school drop-out and absenteeism, DepEd intensifies its Essential Health Care Program (EHCP) and targets the leading cause of absenteeism by promoting proper oral care habits among students. The EHCP is a school-

based program of DepEd and allocates simple and doable programs like daily hand washing, tooth brushing, bi-annual de-worming, among others. We hope to improve students' health thus also upgrade their academic performance," Education Undersecretary for Programs and Projects Vilma Labrador said. Together with Lamoian Corporation and Philippine Dental Association (PDA), DepED launched the Happy Smiles for Healthy Kids project Wednesday, targeting thousands of preschool pupils nationwide. The special project falls under the education department's EHCP.

The launch was held at Bagong Ilog Elementary School in Pasig City. The project will provide each pupil with one soap and one toothbrush and access to toothpaste, which will be provided by Lamoian Corporation. Each package costs P25. 00 per child for the entire school year. PDA, on the other hand, will also provide oral education and oral examination to 86 different schools nationwide. PDA is composed of 156 licensed dentists involved in the development of workable oral health programs in public elementary schools and communities.

Most importantly, DepEd along with their partners urged teachers to lead its students in practicing proper hygiene. " Teachers have theresponsibility, not only in developing their students' minds but also good habits especially oral care," Lamoian Corporation president and CEO Cecilio Pedro said. Hb5 Hb6 Student's excessive absenteeism should have prompted action by the school district to respond to attendance issues. Springfield School Committee v. Doe, 53 IDELR 158 (D. Mass. 009): A school district has an affirmative duty to take responsive action to a student's chronic absenteeism, even when there

is no “ particularized showing of lack of progress or loss of education benefit attributable to [the school district’s] failure to respond” to the student’s absenteeism. In this case, the student had cognitive, attention, and behavioral issues (plus a history of poor attendance) and was absent in excess of thirty-two (32) days over a period of just two months.

Also, one of the goals of the student’s IEP was to improve his handling of school responsibilities, which was “ grounded in” the student’s “ often being late and walking out of class, among other serious performance problems. ” Although there was no specific indication of any loss of educational benefit due to this chronic absenteeism, there was also no indication that a representative from the school’s Educational Team contacted the student or his guardian to determine the cause of the student’s absences. This failure was “ reason enough for the hearing officer to conclude that he had been denied a FAPE. The Court noted that “ for the hearing officer to have found otherwise” in light of such circumstances, it “ would only encourage school districts to ignore such problems in the hope that no lasting damage will ensue. ” Notably, the Court stated that it would not establish a set number of days of absence or truancy that would trigger a school district’s obligation to determine how to provide a FAPE. Rather, “ each student’s case must turn on its own facts. ” Hb7 The Effects of Excessive Absenteeism in Schools

Students who skip school a lot miss out on the opportunity to gain a quality education, while teachers who are often absent may hurt the students' chances by weakening the school's ability to function. Students without adequate parental supervision may skip school to escape the boredom or

cope with depression, according to author Linda L. Williams. Others stay away from class because of feelings of disconnectedness and inadequacy.

Disconnected to School * Students who are frequently absent from school have more difficulty forming relationships and participating in school activities.

Students with excessive absences may feel disconnected from academics and believe that the lessons are not relevant to their lives. They may spend less time in extracurricular activities, which reduces their chances to discover their passion, gain recognition for their talent and develop their skills outside the classroom. Disconnected student lack accountability which can lead to behavioral issues and poor academic achievement. Teachers who are frequently absent may not be able to bond with students.

As a result students are more likely to disregard lessons and take school less seriously. Compromised Learning * Excessive absences create gaps in the student's education. Lesson plans are designed to prepare students for the next lesson. However if the student is not present in the classroom for the teacher to help them, the student has a higher chance of being left behind. Due to frequent absences, students may forget the previous lessons which results academic insecurity. Students may be doubt their ability to excel academically and stop putting in the effort to achieve high grades.

If teachers have excessive absences, the learning process of the students becomes disrupted. Instead of challenging lessons, students are given busy work from less qualified substitute teachers. Lack of Positive Social Support * Constructive support from teachers and peers can boost a student's

confidence in academics and encourage her to work towards academic success. Many students with excessive absences are dealing with difficult financial, health or family situations. However, without the chance to gain support from teachers, the student may not receive the extra attention she needs.

Students who are exposed to negative attitudes about school will not have to chance to befriend students that excel academically. Teachers who are frequently absent are less able to join a strong network of teachers and gain the support of administration. This can lead to further clashes, organizational issues, conflicts and divisions within the school. Strained School Budgets * Student and teacher absences put a heavy burden on the school budget. Money that could be invested in field trips, technology and extracurricular activities are instead wasted on the cost of absences.

Research in 1998 by PhoneMaster systems found that Oakland (CA) Unified School District suffered a loss of \$4 million from student absences. Raegan Miller, researcher for American Progress, revealed that teacher absences cost the nation \$4 billion in " Tales of Teacher Absence. " Removal from School * Chronic absenteeism can often result in the student getting expelled, especially if the student has behavioral issues and extremely low grades. Students who are disconnected from school are less likely to be aware of the attendance policy.

This increases the chances of them being expelled from school. To reduce the budget strain and improve the quality of education, teachers with excessive absenteeism are targeted for removal. Many schools are feeling

pressure from officials to reduce budget costs by enforcing attendance. As a result frequently absent teachers are vulnerable to lay offs and dismissals.

Hb8 Absenteeism and Lateness Among Secondary School Students in Nigeria: Profiling Causes and Solution Introduction Absenteeism is major and continuous administrative problem among secondary school students in developing countries.

Since the problem is to 70% student home based, there is need for the student/parent to help identify and proffer solutions to this quality disturbing problems that could lead to students' dropout from school. Ubogu (2004: 25) identified illness, permitted leave, voluntary absenteeism, as common forms of absenteeism. Identified causes of absenteeism include: illness, financial hardship, age, social class, geographical area, truancy and institutional influence. School related factors, such as; teachers' attitude, poor administration, high cost of education, illness due to weather condition such as cold, temperature rey days causes absenteeism among students. Harsh school rules and regulations could cause absenteeism i. e. corporal punishment; families where children prepare themselves for school and parent to work. Truancy among students is caused by school-related reasons. Bullied by school staff, boredom, dislike of teachers and avoidance of tests. These are without parents' knowledge (Susan Kirk 2003). School authorities authorized absence for ailments, medical and death in the family. Parent particularly in rural areas keep their children at home for domestic activities on market and community festival days .

In crises areas, student absence from school for safety reasons. Unaccepted absence had a negative effect on peer relationship, which could cause absence. According to Malcolm, Wilson, Davidson and Kirk (2003) teachers identified effects of absenteeism on children are; academic underachievement which increases costs and wastage, difficulty in making friends which could lead to boredom, loss of confidence and engagement in premature sexual activity which could lead to pregnancy resulting in dropout and stress among young careers.

The society suffers as the children of school age hang around in the streets, intimidating other people and stealing properties of those who are in school and other place of work. Absenteeism and lateness could be reduced by providing; free education, counseling, discipline relevant curriculum and social welfare seminal to students'. The use of electronic registration systems, truancy sweeps, contact with parents, and support for pupils with poor attendance and effective school administration by principals. Davidson et al 2003) (Ubogun 2004: 160). Absenteeism could results into poor academic achievement, lost of friends and partners, disruption in class when absentees return affect the behavior of other students, difficulty in keeping accurate records, reduced ability to meet instructional targets and damaged school reputation. For school community positive relationship to commune in the administration of secondary schools, there is need to identify causes of absenteeism and lateness among secondary schools in Nigeria (Oghuvbu 2002).

Discussion The study revealed poor condition of health, lack of transportation parent poor financial condition, inability of parent to provide instructional materials and teachers non-commitment to the teaching of their subjects as causes of absenteeism. Going late to bed because of watching films and home movies, resulting into wake up late in the morning, distance to school and keeping friends who are not students are causes of lateness among secondary school students in Nigeria.

These findings are consistent with those of Ubogu (2004), Heather Malcolm, Valerie Wilson, Julia Davidson and Susan Kirk (2003). Identified solutions to the causes of absenteeism and lateness were teachers should be punctual and regular in school, activities of Senior and Junior students should be supervised by teachers, parents should check their children in school regularly, library facilities should be provided in school to engage students during their free periods and punishment should be given to students involved in continuous absenteeism and lateness by school administrators.

The result of this study showed that both the school authority and parents are involved in the factor that generates absenteeism and lateness among students. There is no significant difference between the views of principals, teachers, parents and students in the identified causes and possible solutions to the problems of absenteeism and lateness among secondary school students in Nigeria as revealed in this study. Also the causes of absenteeism are not significantly related to causes of lateness. The study revealed that only 2. 4% of the causes of lateness influences absenteeism that is students are not absent from school because of distance wake up late

or keeping friends who are not students. However, poor parent financial status could result to lateness and absenteeism. The finding of this study could help reduce the problems of absenteeism and lateness since the four groups involved in the creation, management and control of these problems have no significant difference in the identification of causes and possible solutions to these structural quality and societal disturbing problem, which affects the educational system in Nigeria. Hb9 Hb10