

# Pay Attention to Attendance

## Keep Your Teen on Track in Middle and *High School*

Even as teens grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure teens participate or get to school safely every day.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Absences can be a sign that a teen is losing interest, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or facing some other difficulty.
- By 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a teen may drop out of high school.
- Missing 10% (just 2 days each month) can drastically affect a teen's academic success.
- Attendance is an important life skill that will help your teen keep a job and graduate from college.



### WHAT YOU CAN DO

#### Communicate with the School

- **Contact your teen's teachers** and let them know how to reach you.
- **Ask for help** from school officials, after-school program providers, other parents or community agencies if you need help with food, housing or some other challenge.
- **Know the school's attendance policy** and the consequences for absences.
- **Check on your teen's attendance** to make sure they are attending all of their classes.  
\*Consider asking the school for a **change to in-person learning** if remote learning doesn't engage your teen.

#### Make School Attendance a Priority

- **Talk about the importance of showing up** to school every day so your teen knows this is your expectation.
- **Encourage your teen to maintain daily routines**, such as finishing homework or getting a good night's sleep.
- **Avoid scheduling non-urgent dental and medical appointments** when classes are in session.

#### Help Your Child Stay Healthy and Engaged

- **Make sure your teen gets the flu vaccine** and other required shots.
- **Find out if your teen feels safe.** Make sure that school discipline policies don't lead to your teen becoming disengaged or pushed out of school. If there are problems, work with your school to find a solution.
- **Check in weekly about your teen's academic progress and seek help from teachers or tutors.**
- **Stay on top of your teen's social contacts.** Peer pressure can lead to skipping class. Teens who have a hard time making friends can feel isolated.
- **Ask for help when you need it.** School staff, after-school program providers, and other parents or community agencies are available to help families, obtain food or housing and address other experiences that make it difficult to attend and participate.