

## What Parents Can Do

Ultimately, you will be the difference in the future success of your child. Parent commitment to school attendance sends a message to your child that education is a priority for your family.

- **Help** your child get into the habit and learn the value of regular routines of attendance.
- **Teach** your child that attending school is non-negotiable unless they are truly sick.
- **Build** relationships with other families and discuss how you can help each other out (e.g., drop off or pick up children, babysit, translation assistance) in times of need or emergencies.
- **Identify** non-academic activities (drama, art, music, sports, etc.) that can help motivate your child's interest in school and learning.

(Adolescent Literacy, 2015)



## Food for Thought...

Like bacteria in a hospital, chronic absenteeism can wreak havoc long before it is discovered.



Regular school attendance can help students who are learning English by giving them the chance to master the skills and information they need more quickly and accurately in subjects.

Just by being present at school, your child is learning how to be a good citizen by participating in the school community, learning valuable social skills, and developing a broader world view.

One of the most effective strategies for providing pathways out of poverty is ensuring students attend school every day.

Schooling significantly reduces the probability of incarceration.

Education is considered as basic a need as food, clothing, shelter and medical care.



*Student Support Services*  
(801) 610-8518

## Why School Attendance Matters NOW!



Your child's attendance record may be the biggest factor influencing his or her academic success!



## Why elementary school attendance matters...

When a student is approaching or has accumulated 10 or more absences (excused or not) in a school year, he or she is identified as having “chronic” attendance. This is a point where studies have shown students are, or may become “at-risk” for educational success.

What are the risks and myths related to student attendance?

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*“If attendance is a problem in elementary grades, the student will pay the price later.”*

### Myths and Facts about Attendance

**Myth 1. “Missing school is not habit forming.”**

**Fact—** Students with chronic attendance problems in elementary grades showed the lowest levels of attendance five years later.

**Fact—** Children chronically absent in kindergarten become the same students with low achievement levels in sixth grade.

**Myth 2. “My child will be able to catch up.”**

**Fact—** Most elementary aged students who miss more than 4 or 5 days of school a year tend to always be trying to “catch up” rather than “keep up.”

**Fact—** Absenteeism increases achievement gaps at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

**Fact—** Literacy is frontloaded in the early grades, so if a child misses too much school, they lag behind classmates in reading.

**Fact—** Teachers provide instruction that builds on the previous day’s instruction; the learning experience is appropriate developmentally. This process begins in Kindergarten.

**Myth 3. “Elementary school attendance is not as important as high school.”**

**Fact—** As early as sixth grade, absenteeism can predict the likelihood that a student will dropout.

### Myths and Facts continued

**Fact—** Attendance in the early grades is critical to sustaining school readiness skills.

**Fact—** Good attendance is the most reliable predictor of graduation from high school.

**Fact—** Students with chronic absenteeism have a greater risk of dropping out of school, having behavioral and social problems.

**Myth 4. “It is my right to keep my student out of school.”**

**Fact—**It is a class B misdemeanor for the parent of a school-aged child to fail to prevent the child from being absent without a valid excuse five or more times. (Utah Code 53A-11-101.5 Compulsory Education)

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### What the courts are saying about elementary school attendance...

“Not getting an education damns you--especially as an elementary student.”

“Education is vital to the Court, even if the student hates every minute of it.”

“More than any other time in history, a child needs to be in school and receiving an education.”

Commissioner Faulker, 4th District  
Juvenile Court

