

Beyond the talking points for families, you should add in some messages targeted to students. You can utilize these messages when you are talking about attendance at schoolwide events involving students or meeting with a student one-on-one to talk with them about their success in school. Remember to approach the conversation with concern and with clear information. A national survey of youth shows that teens are motivated to go to school after hearing messages that connect absences with consequences—such as not graduating from high school.

Remember to express care and concern about why students are missing so many days.

What to Say to Students

- **Showing up every day is a skill that you are developing that will help you** do well in class and with getting and keeping a job later on.
- **School only gets harder when you skip a class.** Sometimes it's tempting to skip or stay home because you are tired or don't understand what's going on in class. But missing a day only makes that worse because you aren't learning something that will help you understand a lesson later on.
- **If you think missing a day here or there won't matter, think again.** By missing just one day every two weeks, you would be on track to miss two full weeks in a semester or nearly a month of school for the year!
- **Did you know that a student who misses 10 days or more during a school year** is less likely to graduate from high school and or ever enroll in college?
- **Chronic absence can affect your ability to earn a living.** Dropouts are less likely to succeed in a career. In fact, a high school graduate makes, on average, \$1 million more than a dropout over a lifetime.
- **While short- and long-term consequences of absenteeism are most motivating to teens,** it's important to remember that many teens trust their teachers and are motivated by the positive relationship. You can express concern but make sure you are genuine. Teens are quick to spot when adults are just saying the right things and not backing them up with actions. You can say:
"When you're not here, teachers and administrators notice because we care about you and we want you to be successful."
- **If you're having trouble getting to school—** and have challenges such as transportation, bullies, etc.—tell someone, such as a teacher, guidance counselor or your family. Many schools offer services to help the whole family.