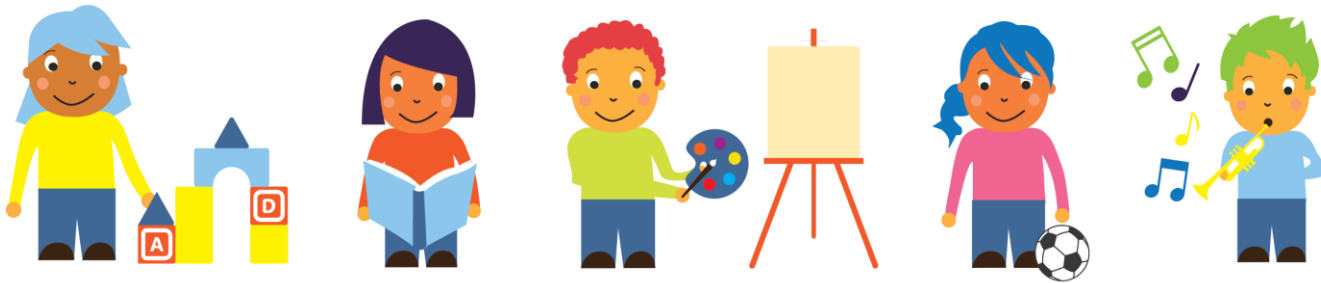


Reducing Chronic Absence in Early Childhood Programs

Year 2 - Session #1





Zoom Instructions

- How to use raise hand feature
- How to use chat feature
- Use this shared Google doc to record your comments, questions, ideas, and notes from today's breakout groups.

Open now using this link:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xVzaevGxeKy3hyKxZma8UTPpcd2YQ5xIJaShBgd9Q28/edit>



Welcome & Introductions



1. Click on Participants button
2. Select Rename
3. Enter your Organization name or Center name followed by your first and last names

Example: Berkeley Y – Meuy Saephan

4. Click the Rename button again to save your changes



Warm-up Activity

Share in chat:

What's something that you would do more of, if you could?



Group Norms

- ✓ Mute to minimize background noise
- ✓ Share your video when you can
- ✓ Use the chat to ask questions or make comments
- ✓ Stay focused
- ✓ Participate actively
- ✓ Be kind and patient with one another as we learn new skills

Agenda

- I. Welcome / Warm-up
- II. Meeting Goals and Agenda Review
- III. What is chronic absence and why does it matter?
- IV. What does chronic absence data reveal?
- V. Break
- VI. Purpose and key functions of an attendance team
- VII. Chronic Absence is a Solvable Problem
 - *Relationships first*
 - *Tiered Framework*
- VIII. Wrap-up and Reflection

Training evaluation:

https://app.upmetrics.com/data_collector/ckf2oltbqlt8k0759tfdbfybj



Outcomes for Year #2

1. Implement Training of Trainers (TOT) for designated staff from Berkeley Y, BUSD and Bahia.
2. Review chronic absence concepts and materials (and adapt where necessary for distance learning)
3. Clarify and strengthen system for transition from preschool to kindergarten



Learning Outcomes: Training of Trainers

1. Be able to communicate what chronic absence is and why it matters to staff and families
2. Know the key functions of an attendance team and how to support them to operate effectively
3. Be able to review, analyze, and use chronic absence data to design a multi-tiered approach to improve attendance



Meeting Dates for Year 2

PLN:

- ❖ November 17, 2020, 10am-12noon
- ❖ February 9, 2020, 10am-12noon
- ❖ April 20, 2020, 10am-12noon



Goals for Today's Session

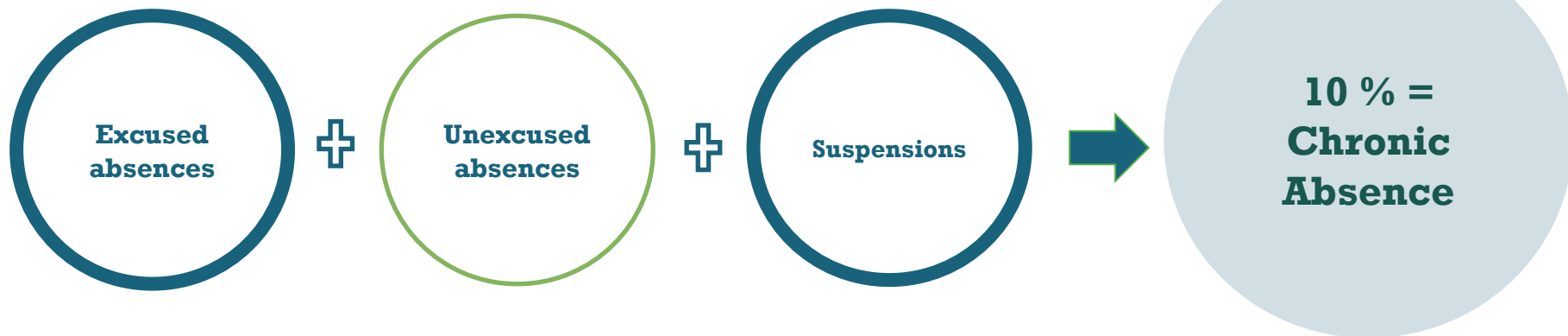
1. Learn about chronic absence and why it matters
2. Learn about what chronic absence data can reveal
3. Learn about the functions of an attendance team
4. Learn about the tiered intervention framework

What is Chronic Absence?



What is Chronic Absence?

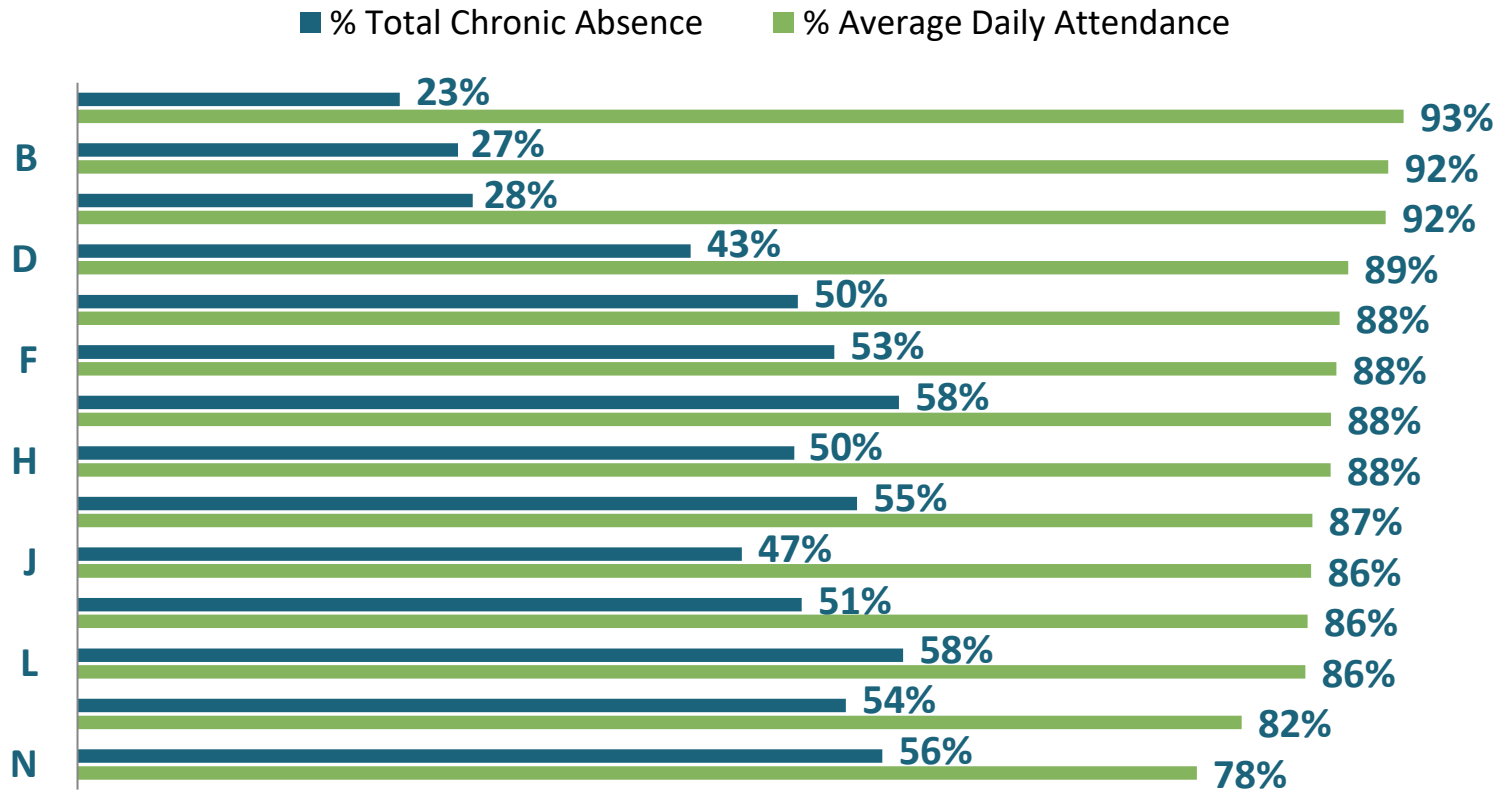
Chronic absence is missing so much class time for any reason that a child cannot experience the full benefit of preschool or school. Attendance Works recommends defining chronic absence as **missing 10% or more of school or preschool for any reason.**



Chronic absence is different from **average daily attendance** (how many students show up to school each day) because it is child-focused and counts **all** absences.



Average daily attendance easily masks high levels of chronic absence



Source: Minnesota Head Start Association for sample of Programs in 2015-16



Chronic absence is easily masked if we only monitor missing consecutive days

| September | | | | | October | | | | | November | | | | | December | | | | | January | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|----|---|---------|---|---|----|---|----------|---|---|----|---|----------|---|---|----|---|---------|---|---|----|---|
| M | T | W | TH | F | M | T | W | TH | F | M | T | W | TH | F | M | T | W | TH | F | M | T | W | TH | F |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | | | | X | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | X | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | X | X | | | | | X | | | | X | | | X | X | | | | | X | X | X | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

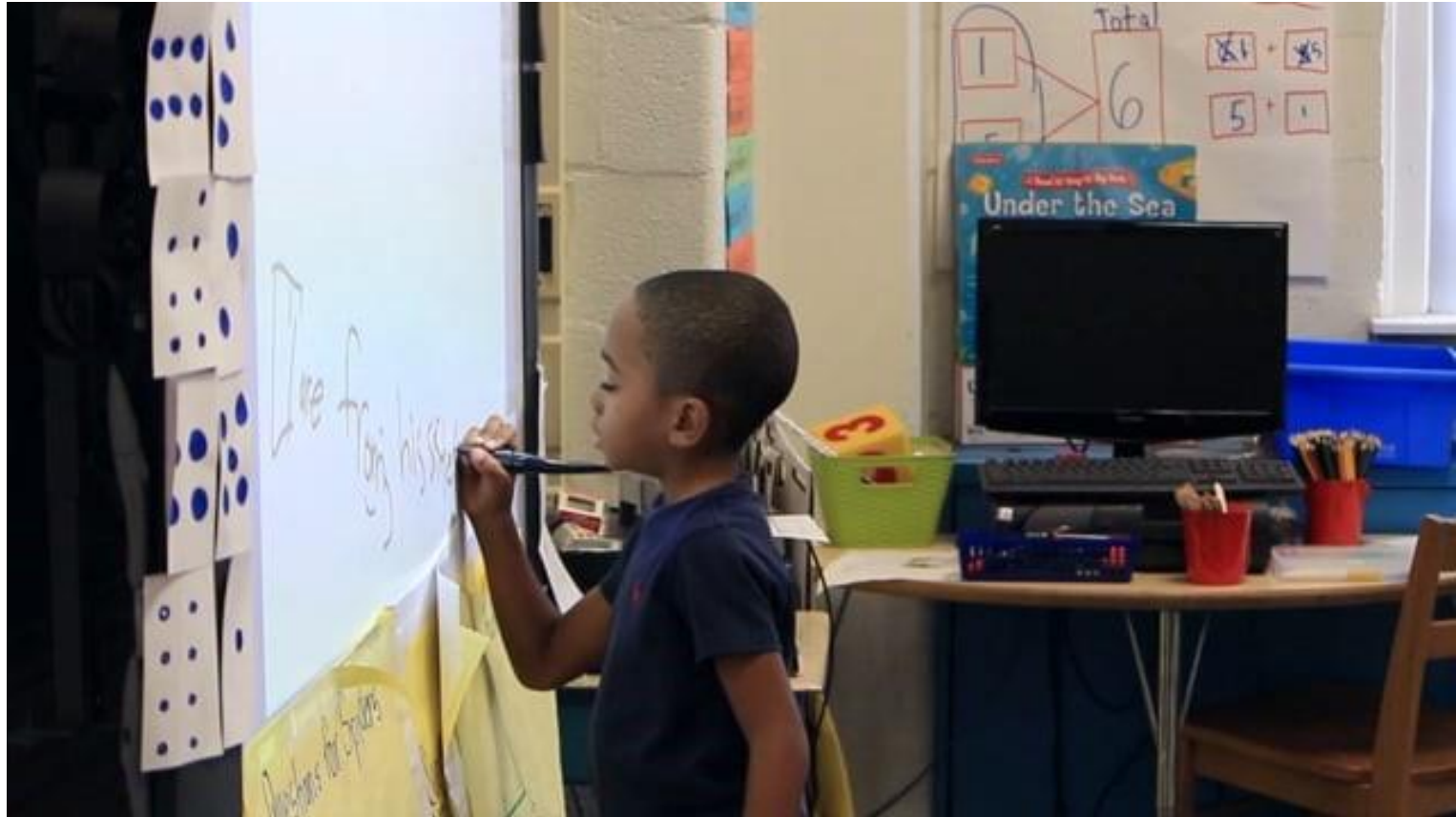
| February | | | | | March | | | | | April | | | | | May | | | | | June | | | | |
|----------|---|---|----|---|-------|---|---|----|---|-------|---|---|----|---|-----|---|---|----|---|------|---|---|----|---|
| M | T | W | TH | F | M | T | W | TH | F | M | T | W | TH | F | M | T | W | TH | F | M | T | W | TH | F |
| | | | | X | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | | X | | | | | | X | X | |
| | | | | | | | X | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Chronic Absence = 18+ days of absence = **As few as 2 days a month**



Every Day Counts

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7WEjlmrbUg>



Bringing Attendance Home

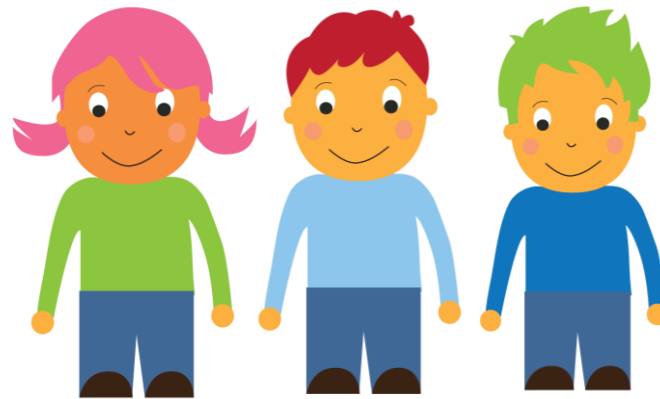
English - <https://vimeo.com/101425388>

Spanish - <https://vimeo.com/130556839>

Why Does It Matter?

Illustrating the Gap

(interactive exercise for educators and families)



Instructions found in Bringing Attendance Home Toolkit

<http://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/bringing-attendance-home/>

Voice over recording of the exercise:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/BL-QaT505hCaY9ideg9UiRgxgyjCH3NvQ-PZ7XI7TAjvZA5RKB9wQaHpdPM-epDS.cYvtzTr2jpWQrgzu?startTime=1603153898000>



Question to ask after activity

What is a reaction or insight gained from the “Illustrating the Gap” exercise?

Write your response in chat.



New Policy Incentives

Head Start Performance Standards historically required 85% ADA threshold. Now it asks providers to:

- Track attendance for each child
- Implement strategies that promote attendance
- Engage families in understanding the benefits of good attendance
- Take action to address individual patterns of 10% absence



Attendance in Pre-K Matters...A Lot

Researchers found that Pre-K students who attended regularly (missing 0-1 days a month) are more likely to master these kindergarten readiness skills:

- Math
- Letter Recognition
- Pre-Literacy
- Social and Emotional Development
- and were far more likely to read on grade level by 3rd grade.



Gottfried, M. (2015). Chronic Absenteeism in the Classroom Context: Effects on Achievement. *Urban Education*, 54 (1), 3-34.

Ehrlich, Stacy B., et al. University of Chicago, 2014, pp. 1-64,
Preschool Attendance in Chicago Public Schools Relationship with Outcomes and Reasons for Absence.



Regular Attendance is Harder for Some Children and It Matters More

Children who live in poverty:

- are **4 times** more likely to be absent in Kindergarten than their highest income peers.
- are more likely to lack health care, transportation, stable housing, food, clothes, and other supports that make getting to school more likely.

For children living in poverty, the negative impact of absences on literacy development is **75% greater** than for their non-poor peers.

(Romero & Lee 2007 and Ready, Doug 2010)



Critical Roles for Pre-K Programs



Pre-K programs:

- ✓ Build Literacy and Numeracy Skills
- ✓ Build Student Attendance Muscles
- ✓ Teach the Importance of Routine
- ✓ Build Reciprocal Family-School Relationships
- ✓ Provide Support and Resources



Requires Nurturing a New Data Mindset

Expands focus from

Attendance = Compliance

to

***Attendance = Opportunity to Learn**

***Attendance Data = Action Alert**

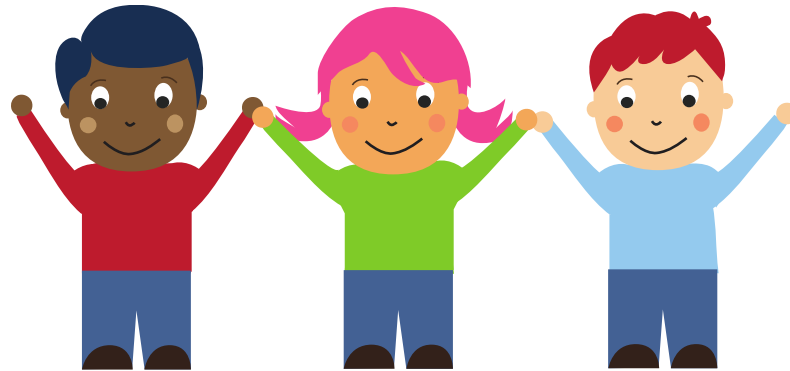


Large Group Discussion

1. When might you use any of these videos with families?
2. What are some good questions to start conversations with families about why attendance matters?

Write your responses in chat.

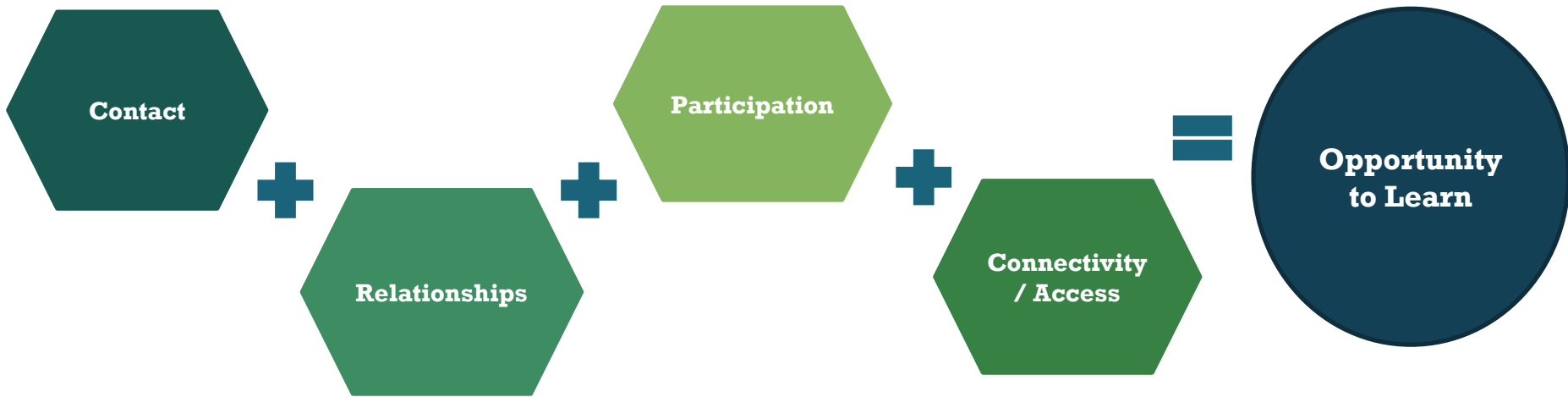
What Does Our Chronic Absence Data Reveal?



Attendance mattered before Covid-19, but what about in school year 2020-21?



How do we measure the opportunity to learn?





Four Key Concepts for School Year 2020-21

Contact

Programs have working contact and back-up information for each enrolled student and their family.

Connectivity / Access

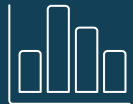
Students and families can access their program's learning materials and opportunities, whether they are packets, home-based resources or require a computer, software, and internet access.

Relationships

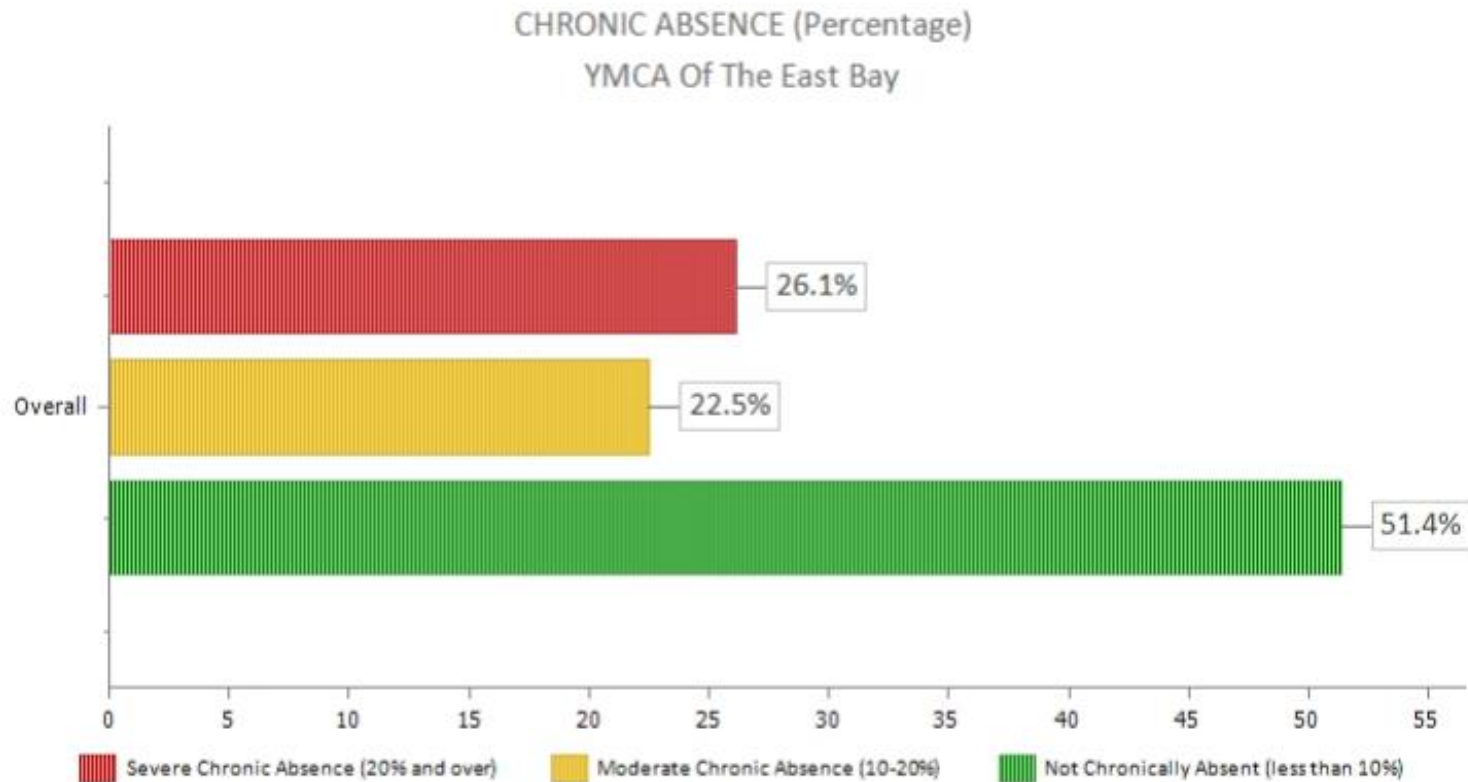
Students and families are connected, supported and engaged in reciprocal, problem-solving relationships.

Participation

Students participate in meaningful learning opportunities.



Example: Berkeley YMCA Head Start Program Classroom Attendance Data





Breakout Group Discussion #1

- Review Child Plus report 2335 for September and October with your team. (Review 2336 when you return to your Center to see individual names)
- How is your team using the report as an action alert?
- How is your team using the report to see patterns and trends?

Use shared Google doc to record your group's ideas.

Open document before going to breakout group.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xVzaevGxeKy3hyKxZma8UTPpcd2YQ5x1JaShBgd9Q28/edit>



Tracking Participation in Remote Learning

- ✓ Record weekly participation in Family Services module
- ✓ Note when family is non-responsive
- ✓ Review participation in Learning Genie
- ✓ Family Services cases for families with unmet needs

Break

Building Your Attendance





Question

What's the purpose of having an attendance team?



raise hand

Use raise hand feature to respond.



What Does an Attendance Team Do?

Key responsibilities

1. **Leverage data** to implement and evaluate strategies for improving attendance practice as an agency.
2. **Use data** to ensure children and families receive assistance.
3. **Ensure key stakeholders** are involved and consulted in identifying barriers and implementing solutions.
4. **Create a plan** for moving forward including setting year long calendar of Tier 1 & 2 activities.



Attendance team video from Children's Health Fund

<https://vimeo.com/325012957>



Who should participate?

Possible team members include:

Representative(s) from...

- Family Service Staff
- Teaching Staff
- Data Manager or Data Lead (Admin Staff)
- Director or Director's Office
- Parent Policy Council
- "Front Office" Staff



What Can We Do to Build Our Team?

Build from our strengths:

- Who meets regularly now and can address attendance?
- Use the Attendance Team Self-Assessment to identify where to improve
 - Meet more regularly?
 - Add new team members?

School Team Self-Assessment

| LEADERSHIP | Emerging | Developing | Proficient | Comments |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|----------|
| Attendance as a Priority | <input type="checkbox"/> The Principal acknowledges that improving attendance is important for student success, but only occasionally focuses on it (e.g., one professional development session for staff per year) | <input type="checkbox"/> The Principal has improving attendance as one of many priorities, consistently focuses on it, and periodically organizes training sessions for core staff including those who work with students with disabilities. | <input type="checkbox"/> The Principal has a systemic approach for improving attendance that is explicitly linked to academic outcomes and school climate, and demonstrates visually and verbally the importance of student attendance at their school. | |
| School Climate | <input type="checkbox"/> Beginning efforts to explore the connection between school climate and attendance. | <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance is incorporated into the school's climate improvement process (e.g., PBIS). | <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance is embedded into the school's student and family engagement and school climate plans. | |
| Team Purpose | <input type="checkbox"/> The group responsible to address attendance operates in isolation and focuses on students with highest number of absences. | <input type="checkbox"/> The group responsible to address attendance focuses on prevention and early intervention. | <input type="checkbox"/> The group responsible to address attendance is aligned with other school teams, focuses on the needs of the whole child based on the reasons for absence and ensures interventions are coordinated. | |
| Roles & Responsibilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Team member roles and responsibilities are unclear and meeting protocols have not been established. | <input type="checkbox"/> Roles are informally understood, but responsibilities are not clearly defined and meeting protocols are not consistently followed. | <input type="checkbox"/> Roles and responsibilities of members are defined and documented and members are held accountable. | |
| Meeting Frequency | <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings are not held on a regular basis and member attendance is inconsistent. | <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings are scheduled on a monthly basis, but may be cancelled if a key member is absent. | <input type="checkbox"/> A weekly meeting schedule is established and meetings are held even if a key member is unable to attend. | |

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/School-TEAM-Self-Assessment-9-23-19.pdf>



Attendance Team Self-Assessment Tool

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/School-TEAM-Self-Assessment-9-23-19.pdf>

School Team Self-Assessment

Write in chat:

What is one area where your attendance team needs to improve?

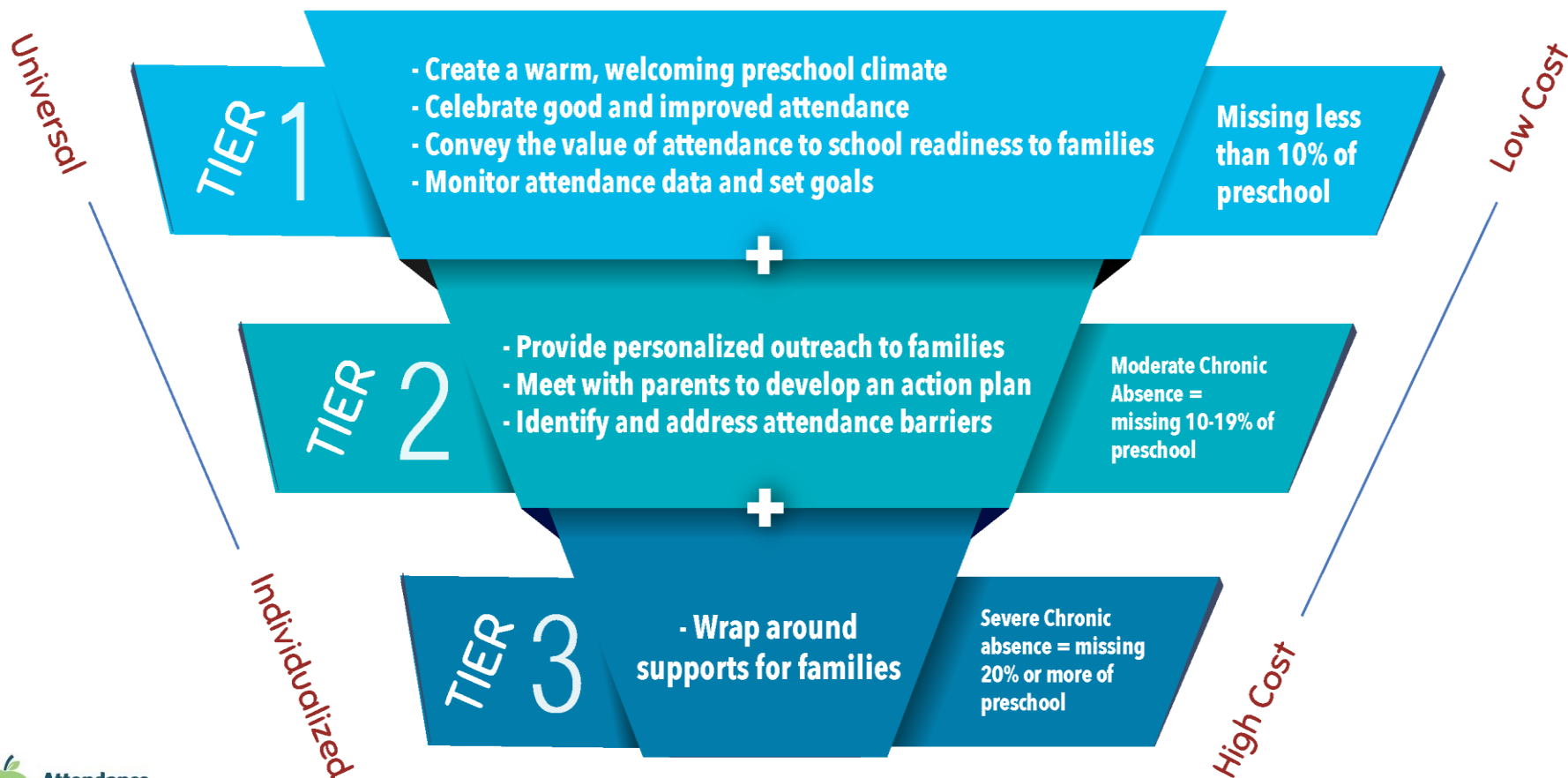
| LEADERSHIP | Emerging | Developing | Proficient | Comments |
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Chronic Absence = A Solvable Problem





Invest First in Prevention and Early Intervention



Using a Tiered Framework to Address Chronic Absence

Tier 1: Includes all children and families

- ✓ Universal prevention strategies
- ✓ Year round
- ✓ Recognize and celebrate strong attendance

Tier 2: Children with 10-19% absence rate

- ✓ Address moderate chronic absence 10-19%
- ✓ Individualized outreach to move children to Tier 1
- ✓ Recognize and celebrate strong attendance

Tier 3: Children with 20% or higher absence rate

- ✓ Address severe chronic absence 20% or more
- ✓ Individualized support coupled with intensified collaboration with community services to move children toward Tier 1
- ✓ Recognize and celebrate strong attendance



Chronic Absence Strategies & Effective Early Childhood Practices

Chronic absence strategies promote a holistic approach to attendance that reflects effective early childhood practices.

- ❖ Relationships with families
- ❖ A warm, welcoming environment
- ❖ Positive reinforcement -- not penalty



Share with Group

What are some of the key reasons for absence that you are seeing in your program?



raise hand

Use raise hand feature.



Early Intervention: Why Are Children Chronically Absent?

Myths

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Sporadic versus consecutive absences aren't a problem
- Attendance only matters in the older grades

Barriers

- Lack of access to health, mental health or dental care
- Chronic illness such as asthma
- Poor Transportation
- Trauma
- No safe path to program
- No clearly identified support network
- Lack of access to tech device and internet
- Lack of technical skills
- Family struggling with employment, housing, food

Aversions

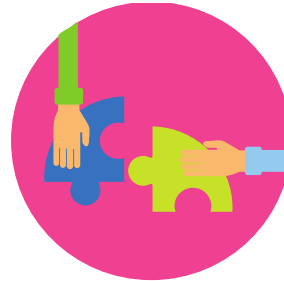
- Child struggling with “readiness skills”
- Child struggling with group environment
- Lack of engaging instruction
- Poor preschool climate or ineffective discipline
- Parents had negative school experience
- Fear about health & safety due to Covid-19



Who and What Can Make a Difference



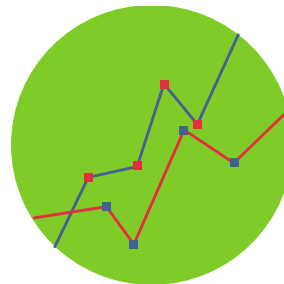
Families
Understand Value



Staff
Works as a Team



Preschoolers
Are Engaged



Attendance Data
As Alert for Action



Attendance Activities for Engaging Children & Families



Key Actions for Tier 1

TIER
1

- Create a warm and welcoming school climate
- Celebrate good and improved attendance
- Convey the value of attendance to school readiness
- Monitor data and set goals



Engage Children

- ✓ Greet children warmly by name on arrival every day and when they connect virtually
- ✓ Establish Morning Routines that Emphasize Attendance and Notice Absences
- ✓ Use Stories, Songs, and Games to Convey the Importance of Attendance to Children

Acknowledge & celebrate positive change



Playful activities with a serious mission



- ❖ ***Routines that Rock!*** workshops build on parent creativity and promote family engagement
- ❖ Encourage parents to think about their own routines
- ❖ Make charts for and/or with the children
- ❖ Create songs and jingles to familiar tunes that children can sing at home and in classroom



Zoom Activity with kids & families

- Introduce schedule, including morning routine for children
- Brainstorm getting ready to learn routines in a big group (e.g. brush teeth, get dressed)
- Organize into small groups of 3-5 people (Use breakout rooms in Zoom if meeting is virtual)
- Brainstorm common tunes for children, e.g. “*Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*” tune.
- Write songs
- Share in large group



Playful activities with a serious mission



Sing a song of on-time

Song Tune: Jingle Bells (Parent created lyrics)



Up we get, sleepyhead
Up and on our way.
It's 8 o'clock, time to rock
Success is a blink away, hey!

Hair is brushed, teeth are clean,
And your bag is ready to go.
It's Head Start at 9, then breakfast time,
So you can learn and grow.





Your turn...
Breakout Group
Discussion #2

Make up a song that gets kids up and ready to learn using the music from “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”. (10 minutes)

Use shared Google doc to record your group’s ideas.
Open document before going to breakout group.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xVzaevGxeKy3hyKxZma8UTPpcd2YQ5x1JaShBgd9Q28/edit>



Key Actions for Tier 2

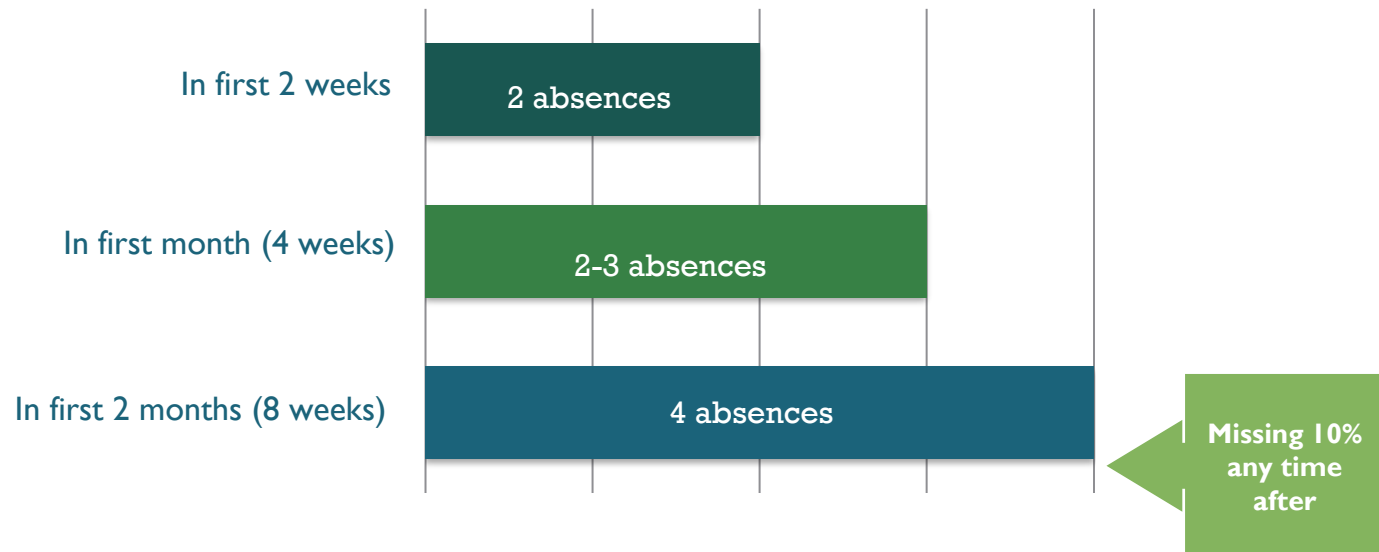
TIER 2

- **Provide personalized outreach to families**
- **Identify and address attendance barriers**
- **Meet with parents to develop an action plan**



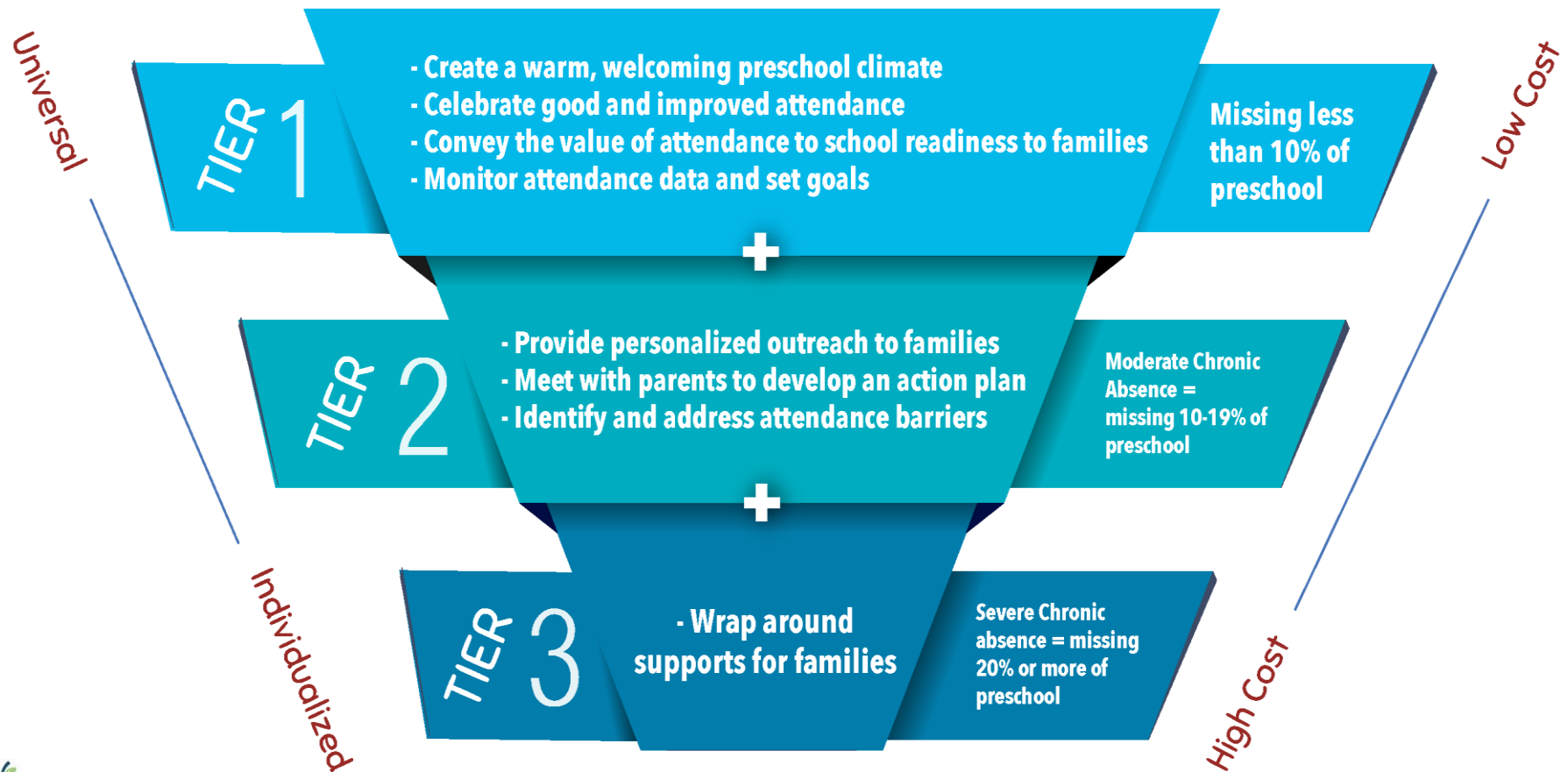
Monitoring Data: Who Needs Tier 2 Support

Any child who has missed 10% of possible days of Head Start or pre-school since enrollment

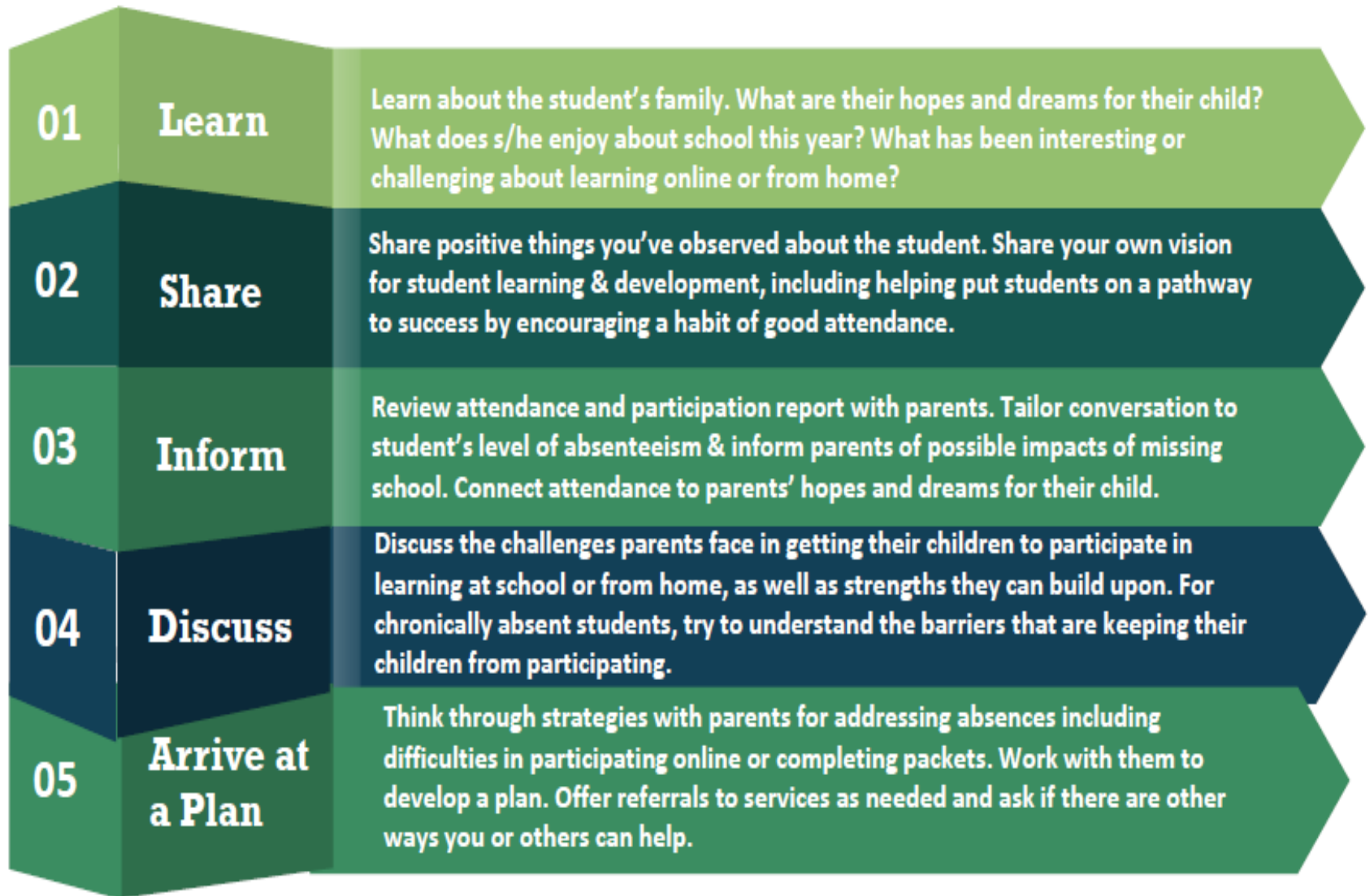




Invest in Prevention and Early Intervention



Proposed Process for Working with Students & Families



Adapted with permission from materials created by © High Expectations Parental Service, 2011



Caring Conversations

Having caring conversations with parents/caregivers can:

- Help build positive relationships
- Educate parents about the importance of attendance
- Support parents to get their children to school and on time



Example: Role Play with Staff

In groups of 3, have a conversation with Jose’s mom in this practice scenario.

Select 2 role play partners: One person plays the role of Jose’s mom, one person plays the role of staff (teacher/family advocate), and one person is the observer. Use the following background information:

“José is in a Head Start program. He has missed 5 days in his first two months of preschool. When you asked him if he was sick, he said no—he just couldn’t get to school that day. Jose is also frequently late to school.”

(Do activity via zoom or in-person with other staff.)



Caring Conversations Practice Activity: Round 1

Debrief Questions:

- What observations and suggestions do you have based on practicing having a caring conversation from the staff perspective?
- What did you observe/learn from the parent perspective?

Questions on the content?



Next Steps

By the end of December:

1. Meet with your center's Attendance Team
2. Complete Attendance Team Self-Assessment
3. Review attendance data
4. Try “*Routines That Rock*” with staff, and then with families



Reflections



Head – a thought inspired by today



Heart – a feeling evoked by today



Foot – an action you will take

Training evaluation:

https://app.upmetrics.com/data_collector/ckf2oltbqlt8k0759tfdbfybj



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