

# Reasons for Chronic Absenteeism- Blended or Virtual (RCA-BV)

Chronic absenteeism, commonly defined as missing 10% or more of instructional days per school year, has significant impact on student outcomes. It is associated with decreased reading levels, overall academic performance, on-time graduation rates, and post-secondary enrollment as well as increased dropout rates.<sup>1,2</sup> Fortunately, chronic absenteeism rates are alterable at the student and system level when interventions are appropriately targeted and matched to student needs.

In order to efficiently and effectively match interventions to student needs, there is a need for reliable and valid data that provide sufficient information to understand the various challenges students experience. The Reasons for Chronic Absenteeism (RCA) Survey was developed and underwent extensive validation processes including an expert panel review, student reviewers, and a national validation study to ensure the technical adequacy of the items and instrument.

The RCA is designed for secondary students (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) who have missed 10% or more instructional days. The survey is comprised of 14 demographics and perception of absences questions; 28 items measuring multifaceted reasons for absences; and three open-ended questions asking about other reasons for missing school, the reasons they do come to school, and what would help them come to school more often. Students respond to each of the items that ask why they missed school using a 0-3 scale with response options of Never, Rarely, Sometimes, or Usually. Students may take the survey via an online survey platform (e.g. SurveyMonkey®, Qualtrics®, etc.) or hardcopy. Survey administration takes approximately 10 minutes and multiple students may take the survey at one time. Students may be provided the explanation that they are taking the survey so school staff better understand why students miss school. Please allow students privacy to independently answer questions.

<b>Demographic Items</b>
<b>What is the name of your school?</b>
<b>What ways have you attended school this year? (check all apply: in-person, virtual, blended (in-person some days, virtual other days of the week))</b>
<b>How old are you? (10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21)</b>
<b>What is your gender? (male, female, non-binary, prefer not to say)</b>
<b>What grade are you in? (6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)</b>
<b>Do you get free or reduced price lunch? (yes/no)</b>
<b>What is your Race? (*if more than one race select multi-racial)?</b>
<b>Multi-racial</b>
<b>Asian</b>
<b>Black/African American</b>
<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>
<b>White</b>
<b>American Indian or Alaskan Native</b>
<b>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</b>

<sup>1</sup> Balfanz, R., & Byrnes, V. (2012). *Chronic Absenteeism: Summarizing what we know from nationally available data*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Organization of Schools.

<sup>2</sup> Chang, H. & Romero, M. (2008). *Present, engaged and accounted for the critical importance of addressing chronic absence in the early grades*. National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP): The Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University.

Prefer not to say
Do you get special education services? (yes/no)
Is English your first language or the language you use most often? (yes/no)
About how many days of school did you miss <u>last year</u> ? 5 days or less 6-10 days 11-15 days 16-20 More than 20 days
About how many days of school did you miss in the <u>last month</u> ? 0-1 days 2-3 days 4 or more days
Compared to other students, how many school days did you miss last year? The same as other students More than other students Fewer than other students
How do you usually get to/from school? Walk or ride a bike By bus By car I do not attend school in-person

**Survey Items/Directions:**

Please rate each question as being Never, Rarely, Sometimes, or Usually the reasons you miss school.

- Never means that it is never a reason you have missed school or it doesn't apply to you.
- Rarely means that it is not very often a reason you have missed school.
- Sometimes means that it is a reason you have missed school more than 3 times.
- Usually means that it is often the reason you have missed school.

Item	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually
1. I was sick (short term: Covid-19, flu, cold, headache).				
2. I was sick (long term: asthma, cancer, kidney disease, chronic illness, etc.).				
3. I had an appointment or procedure				

(surgery, treatment, doctor, dentist, counselor, etc.).				
4. I had to quarantine because of contact with someone who tested positive for Covid-19.				
5. I was distracted by other things (video games, online videos, social media, etc.).				
6. I did not have a quiet work space to login or do my work.				
7. I hung-out with friends or family instead of attending school.				
8. I had to work.				
9. I do not feel like I belong at my school.				
10. I did not get my school work done or study for a test.				
11. I did not want to be teased or bullied.				
12. My parents don't care if I miss school.				
13. I stayed up too late and missed school/class or overslept and missed school/class.				

<b>14. My computer/ device didn't work.</b>				
<b>15. I lost materials I needed for school (device, device charger, books, etc.).</b>				
<b>16. I did not have a computer/ device to use.</b>				
<b>17. I was out of town.</b>				
<b>18. I did not feel safe on my way to or from school.</b>				
<b>19. I did not feel safe attending school because of Covid-19.</b>				
<b>20. My family did not feel it was safe for me to attend school because of Covid-19.</b>				
<b>21. I did not feel safe attending school because of reasons other than Covid-19.</b>				
<b>22. I had to go to court or was in jail or juvenile detention center.</b>				
<b>23. I do not have internet where I live.</b>				
<b>24. I have internet where I live, but could not get on or the internet was down.</b>				
<b>25. I could not get to an internet hotspot to connect.</b>				

26. I think school is boring.				
27. The virtual sessions (live or recorded) or assignments are boring.				
28. No one misses me when I don't attend school.				
29. Adults at my school do not care about me.				
30. Students at my school do not care about me.				
31. I was suspended.				
32. I was not able to or had trouble logging in for live sessions (Zoom, Google Classroom, etc.).				
33. I was not able to log in to watch recorded lessons or get my assignments from the learning portal or management system (Blackboard, Canvas, Schoology, etc.).				
34. I did not have my assignment packet(s).				
35. I was not able to turn-in my completed assignments.				
36. There was no reason for me to attend school.				
37. There was no one to help me when I didn't				

<b>know how to do an assignment.</b>				
<b>38. I did not want to interact with another student(s)</b>				
<b>39. I didn't have the right or clean clothes or supplies for school.</b>				
<b>40. I did not want to get in-trouble for being late or tardy, so I stayed home or did not log in.</b>				
<b>41. I was too sad/depressed or anxious/upset to attend school.</b>				
<b>42. I was homeless or had no place to stay.</b>				
<b>43. I did not want to go to or login for a class or classes.</b>				
<b>44. The water, heat, or power were turned off at home.</b>				
<b>45. My school is not a nice place to attend (people are not nice, people don't care about others, unfair rules, etc.).</b>				
<b>46. I had to take care of or help a family member (child, brother/sister, relative, etc.).</b>				
<b>47. I had a family emergency</b>				

(death, illness, injury, drama, etc.).				
48. There were problems with the car (would not run, ran out of gas, etc.).				
49. I missed the bus, or the bus was late or the bus did not come.				
50. I did not want to walk in bad weather.				
51. I had to move.				
52. Are there any other reasons not listed that you miss school?				
53. What are the reasons you do attend school (e.g. friends, interacting online, etc.)?				
54. What would help you come to school more often or miss fewer days?				

For additional information on the hardcopy or Qualtrics version, and/or survey administration and scoring contact: Amber Humm Patnode, [Abrundage@mail.usf.edu](mailto:Abrundage@mail.usf.edu)

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