

Tips for Talking to Parents & Families



Ease the conversation about the importance of regular attendance

A phone call, video chat, or meeting with parents or guardians can be very helpful when a child is missing school frequently. This is an opportunity to help figure out what the issue might be and how school staff can be supportive.

1. Be kind.

Start off with a supportive statement, "Your child is an important part of our classroom community. When they are absent, they're missed."

Remember: There are many reasons a child might be missing school, from illness to emotional stress to other factors in the home.

2. Offer targeted help.

Ask if there is a specific reason their child isn't coming to school. If a parent is keeping a child home because of allergies, offer the support of the school nurse; if there is emotional stress, offer to connect them with a school counselor. Make sure the family understands how school staff can be helpful.

3. Help families understand.

School is a place where children learn and grow with peers and trusted adults by their side. Regular attendance is important for the lifelong learning of the child and their path to success in many areas of life.

4. Explain how many absences are a problem.

Many families may not realize that missing just two days of school a month can lead to chronic absenteeism. Explain this gently so they are aware.

5. Support families with additional resources.

Let them know about our website, ct.gov/betterwithyou, and the resources available there, as well as in their child's own school.

Offering families support can reduce absences and help more children attend school every day.

