

HANDOUT #1

CHRONIC ABSENCE

Many researchers use the term “chronic absentee-ism.” That means a student missed 10% or more of the days school is open for any reason. That represents approximately 18 days for most schools.

What Does This Mean?

- ▶ By 6th grade, chronic absence becomes a leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school.
- ▶ When students improve their attendance rates, they improve their academic prospects and chances for graduating.

Research says that students who attend school regularly and on time...

- ▶ have lower rates of involvement in risk-taking behaviours – including drugs and alcohol and gang activities
- ▶ develop important life and employment skills, such as dependability and punctuality, positively impacting their later employment
- ▶ are less likely to experience negative outcomes later in life, and often have higher-paying jobs, increased likelihood of employment, and even lower rates of incarceration

Absences are important even at the early grade levels. Research shows ...

- ▶ As early as kindergarten, regular and repeated practice of skills is critical for ongoing success.
- ▶ Skills build from the foundation set in early grade levels.
- ▶ Early absenteeism predicts later absenteeism.

How do we know when absences are a problem?

The term "chronic absenteeism" is commonly used by researchers to describe students who have missed 10% or more of school, which typically amounts to approximately 18 days within the year. To put it in perspective, 18 days is nearly an entire month of school.

O C T O B E R

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		X	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	X		