

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMITTEE

KIDS + SCHOOL

MISSING SCHOOL MATTERS AND EVERY DAY COUNTS!

SCHOOL ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE TIPS FOR FAMILIES



All children in NSW and ACT must go to school from the age of 6. They must go to school or be involved in training or employment until they complete Year 12 or turn 17.

All children deserve an education.
Kids must attend school EVERY DAY!



COUNCIL OF
**CATHOLIC
SCHOOL
PARENTS**
NSW/ACT

LEADERSHIP | ADVOCACY | SUPPORT

Missing too much school puts your child behind and makes it harder for them to catch up; can lead to lower achievement in reading, writing and numeracy; and can lead to gaps in learning and social connections.

**MISSING ONE FULL DAY
OF SCHOOL EACH FORTNIGHT**



**1 YEAR OF EDUCATION LOST
OVER THEIR SCHOOL LIFE**

Children can be absent from school for acceptable reasons such as:


- ▶ Illness
- ▶ Doing work experience
- ▶ Competing in school sporting events

Check with your teacher, Aboriginal education worker or the principal if you're unsure. If your child is going to be absent from school, you have to let the school know why within two school days of their return. If possible, it is best to advise the school on the day or beforehand.

Children cannot miss school because of

- ▶ Birthdays
- ▶ Shopping
- ▶ Visiting family and friends
- ▶ Sleeping in
- ▶ Looking after other children
- ▶ Going to checks-ups or care appointments such as haircuts
- ▶ Routine medical or other appointments

If children miss too much school families may have to attend a compulsory attendance conference to identify support strategies for the child and family, and the NSW Department of Education may need to be notified.

A background image showing a group of children in green school uniforms and bucket hats. One child in the center has long braids. They are outdoors, and a large blue semi-circle is overlaid on the bottom left.

IF CHILDREN DON'T GO TO SCHOOL
THEY WILL FALL BEHIND IN THEIR
LEARNING. CHILDREN WHO GO TO
SCHOOL EVERY DAY DO BETTER AND
HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES.

KIDS WHO ATTEND SCHOOL EVERY
DAY EXPERIENCE ALL OF THE
LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND GET
THE BEST CHANCE AT SUCCESS!

GOOD ROUTINES TO HELP SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

- ▶ Send your child to school every day unless they are sick
- ▶ Develop good sleep and morning routines – have a set time to go to bed and get up
- ▶ Have uniforms, school bags and lunches ready the night before
- ▶ Have set times for starting and finishing breakfast
- ▶ Have a set time to leave the house to get to school
- ▶ Have a set time for daily homework activities and be on hand to support your child if they need homework help
- ▶ Schedule appointments for after school
- ▶ Avoid taking holidays during term time
- ▶ Talk about school positively

TOP TIPS FOR GETTING KIDS TO SCHOOL

Children and young people are sometimes reluctant to attend school and can become significantly worried or upset to the point of refusing to do so. Here are some ideas to help make it easier:

Keep it simple: Do the same things each day so kids know what needs to be done to get ready for school and ready to learn. For example, wake up, have breakfast, pack the school bag and leave the house at the same time each day. Set a simple routine.

Planning and organisation: Be organised. Know what's on at school. Have a family calendar. Have a set place for kids to put their bag, shoes and other school items. Have a set place to do homework. Then there can be no excuses about lost or forgotten items.

Set rules and expectations: Let your kids know that you expect them to go to school because it's important – not just to you, the community and the school but for them and their future.

Show that you value learning: Don't talk negatively about school in front of the kids. Talk up school and what it can offer. Be interested in what kids are learning at school. Ask questions or get them to teach you something.

Reward: Praise your kids for the little things. Set small goals daily or weekly. Don't just talk about the distant future of needing school to get a job. Kids don't often think that far ahead!

Opportunities for a 'fresh start': Sometimes it's best to put the past behind us and start again in a more positive way. Give kids the opportunity to put past negative behaviour or attendance issues behind them.

Role models: You can set an example but so too can older kids or other young adults. Kids sometimes respond better to other young people rather than their parents or other adults.



WHAT IF THEY JUST WON'T GO?

Keep trying: It takes a while to break a habit and it takes time to form a new one. Don't give up! But, if you're finding it really stressful, you need to know you are not alone. Tell someone at school; the school is there to help.

Understand why your child doesn't want to go to school: Is it because of something like incomplete homework, not having the right uniform or friendship problems or is it something deeper like anxiety, depression, bullying? Address the real source of the problem.

Trust the school: Talk to the teacher, the Aboriginal education worker or the principal. They want your kids at school as much as you do.

Attendance is EVERYBODY'S responsibility



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