

# Ty Ankrom's Here's What I Think ...

It's not surprising to know that students who attend school regularly are more likely to succeed. But the statistic from the U.S. Department of Education that nearly 8 million students were chronically absent in the 2015-16 school year should be alarming.



Attendance Works, an initiative that promotes the importance of school attendance, designates September as Attendance Awareness Month.

But some of the factors that contribute to absenteeism can occur at any time through the school year.

Absences Add Up, a public service campaign to curb school absences, cites a half-dozen reasons why a child may miss school, from fear of a bully to a family having housing or food challenges.

At <http://absencesaddup.org/reasons-why-kids-miss-school/>, visitors can click on a reason and get suggestions for how to deal with an issue. While the page is intended for parents, educators can learn about resources that are available to help students.

The site also recommends actively encouraging attendance, promoting [www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org) and



Research has shown that having good attendance needs to start as early as the younger grades (left). According to a 2007 study, excessive absenteeism in kindergarten can result in lower achievement later in reading and math. Absences Add Up reports that students who miss two days of school for the nine months of the school year are less likely to graduate.

Aug. 25, 2017

after-school programs.

There is also a resource link specifically for teachers at <http://absencesaddup.org/additional-resources/for-schools/>.

Attendance Works also offers suggestions for educators at [www.attendanceworks.org/take-action/educators/](http://www.attendanceworks.org/take-action/educators/) and resources at [www.attendanceworks.org/resources/](http://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/).

Among the resources are links to videos, exercises, posters and banners, handouts for families and toolkits.

Absences Add Up also cites a powerful statistic: Students who have two absences every month are more likely to fall behind in school and less likely to graduate.

Let's work together to encourage students to succeed by attending school every day.

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