

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

The statistics are startling:

- Half of the students who miss between two and four days of school in September will go on to miss nearly a month of school.
- About 5 million to 7 million students miss nearly a month of school a year.
- Poor attendance can have an effect on children's third-grade reading proficiency.



These facts, from Attendance Works, are just a few of the realities of the price of absenteeism on a child's education and future.

September is Attendance Awareness Month, promoted by Attendance Works, an initiative that promotes the importance of school attendance.

It should go without saying that attendance is important to academic success.

But Attendance Works ([www.attendanceworks.org/](http://www.attendanceworks.org/)) and Absences Add Up (<http://absencesaddup.org/>), a public service campaign to curb school absences, back it up with numbers.

The campaign has billboards that make the results of absen-

teeism very clear: Students who have two absences every month are more likely to fall behind in school and less likely to graduate.

According to Absences Add Up, students can be missing school for a variety of reasons.

The site lists several at <http://absencesaddup.org/reasons-why-kids-miss-school/>, such as illness, bullying, and difficulties with housing or food, and provides links to resources to help parents and families.

Other resources to address barriers to attendance can be found at <http://awareness.attendanceworks.org/resources/count-us-toolkit-2016/can-identify-help-students-poor-attendance/develop-strategies-address->



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[common-barriers/](http://absencesaddup.org/common-barriers/).

Experts encourage parents to impress upon their children the importance of attending school. Another suggestion is to consider a mentoring or after-school programs. Links to those resources can be found at <http://absencesaddup.org/encouraging-attendance/>.

Additional resources for parents, educators and community leaders can be found at <http://absencesaddup.org/additional-resources/for-schools/>.

The numbers almost speak for themselves but teachers can help by speaking up to parents and students about the importance of regular attendance.

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