



Attendance Matters: Factors Contributing to Chronic Absence

HEALTH

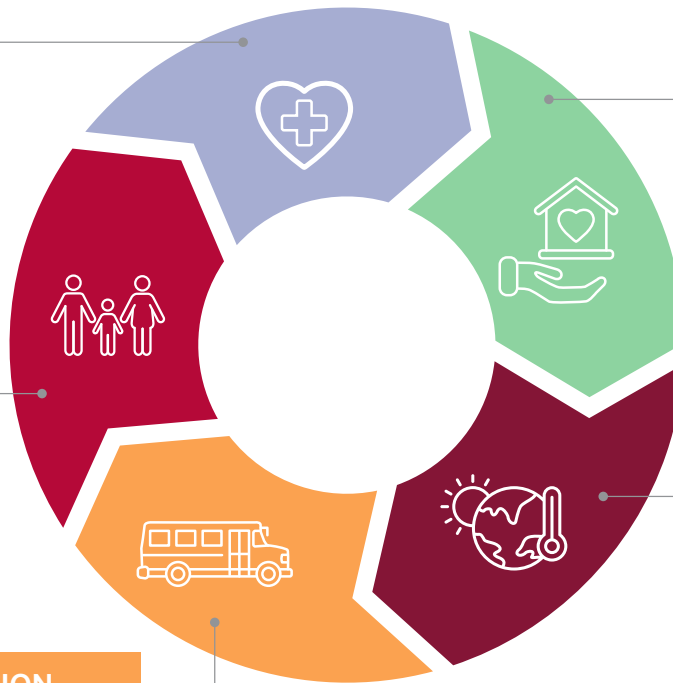
Chronic or acute illnesses impact whether a child goes to school and can be confusing due to unclear health guidance and practices. Trauma and mental health are also impacted by pandemic-related family loss.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Stronger school-home relationships, a welcoming school climate and increased connection can help reduce chronic absence and improve attendance.

TRANSPORTATION

Access to transportation can be affected by reduced bus routes, driver shortages, cost barriers, availability of ride shares, predictability of schedules, and more.



HOUSING

Homelessness or housing insecurity can lead to additional challenges with systems, infrastructure and access to needed supports, impacting children's presence in early learning programs.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Extreme weather and climate events directly impact families' resiliency, health and well-being. Climate change has widespread, long-term impacts on systems that affect families' stability, access to basic needs, and capacity to support their children's early learning.

What's Next?

Chronic absence is highly affected by local contexts; A coordinated, comprehensive, family- and community-centered, equitable approach is needed to address attendance and absenteeism issues.

- [Learn more](#) about addressing school attendance and chronic absenteeism across multiple levels.
- Dig into research and data about attendance and early childhood education from the [Educare Network](#) and [Attendance Works](#).

Sources

1. <https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/the-problem/>
2. <https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/early-education-toolkit/chronic-absence/>
3. <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/2018-10/Pre-K%20Attendance%20Report.pdf>

What is Chronic Absence?

Chronic absence, or absenteeism, is missing 10 percent or more of total school days for any reason, whether excused or unexcused¹. That's an average of 2 days per month.

Preschoolers who miss 10% or more of the school year start kindergarten with lower levels of readiness² and are **5x more likely to be chronically absent in second grade**³. Not all children who need support around attendance qualify as chronically absent, but the proportion of children who ARE chronically absent has risen in recent years.