

# Truancy

## Pre-reading

### Questions:

- What do you think this story is about?
- Do you have a hard time getting your child to attend school?

### Definitions:

- Succeed – to do well
- Personnel – the group of people working for a company or other organization
- Truant – someone who is absent without permission, usually from school
- Valid – acceptable, true
- Refer – to send or direct someone to something



## Reading

18 One of the most important things families can do to help children succeed is to make sure they  
34 attend school regularly. In Minnesota, students must attend school until age 16. Teens ages 16 and  
49 17 may withdraw from school only if their parents give written permission following a meeting  
with school personnel.

52 Students are considered truant when they miss school or class without a valid excuse. Truancy  
67 is defined as seven days of unexcused absences.

75 Unexcused Absences – reasons a student usually cannot miss school include:

- 85 • Staying home to take care of siblings.
- 93 • Missing the school bus.
- 98 • Making doctor appointments that could have been scheduled after regular school hours.
- 111 • Refusing to go to school.
- 117 • Skipping school for the day or for a class period.
- 128 • Working at a job that is not part of a class for school.

142 When your child is absent with a valid excuse, contact the school secretary the day of the  
159 absence. When your child returns to school make sure you give the school a written note  
175 explaining the absence.

178 Valid or excused Absences – reasons a student usually can miss school include:

- 190 • Illness
- 192 • Death of a family member
- 198 • Doctor appointments
- 201 • Religious holidays

204 Here are some **strategies** to encourage school attendance:

- 212 • Insist that your teenager or child goes to school every day.
- 224 • Talk to your child about school and ask how you can help.
- 237 • Discuss your concerns with your child's teachers.
- 245 • Ask for referrals if necessary.
- 251 • Ask the school to contact you immediately if your child is absent without a valid excuse.
- 268 • Check-in with your child's teachers to find out how things are going for your child.
- 284 • Get to know your child's friends and their families.

294 Truancy can have strong **negative** effects on students' lives. Students who are truant often end  
309 up using drugs and doing daytime crime.

316 Adapted from Info U, University of Minnesota Extension Service

## Understanding

1. List two things that encourage school attendance. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. What does the word **strategies** mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. What are two valid reasons for missing school? \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. What is one of the most important things families can do to help children succeed? \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. What does the word **negative** mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
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6. What are three examples of unexcused absences? \_\_\_\_\_  
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7. How many days can a student miss school or class before they are considered truant? \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Writing

Option A: Do you think truancy is a problem in your community? Why or Why not?

Option B: What do you think the community could do to help with truancy?

Option C: Write what you know about truancy.

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