



# Yorkview Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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## 5 Things You Need to Know about School Attendance

The lowest performing students around the world miss more school than their academically successful schoolmates. School attendance is critical to student's academic success but more importantly research shows that low performance at school, generally leads to a more difficult life with less access to good jobs. School absenteeism from a young age has significant negative consequences that can last a lifetime. Research indicates that absenteeism in kindergarten is associated with negative grade one outcomes, such as; greater absenteeism in the future, as well as, lower student achievement in math, reading and general knowledge. Any student who misses a school day misses an opportunity to learn. According to Charity Intelligence, if a student misses 2 days of school each month from grade 1 through grade 9, by grade 10 that student will have missed an entire year of school.

### What is school absenteeism?

The Provincial School Attendance Counsellor (Ministry of Education) defines 'persistent absenteeism' as "any student who has missed 10% or more of school days for any reason, including unexcused or excused absences, over an academic year". Ontario elementary schools have 194 days of instruction for students. A student who misses 19 days of school is considered persistently absent. Statistics show that persistent absenteeism puts children's future success at risk.

### Why school attendance is important from an early age

#### 1. Early school absenteeism is an indicator of future school absenteeism

A recent study found that students who missed an average of two days per month in elementary school stood a 60% chance of dropping out in grade nine (Every School Day Counts: Persistent Absenteeism in Ontario, 2016).

*"Considerable evidence points to poor school attendance as being associated with lower school achievement. Analysis of the current data by the Offord Centre researchers determined that a higher absenteeism rate in kindergarten was associated with lower achievement in Grade 3." Starting Early: A PDF Report prepared for the Education Quality and Accountability Office*

#### 2. Absenteeism in kindergarten negatively affects a child's ability to develop the grit and perseverance needed for academic success

Children who attend a year or more of pre-primary education out-perform children who do not have this advantage. There are more low-performing students amongst the group without access to pre-primary education. A "low-performer" is an individual who can understand simple questions and answer basic math questions; however, they are unable to make use of complex knowledge and information. The low-performing students have these things in common:



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- higher rates of absenteeism from school
- lower perseverance on tasks
- and less of a sense of belonging at school.

### **3. Early absenteeism (in preschool and kindergarten) has a significant effect on a child's ability to learn/master reading**

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (which Canada is a part of), on average, low performers tend to have greater truancy, and less perseverance, motivation and self-confidence in mathematics than better-performing students (Low Performing Students: Why They Fail and How to Help Them Succeed, OECD, 2016).

### **Consequences for low-performing students according to [Low-Performing Students—Why They Fall Behind and How to Help Them Succeed Slideshare](#)**

- Risk of dropping out of school: lower educational attainment
- Low-skills tend to be persistent over time, from age 15 into early adulthood
- Limited access to better paying and more rewarding jobs
- poorer health and less political participation

Numerous studies have linked early absenteeism to poor language and reading mastery by the end of grade three with effects beginning in preschool. Early absenteeism, therefore, undermines efforts to improve literacy at an early age.

### **4. School absenteeism rates can predict dropout rates**

*Students with high absenteeism in Grade 9 were much more likely to drop out, and less likely to graduate.*

*[Study of Absenteeism in the Toronto Board of Education, 1850- 1997 by Robert S. Brown.](#)*

### **5. There is a direct relationship between improved school attendance and significant academic gains**

In general, the higher the absenteeism rates for students the lower the students perform at school and in life. [Low Performing Students: Why They Fail and How to Help Them Succeed, 2016.](#)

Chronic absenteeism has a negative impact on the development of social-emotional skills which are vital for students to develop the required persistence to learn. Students who miss school for four or more weeks during a school year are affected the most, according to research on Chronic Absenteeism by Michael Gottfried.



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## What can parents do?

Parents can improve school attendance rates by helping their children arrive at school on time every day, following school timetables, locating sources of school anxiety that may make their children want to skip school and planning ahead to minimize absences.

[Getting involved in a child's entire schooling experience is a great way to boost school attendance.](#)

## What if your child is behind in school?

Please make an appointment to talk to your child's teacher. Teachers can provide extra help to students and your child can catch up in school. The earlier your child receives help, the easier it is to get caught up but it is never too late. Please contact Yorkview to start the process of building your child's future.

## Summary

Research shows a very strong link between students showing up for school and their success in school, and in life. The best choice a student can make for their future is to show up to school every day.

According to [Closing the Achievement Gap](#) (PDF), The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) now tracks the progress of individual students from one provincial assessment to the next.

Key findings include the following:

- Students who meet the provincial standard early in their schooling are likely to maintain their high achievement in secondary school.
- Students who do not meet the provincial standard early in their schooling are likely to continue not meeting the standard in later grades.
- Pinpointing the needs of students early and providing support makes a difference.

If your child is having difficulty getting to school every day, please contact Yorkview's principal to work on a solution together. We want to see your child succeed.

Adapted from SNCDSB