

EVERY DAY COUNTS

ATTENDANCE FACT SHEET FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

School is better when you're here.

DO I HAVE TO GO TO SCHOOL?

Yes, in Victoria everyone aged from 6 – 17 has to go to school.

Missing one day a fortnight is the same as missing four whole weeks of school a year.

From Foundation to Year 12 that adds up to 1.5 years of school!

School is better when you attend. Your friends and your teachers notice that you are away and wonder if you are OK.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT I GO TO SCHOOL EVERY DAY?

Right now, being at school is the most important thing you need to do for your future. School helps you build good habits for later on in life. You might think school is just about Maths and English but you're also learning about how to work with other people and how to solve problems.

Being at school every day also means you are becoming more independent as a learner and interacting with your friends and teachers. If you are at school you can get help from your teachers and friends and won't have to try to learn things in your own time.

Being an adult probably seems far away but we know that young people who attend school more frequently have better outcomes after school too. This means they earn more money, have better job opportunities and are generally healthier. So being at school really does make a difference!

Minutes lost = days lost per year

A couple of minutes here and there doesn't seem like much, but...

| When your child misses just... | they miss days per year |
|---|---|
| 5 mins per day  | = 3 days  |
| 30 mins per day  | = 18 days  |

 **Patterns of lateness can have a serious impact on your child's education.**

Days missed = years lost

A day here and there doesn't seem like much, but...

| When your child misses just... | they miss weeks per year | and years over their school life |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 1 day per fortnight  | = 4 weeks  | = Over 1 year missed |
| 1 day per week  | = 8 weeks  | = Over 2.5 years missed |

DO MY PARENTS NEED TO LET THE SCHOOL KNOW IF I'M GOING TO BE AWAY?

Yes. Your parents need to notify the school of your absence as soon as they can within three days of your absence. If they know you are going to be away, they should try to tell the school before the day or days you are away.

If you're away from school too much and don't have a reasonable excuse like a serious illness, your parents might get a letter from the principal asking about why you're away.

ARE THERE ANY GOOD REASONS TO BE AWAY FROM SCHOOL?

No. Unless you are very unwell or there is an event like a funeral, you should be at school. Every day you are away is a day of classes and social connection you miss out on. Taking a day off for your birthday or go shopping isn't a good reason to miss school.

Even medical and health appointments should be made either before or after school or during the school holidays. This includes family holidays. Your parents are encouraged not to plan holidays during the term but to organise these during the school holidays.

If you do have to be away for some reason, your parents need to contact the school and let them know what's going on. Depending on the situation, the school might provide schoolwork for you to complete.

IF I'M NOT AT SCHOOL WHAT DO I MISS OUT ON?

You miss out on all the big stuff – class discussions and all the interaction that happens in a classroom, the chance to get help from teachers and the opportunity to practice skills and gain knowledge.

Being away means you might miss out on a lot of learning or that you need to catch up in your time.

If all of that isn't enough to convince you to be at school every day, being away also means you also miss out on playing with your friends. Being away from school a lot can be lonely. It has a big impact on relationships and social connections.

Believe it or not, everyone wants you at school and it really is better when you attend.

WHAT IF I'M HAVING PROBLEMS GETTING TO SCHOOL?

Getting to school on time everyday can be about having a good routine.

If you find yourself running late or missing school because you're disorganised, try:

- Asking your parents for help getting ready
- Having a set time to go to bed
- Leaving all technology out of your bedroom
- Packing your school bag the night before with everything you need
- Having a set time for breakfast
- Planning to meet up with a friend so you can travel to school together.

Sometimes, though it can just be hard to go to school. Whatever the situation is, staying away from school isn't the answer. Many people want to help you. Try talking to:

- Your parents or another adult family member
- A trusted teacher
- Wellbeing Coordinator.