

# IT'S NOT OK TO BE AWAY

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**Student absence fits into the following categories:**

- 1** **Illness/injury**  
Your child is absent from school without your knowledge
- 2** **Truancy**  
Your child does not want to attend school, even though you have tried
- 3** **School Refusal**  
Your child does not attend school with your permission. For example, family holidays, baby-sitting, helping parents at home, working in the family business.
- 4** **School Withdrawal**  
Your child does not attend school

*Parents and caregivers are powerful figures in influencing the behaviour of young people.*

*You play an important role in supporting your child to be safe and make informed choices.*

**For more information schools can contact their DE&T regional office.**



**Attendance Information for Parents and Caregivers**

*School can give you a better future*



[www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/welfare/attend.htm](http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/welfare/attend.htm)

## **F**requently asked questions

### **What is my responsibility as a parent/caregiver?**

Make sure your child:

- attends school on ALL school days
  - is on time every day
- Make sure you:
- provide the school with an explanation if your child is away
  - contact the school if your child does not want to go to school
  - arrange doctor and dentist appointments out of school hours
  - arrange personal shopping trips with your son/daughter or birthday celebrations out of school hours
  - do not allow your child to stay at home for minor reasons.

### **Is regular attendance at school important?**

- Yes – from the first day. If your child misses the basic skills in primary school they can experience difficulties with their learning
- Regular attendance is essential to make sure learning is not disrupted. Regular learning provides building blocks for the future
- Schools help children to develop important social skills, such as friendship building, teamwork, communication skills and a healthy self-esteem.

### **What can I expect from the school?**

- Monitoring of student attendance and review progress on a weekly basis
- Strategies to help you as a parent encourage your child to go to school.

### **What help can I get if my child refuses to go to school or is truanting?**

The school can offer a range of support options:

- teacher working with the student in a supportive, counselling role
- school student welfare co-ordinator working with the student
- provide a mentor for your child
- home visits to identify the problem and help work it through with parents
- identify reasons why your child doesn't want to go to school
- strategies to help you encourage your child to go to school
- develop an incentive program to encourage your child to attend school
- link with community agencies.

### **Must I send my child to school every day?**

Yes, unless:

- your child is too sick or injured to go to school
- your child has an infectious disease
- the principal is provided with any other genuine and acceptable reason for absence.

### **Will my child be marked absent if they are doing a TAFE, VET or community program?**

- No – as long as it is part of the school program.

### **What if my child is involved in sport?**

- No – as long as it is part of the school program.

### **Do I need to let the school know if my child has been away?**

- Yes – for the wellbeing of your child, Department of Education & Training has an attendance policy and teachers and schools are required to follow up student absences.

*Let's pick up Chloe and hear about her day at school.*

