

Attendance in the early grades

Many of our youngest students miss 10 percent of the school year—about 18 days. Chronic absenteeism in kindergarten, and even preK, can predict lower test scores in 3rd grade, especially if the problem persists for more than a year. Do you know how many children are chronically absent in your school or community?

Who is affected

Kindergarten and 1st grade classes often have absenteeism rates as high as those in high school. Many of these absences are excused, but they still add up to lost time in the classroom.

1 in 10 kids

in kindergarten and 1st grade are chronically absent. In some schools, it's as high as 1 in 4.¹



2 in 10
low-income kids
miss too much

2.5 in 10
homeless kids
are chronically

4 in 10
transient kids
miss too much

Why it matters

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers.

Preliminary data from a California study found that children who were chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade were far less likely to read proficiently at the end of 3rd grade.

Who Can Read on Grade Level After 3rd Grade?



► 64%

of kids with good attendance in K and 1st
(missed 9 or fewer days both years)



► 43%

of kids with at-risk attendance
(missed more than 9 days both years)



► 41%

of kids chronically absent in K or 1st