

WHAT CAN FAMILIES DO?

- Avoid extended vacations that require your children to miss school. Try to line up vacations with the school's schedule. The same goes for doctor's appointments.
- For younger children, set a regular bedtime and morning routine. Make sure they get 9 to 11 hours of sleep. You can lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- For older children, help set homework and bedtime routines that allow for 8½ to 9½ hours of sleep. Make sure that when the lights go out, so do the cell phones, video games and computers.
- Get to know the teachers and administrators. With younger children, make sure you introduce your child to teachers before school starts and keep in touch with the teachers. For older students, school officials can help you stay on top of academic progress and social contacts to make sure your child is staying on track.
- Show your child that attendance matters to you and that you won't allow an absence unless someone is truly sick.
- Don't ask older students to help with daycare and household errands during the school day.
- Turn to the school for help. Many schools offer services for the whole family.
- Ask your principal to calculate chronic absence rates for the whole school. Even if your child attends regularly, it's important to know how many students in your child's school are missing 10% or more of the school year.

