

How to handle situations that often result in school absences

Your child woke up late and can't get going. He has a big test today and forgot to study for it last night.

Things like this happen all the time. And parents sometimes wonder if missing a day of school here and there is really a big deal.

The answer is yes. Attending school regularly is important—right up to the very last day.

Here are a few of the top reasons kids miss school and some ways to prevent those absences:

1. Your child feels sick. If he doesn't have a fever and isn't showing signs of illness (vomiting, coughing, diarrhea), he can probably go to school. If you do keep him home, don't make it a vacation. A child who is too sick to go to school is too sick to watch TV, text friends or play on the computer.
2. Your child won't get up. Make his bedtime earlier. Help him get ready for school the night before.
3. He isn't prepared. Forgetting to study for a test and running out of time to complete a project are not valid excuses for missing school. Expect your child to plan ahead and let him face the consequences when he doesn't.
4. Your child is worried. Talk with him. Is he struggling in a class? Is a classmate bothering him at school? Talk with the teacher.

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