Every Student Present
Toolkit:

Building Communities That Connect &Communicate

When I miss school, my opportunities disappear...

every student present!

Visit www.everystudentpresent.org/parents

This toolkit was developed by the New York State Council on Children and Families
2014

OVERVIEW

A common goal shared by New York families is to help their children reach their full potential. This makes them our best allies for reducing chronic absence. Families are able to be most effective when they have good information so a key goal of *Every Student Present* is to help inform them about the detrimental effects that multiple absences can have on all their children, regardless of their children's ages. It has been shown that most parents recognize the importance of good school attendance among their older children and don't realize the extent poor attendance can jeopardize the academic success of their younger children. The purpose of this [toolkit](#) is to provide strategies for how community members can work together to bring this important message to parents.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Numerous channels are available to us when trying to communicate our message. Some of these channels, like editorials, are longstanding forms of messaging while others are relatively new. As communities work together to disseminate information to parents, it is important to identify community partners, coordinate activities and raise a collective voice so parents can be reached.

Some channels we suggest using include:
- Social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn)
- E-mail your networks (school boards, faith-based organizations, professional and community service organizations)
- Websites
- Newsletters
- Op-ed articles
- Kick-off events
- Face-to-face (e.g., meetings with parent groups, open house, school orientation)
- Press releases
- Earned and paid media
- Direct mail (e.g., letters, post cards)

The importance of using multiple channels can't be overstated. We want families to receive the messages multiple times over an extended period of time through various means. If this is done well, families will hear and gradually absorb the information they need to help their children. Ideally, a community should present families with a clear message wherever families go: at the grocery store or local food pantry, in church, at a local business (e.g., barber shop, laundry mat); health clinics and pediatricians' offices, at the bus stop, and on and on.

The various channels can be used for different purposes. For example, use some to promote resources (e.g., www.everystudentpresent.org/resources.htm); curate other people's resources

(e.g., emails, newsletters); or get community input (e.g., social media). The length of content and format of content will differ for channels with some channels being able to serve multiple purposes.

This toolkit includes resources you can use in your community to increase the information parents have about chronic absence. We invite you to identify your partners and identify ways community members can present a coordinated, consistent voice so every student is present regularly in school and able to succeed.

COMMONLY USED SOCIAL MEDIA

There are numerous social media resources. This toolkit focuses on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter.

LinkedIn
- LinkedIn is intended as a professional networking and employment/resume listing tool. There are groups for professionals in the fields of Education, Early Childhood and Policy as well as New York-specific groups. This means we can post information about the Every Student Present campaign in multiple places on LinkedIn and get wide exposure. LinkedIn is a great place to advertise the concepts fo the campaign, what you are doing in your community to support it, information professionals can assume in the campaign and information on upcoming events (e.g., Every Student Present webinars).
- Example of a LinkedIn post

> *Every Student Present* is a public awareness campaign designed to help school staff, parents and communities understand the impact of chronic absence—missing 10 percent of school. The goals of the campaign are to promote awareness of chronic absence and to build capacity among schools, families and communities to reduce it. Be sure to share our parent page, www.everystudentpresent.org/parents with others so parents can learn how to help their children be present every day.

Facebook
- The purpose of Facebook is to connect and share information, with tremendous potential for building community.
- We can advertise this toolkit; create events on our business pages; and drive "like" to our Twitter accounts as well as send tweets to our Facebook accounts. The more "likes" we have, the more "followers" know what is happening with the Every Student Present campaign.

- Facebook is the most visual of the three forms of media described here so we highly recommend posting a photo or image with *every* post. This will catch attention in news feeds and distinguish our posts from others.
- As your organization rolls out events, be sure to post the event and pictures of the event on Facebook.

Twitter

- Twitter is a method of providing quick updates to friends, family and community members. It has become a good way to keep up with the news and current events. The power of Twitter was evident in the progression of the Arab Spring.
- When using Twitter, tweets are limited to 140 characters including spaces. A rule of thumb is to leave seven characters so others can use those characters to re-tweet your tweet. This means your twitter handle, @nysccf, for example, would be included in the tweet.
- Another reason to use less than the 140 characters is that it allows you to add partners' Twitter handles or more hashtags as seen in the example below.
- Example:

#chronicabsence is a community affair! Have you seen #EveryStudentPresent posters? Tell us where @nysccf #EveryStudentPresentposter

[insert every student present jpeg file here so photo is included in tweet]

SOCIAL MEDIA PARTNERS

Several organizations have expressed an interest in helping spread the word about the importance of good attendance and we encourage you to include them in your social media messaging. A listing of those organizations is in the Appendix. Please contact us and share your Facebook and Twitter information so your organization is included in the list.

SOCIAL MEDIA BY THE MONTH

We (@NYSCCF) plan to post several tweets at the end of August to promote Attendance Awareness Month and increase the social media presence of *Every Student Present*. We encourage you to use the tweets in the appendix during August, before school starts, and in September throughout Attendance Awareness Month. Additional social media messages will be shared with you for subsequent months so we can keep attendance issues visible throughout the course of the school year. Sign up for the *Every Student Present* newsletter to receive monthly sample tweets.

CREATING OUR OWN "NEW YORK MINUTE" IN SOCIAL MEDIA

We would like to learn about and share what is happening across New York state during Attendance Awareness Month so we would appreciate it if you could send us photos and videos (from phones, etc.) that showcase:

- Places where the *Every Student Present* materials were distributed (e.g., placement in schools, churches, food pantries, school board members' lawns, etc.);
- Events you hosted to promote Attendance Awareness;
- Children and families who will benefit from your communities' efforts to reduce chronic absence;
- Community members helping to build a strong habit of attendance; and
- Other memorable moments related to Attendance Awareness!

Please send the images and videos to us at our twitter account, @nysccf, or email us at everystudentpresent@ccf.ny.gov and we will try to highlight them in future materials and resources that we develop.

CONNECT WITH US!

Let's make sure we are all connected on social media! Here is a list of our current partners and we encourage you to include one another in your social media "conversations" about chronic absence. Others who would like to be included can submit the name of their organization and Twitter address to us and we will be sure to include them in our messages.

PARENT WEB PAGE & WEBSITE TILE

The *Every Student Present* web tile is an image that can be posted on any website. Your organization's web master can imbed the image on your site and have it direct users to the Every Student Present parent page. We suggest working

If I'm not here, I can't learn.

every student present!
bright futures begin with good school attendance

with school districts, PTAs, community organizations, news outlets (e.g., community page and school alert pages), businesses, county and state agencies, and any other outlet with websites commonly used by parents to post the *Every Student Present* parent web tile. It is helpful to let organizations know this is a parent user-friendly tile that will lead parents to resources that can help their children with attendance.

The web tile connects parents to the *Every Student Present* parent page that provides a combination of general parenting information (e.g., how to get your child to talk to you); content on building relationships with their child's teacher (e.g., parent-teacher conferences) as well as more serious attendance-specific information that helps parents support children who may be experiencing school anxiety and dealing with issues related to school refusal.

MESSAGE RECORDING

A 15-second message is available and can be used to inform parents about good school attendance. The message is simple, to-the-point and in the voice of a child.

Bright futures begin with good school attendance. Missing just a few days of school a month can hurt a child's math and reading skills or even their chance of graduating. Find out more at www.everystudentpresent.org/parents

A traditional use of this recording is for public service announcements and you can take this to your local education station and other news outlets (e.g., radio, television). Another less traditional way that this is being used is as a recording on the radio station of a grocery store chain, where parents will hear this message along with the weekly produce specials. Be creative!

"WORK" YOUR NETWORKS

Think about possible partners who have established communication lines with parents. The Council has connected with the statewide organizations below to promote the message of good attendance so you may want to follow up with their counterparts at the local level and see if they will help share the message with parents in their networks.
- New York State Council of Churches
  - o Reach member churches in your area
  - o You can also locate churches by state and city
- New York State PTA
  - o Locate your regional directors

- New York State School Board Association
  - Information about school board presidents can be found on school district websites.
- United Way of New York State
  - Locate the United Way in your county/region

A sample e-mail that you can send to members of your network is below.

Hello Partners:
Please help us share an important message with parents about the detrimental effect poor attendance has on children's school success—especially young students. *Every Student Present* is a public awareness campaign directed toward parents of young children, especially prekindergarten through grade 5, to help them

understand multiple absences impact their children's school success, even in these early years. A fact sheet describes the campaign and a number of resources are available for your use so you can get this important message to parents who participate in your programs and services. When each of you contributes the best way you can, it will result in a tremendous collective impact in our community so we hope you will become involved in the campaign. Here are some ways you can you help:

- Print and display posters at all your programs sites where parents visit;
- Share the tip sheet with parents;
- Partner with other organizations and display the message on a bus shelter;
- Disseminate posters to local businesses;
- Print the posters as lawn signs and 'plant them' across your community;
- Distribute fliers to parents in church bulletins, children's back packs, etc;
- Post the website on websites so parents can link to the parent resource page;
- Partner with other local organizations to fund bus stop posters in locations near schools; and
- Work with your local television and radio stations to air the 15-second message during children's programs.

All the resources you need can be found at www.everystudentpresent.org/resources.htm

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NEWSLETTERS

Organizations can help inform parents about chronic absence by printing articles in newsletters. Having standard letters they can print on their letterhead will allow them to easily support this

effort. A [sample newsletter](#) was designed to be printed on an organization's letterhead. This was prepared for church bulletins and could be used by other organizations, as well.

CONTRIBUTE TO OP-EDS

Op-ed articles are useful tools to raise awareness about the issue of chronic absence. They have the advantage of educating parents as well as getting media coverage that taps a broad audience of potential community partners. Here is a [sample op-ed](#) article that could be used.

PARTNER WITH BUSINESSES

We are grateful to the businesses that have incorporated the *Every Student Present* messages into products that will help us reach families so they are informed about the impact of chronic absence.

MVP Insurance	Provided funding for bus shelter posters and fliers for parents visiting pediatricians' offices and health clinics
New York Lottery	Displayed the message on all 37,000 lottery terminals located in their retail outlets across the state
Price Chopper	Played an *Every Student Present* message over their store radio station and printed the *Every Student Present* message on grocery bags
Stewart's Shops	Displayed our message on the Community Bulletin Boards in all their stores
WMHT Educational Telecommunications	Produced a 15 second message that was presented during PBS children's programming

APPENDIX

SOCIAL MEDIA BY THE MONTH

AUGUST

Sample Tweets
Try to Tweet at least twice each day during the month.

If I'm not here, I can't learn #everystudentpresent in #[Name of your town]
[attach picture of poster in Tweet]

When I miss school my opportunities disappear, #[Name of your town] #everystudentpresent #kidscount
[attach picture of poster in Tweet]

#chronicabsence is a community affair! See how everyone from police to churches can help
#EveryStudentPresent http://bit.ly/1tttq6K
[attach picture of poster in Tweet]

What is the risk of chronic absenteeism among New York students? #EveryStudentPresent

Help make #EveryStudentPresent for #SchoolEveryDay, Get resources at http://bit.ly/1lf2Z5C

Making every student present & reducing chronic absence http://conta.cc/1aZns4t
#EveryStudentPresent

#EveryStudentPresent bright futures begin with good school attendance - How does your school count
absences http://bit.ly/184yI1I

Reducing #chronicabsence is community affair! Where you have seen these #EveryStudentPresent
posters?
[attach picture of poster in Tweet]

Bright futures begin w/good school attendance #EveryStudentPresent #schooleveryday Visit #PARENT
pg http://bit.ly/1kX7mlG

Bright futures begin with good school attendance #EveryStudentPresent for #schooleveryday Hints &
more, http://bit.ly/1kX7mlG

Where have you seen these #EveryStudentPresent posters in your community? Send us photos via
twitterpic
[attach picture of poster in Tweet]

Chronic absence in kindergarten = lower academic achievement through 5th grade. http://bit.ly/1kX7mlG
#EveryStudentPresent

Reducing #chronicabsence is community affair! Where you have seen these #EveryStudentPresent posters

in your community?
[attach picture of poster in Tweet]

Know when the school year begins #everystudentpresent. Reduce #chronicabsence at your school. http://bit.ly/1kX7mlG

Sample LinkedIn Post
Try to post a message to peers twice a week

Every Student Present is a public awareness campaign designed to help school staff, parents and communities understand the impact of chronic absence—missing 10 percent of school. The goals of the campaign are to promote awareness of chronic absence and to build capacity among schools, families and communities to reduce it. Come visit our parent page to learn more about how parents can support their children. www.everystudentpresent.org/parents.

Sample Facebook Post
Try to post a message twice a week

Communities can work together so students are off to a good start. Use the Every Student Present Toolkit to learn how to connect with one another and share an important message with parents about chronic absence. http://www.everystudentpresent.org/pdfs/ESP_Toolkit.pdf and join our webinar

Every Student Present is a public awareness campaign designed to help school staff, parents and communities understand the impact of chronic absence—missing 10 percent of school. The goals of the campaign are to promote awareness of chronic absence and to build capacity among schools, families and communities to reduce it. Come visit our parent page to learn more about how you can support your children. www.everystudentpresent.org/parents.

SEPTEMBER

Sample Tweets
Try to Tweet at least twice each day during the month.

Communities can help make #EveryStudentPresent Learn how http://bit.ly/1tttq6K

Help make #EveryStudentPresent for #SchoolEveryDay, learn more http://bit.ly/1kX7mlG

Help make Every Student Present in your community http://conta.cc/1sSLlqx #EveryStudentPresent

Bright futures begin w/good school attendance #EveryStudentPresent Learn more at the Parent Page, http://bit.ly/1kX7mlG

Help Make #EveryStudentPresent for #SchoolEveryDay, learn more http://bit.ly/1kX7mlG #parentadvice

Where have you seen these #EveryStudentPresent posters in your community? Send us photos via twitterpic

[attach picture of poster in Tweet]

Chronic absence in kindergarten = lower academic achievement through 5th grade. http://bit.ly/1kX7mlG #EveryStudentPresent

When I miss school my opportunities disappear, #[Name of your town] #everystudentpresent #kidscount [attach picture of poster in Tweet]

Reducing #chronicabsence is community affair! Where you have seen these #EveryStudentPresent posters in your community?

[attach picture of poster in Tweet]

Chronic absence is not the same as truancy. Learn more at http://bit.ly/1mi3W8b

Missing 2 to 3 days of school in Sept can mean poor attendance all year. Make #EveryStudentPresent

Use positive approaches to #chronic absence. School breakfast helps make #EveryStudentPresent.

Learn how to help students counter bullying #EveryStudentPresent http://bit.ly/1kX7mlG

What to do when children not confident about school? Learn more #EveryStudentPresent parent pg http://bit.ly/1kX7mlG

Sample LinkedIn Post
Try to post a message to peers twice a week

The Every Student Present campaign provides parents with strategies to support their children who may be experiencing school anxiety, bullying, health issues and other issues related to school refusal. Engaging and supporting parents is essential as research has shown positive prevention approaches are more effective to reducing chronic absence. Share the parent page with colleagues so they can inform parents www.everystudentpresent.org/parents

Sample Facebook Post
Try to post a message twice a week

How to make the parent-teacher conference work for you & your child. Learn more here, http://bit.ly/1kXzJ2S

[attach picture of poster to Facebook]

COMMUNICATE WITH OUR PARTNERS

Here is a list of our current partners who have Twitter and Facebook accounts. We encourage you to include one another in your social media "conversations" about chronic absence. Others who would like to be included can submit the name of their organization along with their Twitter and Facebook information and we will be sure to include them in our messages.

Organization	www.twitter.com/	www.facebook.com/
Attendance Works	attendanceworks	attendanceworks
Children's Aid Society	children'saidNYC	ChildrensAidNYC
City School District of Albany	AlbanySchools	---
Council of School Superintendents Association	NYSchoolSupts	NYSCOSS
Council on Children and Families	nysccf	nysccf
Enlarged City School District of Troy	TCSD	TCSD
Erie1BOCES	Erie1BOCES	Erie1BOCES
Grade Level Reading Coalition	readingby3rd	CampaignforGLR
New York State Afterschool Network	NYSAN	NYSAN
New York State Council of Churches	NYSCofchurches	NewYorkStateCouncilofChurches
New York State Department of Health	HealthNYgov	NYSDOH
New York State Education Department	JohnKingNYSED	NYStateEd
New York State PTA	nyspta	nyspta
New York State Teacher Centers	---	ilovemynysteachercenter
Schenectady City School District	SCSchools	SchenectadyCitySchools
School Administrators Association of New York State	SAANYS	School-Administrators-Association-of-New-York-State
State University of New York	SUNY	SUNY
Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region	---	TrinityAllianceAlbany
United Way Greater Capital Region	UnitedWay_GCR	UnitedWayGCR
United Way of New York City	unitedwaynyc	unitedwaynyc
United Way of the Southern Tier	uwst	UnitedWaySouthernTier

New York State Council on Children and Families