

# Role of School Health Services in Combatting Absenteeism

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## Purpose

- Identify role school nurse plays in addressing chronic absenteeism

## Background

- School attendance affects student academic achievement
- 1 in 3 students miss more than a month of school for various physical, economic, environmental, social & health reasons<sup>1</sup>
- 52 million hours of school missed due to dental problems<sup>2</sup>
- Chronic absenteeism is a public health issue

## Process

- Literature review indicated lack of research addressing school nursing role
- Recruitment through state school nurse leadership (snowball sampling)
- Collected case studies and reviewed for common themes

## Questions?

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## School Nurses Reduce Chronic Absenteeism by:

- Outreaching to students/families to address individual needs
- Helping student/family access needed healthcare provider
- Ensuring students feel safe
- Providing support during school day
- Advocating for school-wide approach to address absenteeism
- Encouraging utilization of reporting system for better data collection
- Conducting parent/caregiver & student classes on health topics
- Addressing chronic tardiness, early dismissals and class absence

## Case study examples can be found at:

<https://www.nasn.org/portals/0/advocacy/whitepaperabsenteeism.pdf>



## References

<sup>1</sup> Balfanz, R., & Byrnes, V. (2012). *The importance of being there: A report on absenteeism in the nation's public schools*. Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Organization of Schools. Baltimore, MD.

<sup>2</sup> Children's Defense Fund. (2006). *Improving children's health: Understanding children's health disparities and promising approaches to address them*. Washington, DC: Author.