



Education News

School Attendance Matters

(NAPSA)—Nearly 7.5 million U.S. students are chronically absent every school year—missing enough school to put them at severe risk of dropping out or failing to graduate—but a new public service advertising (PSA) campaign aims to reverse this trend.

The Problem

Research shows that students who attend school regularly in the early years are more likely to learn to read well by the critical 3rd grade milestone, score higher on standardized tests and graduate and go on to college than students who are chronically absent. Education is crucial to breaking the cycle of poverty, but chronic absenteeism is most prevalent among low-income students. Chronic absenteeism, which is defined as missing at least 10 percent of school days in a given year, or about 18 days, affects the educational outcomes of millions of students.

An Answer

To help, the U.S. Army, through its partnership with the Ad Council, has created a new series of English- and Spanish-language PSAs asking parents of middle school students to remember the influence they have on their children's attendance, reminding them that even one or two days missed each month of school can jeopardize their child's chances of graduating.

"The U.S. Army recognizes the immense importance of having an educated public and is deeply committed to programs that benefit America's youth," said Mark Davis, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army.

What You Can Do

Parents, adult influencers, teachers, educational organizations, and advocates are invited to



Every absence, in any grade—excused or not—can affect a child's academic achievement.

visit www.BoostUp.org. The website offers an assortment of information, resources and ways to get involved, in helping make sure students graduate—including accessing state-by-state dropout statistics, real student stories, information about why students drop out of school and how to help. Parents can access an attendance calculator, courtesy of Get Schooled, where they can chart the cumulative effect of their children's absences on their education. Visitors can also give students a boost by submitting a text or video message of support on the Boost Nation microsite (www.BoostNation.org). NFL Philadelphia Eagles player David Sims is the latest celebrity to upload a video there, showing students he cares if they stay in school and wants them to graduate.

"My mother strongly encouraged me to pursue my education, and with caring people in your life, you can reach your goals," said Sims. "That's why it's important we all do our part to inspire at-risk students to stay motivated to keep their eyes on the prize and graduate from high school. Give students a 'boost' to show you support them and let them know you believe in them."

Learn More

To find out more about the campaign and how you can help students graduate, visit www.BoostUp.org.