



➔ Preventing Truancy

Truancy can affect a child in a negative way. Some of these kids will end up in a juvenile justice system with some type of criminal background. Others will learn their lesson after getting caught the first time.

In a data report put out by The Annie E. Casey Foundation titled "2007 Kids Count Data Report," Arizona was ranked 36th in the nation when it came to the well being of children. Arizona ranked the highest when it came to the drop out rate and 3rd highest in the teen pregnancy rate.

Truancy, according to the US Department of Education, is the first sign of trouble; the first indicator that a young person is giving up and losing his or her way.

When young people start skipping school, they are telling their parents, school officials, and the community at large that they are in trouble and need our help if they are to keep moving forward in life.

Factors that contribute to the truancy problem:

- Negative peer influences
- Disciplinary problems
- Lack of self-esteem
- Poor academic routine
- Being bullied

Truancy increases the risk for:

- Drug/Alcohol abuse
- Gang activity
- Emotional problems
- Incarceration
- Social isolation

Five Tips for Preventing Truancy Problems:

1. Make sure your child understands how important it is to attend school regularly and that you do not approve of absences from school.
2. Take an active interest in your child's schoolwork. Ask about the school day and praise & encourage daily achievements at school.
3. If your child tells you they are bored at school, ask to meet with the teachers.
4. If your child makes excuses to try to avoid going to school, listen to them - you may find there is an underlying problem such as problems with schoolwork or bullying.
5. Make sure that your child attends school & gets to school on time. **This is the parent's responsibility.**

Truancy Laws

Schools, local law enforcement, parents and students need to cooperate to ensure that Arizona's truancy laws are upheld. Both students and parents may be prosecuted for violations related to truancy.

A.R.S. § 15-802 (A): Every child between the ages of six and sixteen years shall attend a school and shall be provided instruction in at least the subjects of reading, grammar, mathematics, social studies and science. The person who has custody of the child shall choose a public, private, charter or home school as defined in this section to provide instruction.

A.R.S. § 15-803 (B): A child who is habitually truant or who has excessive absences may be adjudicated an incorrigible child as defined in § 8-201. Absences may be considered excessive when the number of absent days exceeds ten percent of the number of required attendance days prescribed in § 15-802, subsection B, paragraph 1. Arizona law also holds parents accountable for enrolling children in school and ensuring that a child is in attendance for the full time school is in session.

For More Info On Truancy: www.crimefreeaz.com/truancy

Dysart Unified School District #89

Volume 1, Issue #3

September 2009

DUSD SS/HS Partners:

- ☉ Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Dept.
- ☉ Magellan Mental Health
- ☉ Jewish Family & Children Services
- ☉ Southwest Behavioral Health
- ☉ Surprise Police Dept.
- ☉ El Mirage Police Dept.
- ☉ Surprise City Court
- ☉ Community Bridges
- ☉ Luke Air Force Base
- ☉ Western Judicial Service
- ☉ Interfaith Community Care
- ☉ SADD

GET AN EDUCATION



STAY IN SCHOOL

Safe School Hotline

To report bullies, threats, drugs, weapons or anything unsafe....call (623) 876-7009

Dysart's C.U.T.S. Program

To encourage and improve school attendance, Dysart Unified School District has a truancy program in partnership with Maricopa County Juvenile Court. **This truancy program is called C.U.T.S. (Court Unified Truancy Suppression).** As you know, we expect your child to be at school every day, unless there is an excused reason not to be.

School attendance is not only a good habit, but state law requires it! Arizona State Law (A.R.S. 15-802 and 15-803) states that every person who has custody of a child between the ages of six and sixteen years shall make sure the child attends school for the full time school is in session. In addition, an absence is defined as follows:

- **A minimum of one missed class period per day.**
- **Any unexcused absence**
- **A student is "habitually truant" if he/she has five or more unexcused absences from school.**
- **A student that is absent more than ten percent (18 days) of the required number of school days per year is considered to have "excessive absences" whether the absence is excused or unexcused.**

When a student has five or more unexcused absences or 18 excessive absences (excused OR unexcused), the student **can be cited** to the CUTS Program through the Juvenile Court. If the student is cited, an attendance hearing will be held with representatives from Dysart Unified School District and the Juvenile Court. Consequences at the hearing may include the following:

- **required attendance of the parent and the child at an education class (to be held on Saturdays)**
- **work hours assigned to the child, counseling, etc.**
- **A \$50 Diversion Fee assessed to the parent**
- **Failure to complete these consequences may result in suspension of your child's driver's license, or inability to get a driver's license until the 18th birthday and/or formal court proceedings. If convicted in a formal court proceeding, it is a Class 3 misdemeanor punishable by jail time and/or fine.**

The real goal of the CUTS program is to have your child in school. The education of your child is extremely important to us. The CUTS program is another way that Dysart Unified School District is working with our students and parents to ensure academic success.



"What You Are Missing Out On"



By not attending school, you are missing out on some great things in life but most importantly you could be missing out on a great future. Think about the future. How do you define success? What makes you happy? What drives you? What makes you get out of bed in the morning? Does success mean family, money, security, prestige, to help others, improve the environment, solve problems, a career, a degree? Whatever you decide, the key is to strengthen your will to succeed and to set goals early.

Goals are like road maps; they get you from one point to another. The best way to get results is to plan for the future, but live one day at a time. Don't get to the point in your life where you look back and say, "what did I miss out on by not attending school regularly." School is a place where you can be YOU!! Get involved and make a difference in something your passionate about. There are people willing to help and support you! By attending school on a regular basis, your life will benefit in many ways.....

