



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ATTENDANCE AT SECONDARY SCHOOL



At Mount Lawley Senior High School, we want your child to do their absolute best. To get the best education, they need to go to school every day.

The teenage years are a time for young people to develop independence and find their place in the world, including how they take part in their school life. We know that some children may need extra encouragement to attend school regularly. By working together, our school community can address some of the reasons why children may not want to go to school.

EVERY DAY COUNTS

1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem much but ...

| If you miss ... | That equals ... | Which is ... | And over 13 years of schooling that's ... |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|---|
| 1 day a fortnight | 20 days per year | 4 weeks per year | Nearly 1½ years |
| 1 day a week | 40 days a year | 8 weeks a year | Over 2½ years |
| 2 days a week | 80 days a year | 16 weeks a year | Over 5 years |
| 4 days a week | 160 days a year | 32 weeks a year | Nearly 10 years |

How about 10 minutes late a day? Surely that won't affect my attendance

| I only miss ... | That equals to | Which is ... | And over 13 years of Schooling that is ... |
|------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 10 minutes a day | 50 minutes a week | Nearly 1½ weeks a year | Nearly ½ a year |
| 20 minutes a day | 1 hour 40 minutes a week | Over 2¼ weeks a year | Nearly 1 full year |
| 30 minutes a day | Half a day a week | 4 weeks a year | Nearly 1½ years |
| 1 hour a day | 1 day a month | 8 weeks a year | Over 2½ years |

Remember there are 40 weeks of school a year

Some common problems you may have getting your child to school:

- They won't get out of bed in the morning
- They go to bed late at night
- They take a long time to get ready in the morning
- They haven't done their homework or are avoiding a test or assignment
- They are using their phone or computer in their rooms during the night
- They are playing video games late at night

What can staff at Mount Lawley Senior High School do to help?

- Offer relevant and culturally responsive learning opportunities
- Monitor every student's attendance and work with you to overcome problems affecting your child's attendance
- Talk with you about involving support staff such as school psychologist, chaplain, mentors and relevant staff
- Talk with you about local services they may also be able to help such as Headspace, Mercy Care and other organisations

You may also have concerns that your child:

- May not have friends or is not fitting in
- May be feeling lost at school
- Fears being a failure
- Is not feeling academically challenged
- May have learning difficulties
- May not get along with a teacher
- Just not wanting to be at school

What can you do to help?

- Act early. It is important to understand and work on the underlying reasons why your child is not going to school.
- On average, teenagers need eight to nine hours sleep a night to be healthy and alert. Maintaining a daily routine helps. This may include monitoring internet, mobile phone, computer games and television use at night to ensure sleep is not disturbed.
- Try not to make appointments or take holidays during school time. This can make it difficult to catch up on missed school-work, and cause anxiety about attending school.
- Don't let your child stay home unless they are genuinely sick.
- Don't let your child stay home to finish an assignment that is due. Make attendance the number one priority.
- Set a good example - how you meet your commitments impacts on how they will meet theirs. Teach them that 'showing up' to commitments is normal and expected behaviour.
- Have clear expectations about after school jobs. Make sure work does not impact on their ability to get to school each day or interfere with study.
- Encourage extracurricular activities such as sport and creative activities. They can help your child develop positive relationships and experience success, helping them feel more motivated.
- Monitor your child's attendance and learning at school. Periodically check with their teachers or the year coordinator to find out how things are going.
- Avoid taking over or giving your child the impression you are fighting their battles for them. Improving attendance requires the school, parent and student to work together.
- If your child delays getting ready for school so they are late, encourage them to still go to school with a note.
- Ask school staff such as the Student Support Coordinator or Student Support Officer for help if you are struggling to get your child to school.

Do you need to let the school know if your child will be away from school?

Yes you need to let the school know the reason why your child is going to be, or has been, absent from school as soon as possible by one of these resources:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| PHONE | 9265 1507 you are able to leave a message |
| EMAIL | mountlawley.shs.absentees@education.wa.edu.au |
| ONLINE FORM | http://www.lawley.wa.edu.au/view/contact/absentee-form |
| SMS | 0407 447 500 <u>SMS ONLY</u> |
| MOBILE PHONE APP | This app has easy push buttons for all of the above functions. 'Audiri APP' |

Don't feel the need to 'cover up' the reason for your child's absence. This reinforces that you are taking over when things are difficult. Be honest so we can work with you and your child to improve their attendance.

Having information about why your child is missing school helps us plan for their return, and to work out whether we can provide any further help to you.

It's NOT OK to miss school if your child:

- Is celebrating a birthday
- Is going on a family holiday
- Is visiting a family or friends
- Has slept in or had a big weekend
- Is looking after other children
- Has sport or other recreational activities that have not been approved by the school
- Has appointments such as haircuts, driving lessons and minor check ups
- Has a pet is who is sick
- Attended after hours school activities
- Didn't complete homework or assignments

If possible, routine medical and other health appointments should be made either before or after school, or during school holidays.

When is it OK NOT GO to school?

An OK reason is one that prevents your child from getting to school. This could include:

- When your child is sick or unwell
- Attending cultural or religious observances such as EID and funerals.
- An unavoidable natural event such as flood waters, fire or a cyclone.
- An unavoidable medical appointment

The Principal decides if the reason given for your child's absence is acceptable.