What Causes Empty Seats?

Early Warning Signs of Non-Attendance

Jessica Holder, Family Advocate
Wendy Kaiser, Quality Assurance Coordinator
Introductions

• GOALS (Greater Omaha Attendance and Learning Services) Center

• Who is in the room today?
Some groundwork first...

• Terminology
  • Non-Attendance: ________________________________

  • Chronic Absenteeism: ________________________________

• Prevention focused
Why talk about it?

Rates of Chronic Absenteeism (2015-16)

United States: 15.50%
Nebraska: 11.60%

Source: The Hamilton Project, [http://www.hamiltonproject.org/charts/chronic_absence_across_the_united_states](http://www.hamiltonproject.org/charts/chronic_absence_across_the_united_states)
Agenda for Today

• Warning Signs
  • Research
  • Case Study: GOALS Experience
• Prioritizing
  • Utilizing tools to help prioritize issues
• Who is involved?
• Group Activities
• Practical Resources
• Questions?
Activity Time!

• With a partner near you, take 2 minutes and think of the barriers to school attendance that you have seen firsthand.

• Briefly call out and share!
What Does Research Tell Us?

Early Intervention is **KEY**!

"Red Flags" typically precede non attendance
School Refusal Behavior

“difficulty attending school or remaining in school for the entire day” (Kearney & Silverman, 1990)

**Nonproblematic**
- eventually correct w/out intervention
- usually short term
- occasionally absent

**Problematic**
- require intervention
- trigger family duress OR ongoing absences
Factors impacting attendance can be grouped into categories including:

- Family Related
- Student Related
- School Related
Barriers We’ve Experienced

- Low Parent Engagement
- Mental Health Concerns
- School Refusal Behavior
- Poverty
- Parental lack of engagement
- Substance Use & Abuse
- Self Efficacy Issues
- Impact of Cultural Norms & Values
There’s **A LOT** going on….

- Recommend utilizing an evidence based, research supported tool to help you prioritize barriers and issues
  - One example: Ohio Scales
    - Handout
    - sites.google.com/site/ohioscales

- What are your thoughts on using these types of tools? Anyone have any other examples of tools like this?
Who needs to be involved?

• *Anyone* with a direct connection to and stake in the youth’s education

• Most often, this will include at minimum:
  • Youth
  • Family
  • School staff
  • Community providers addressing attendance
An Example
Visualizing the Warning Signs

Family

Student

School
Resource Sharing
Contact Us:
The GOALS Center               thegoalscenter@gmail.com
531-299-9853

Wendy Kaiser, MPA
Quality Assurance Coordinator wendy.kaiser@goals-center.org

Jessica Holder, MPA
Family Advocate                Jessica.holder@goals-center.org