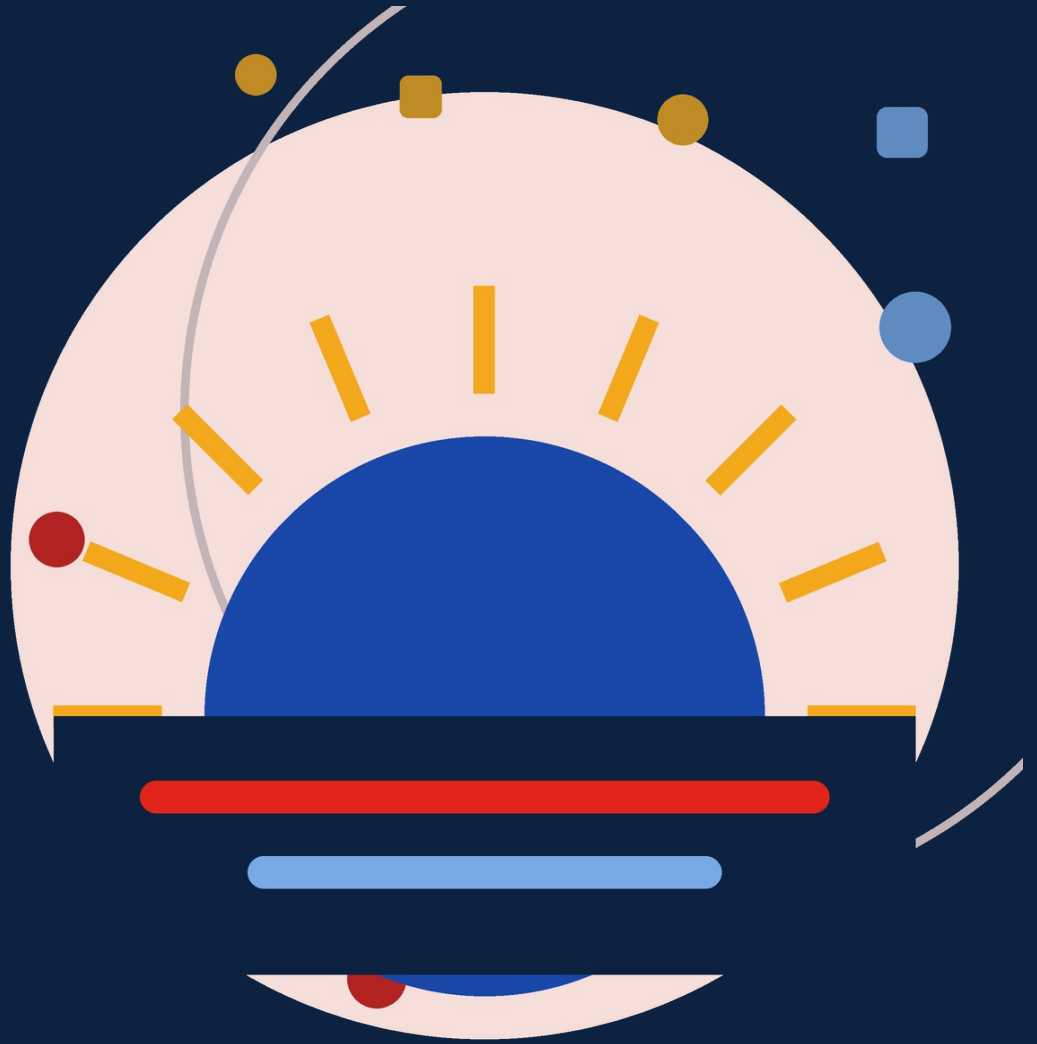
THE SEAT SERIES · FREE ATTENDANCE SCIENCE™ RESOURCE

SEAT 02

Teachers · Grades K-2

# Early Absence Is a Logistics Signal

*Why do my youngest students miss, and what can a K-2 teacher do about it?*



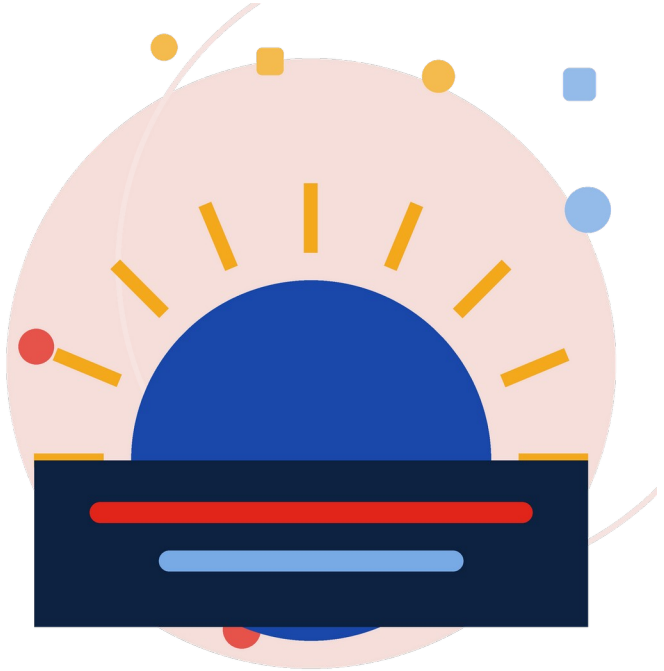
10 slides · 2 handouts · evidence from Schools Spared, Children Punished and the Attendance Science™ research base

# Kayla's turn for a ride

“

Kayla, five, missed about one day a week with no pattern the software could see. A home visit revealed one working car shared by three adults on three shifts. A carpool with two neighbor families, set up by the family liaison, stabilized her attendance within a month.

*Source: Schools Spared, Children Punished, Ch. 3 (Antoine and Kayla, composite cases)*



*Every story in this series is a composite or a published case. Names are invented.*

# What teachers are asking

*Why do my youngest students miss, and what can a K-2 teacher do about it?*

1

Young children cannot get themselves to school.

2

Absences look random when the cause is a family schedule.

3

Early gaps compound: risk concentrated at ages 7 to 9 in our K-6 study.

# Shared words before shared work

W

## Withdrawal

Family-centered absence: rides, shifts, caregiving, housing, survival.

F

## Family stability

Consistent housing, caregiving and household economics over time.

R

## Routine

Predictable daily rhythms that research links to healthier child functioning.

# The numbers behind the moment

**18%**

of 335 K-6 students fell in a high-risk group in our machine-learning study

*Gentle-Genitty, Bowen, Kearney, Jackson & Lashbrook (2024), The Role of Health in Schools, Ch. 4, Rowman & Littlefield*

**~80%**

of those students needed only Tier 1: universal supports plus being present

*Gentle-Genitty, Bowen, Kearney, Jackson & Lashbrook (2024), The Role of Health in Schools, Ch. 4, Rowman & Littlefield*

**50 yrs**

of research connect family routines with healthier child and family functioning

*Fiese et al. (2002), Journal of Family Psychology 16(4)*

# Classify before you consequence

## Withdrawal

Most common in K-2. Ask about rides, shifts and siblings first.

## Refusal

Separation worries and tummy aches on school mornings. Partner with the counselor.

## Avoidance

A classroom, peer or noise that feels scary. Adjust the setting.

## Truancy

Rare at this age. A young child's absence is an adult decision.

# Three moves you can make this week

## 01

Cost: $0

### Greet by name

A warm, named welcome at the door every morning, for every child.

## 02

Low cost

### Class attendance goal

Post a class goal, update it monthly and celebrate together.

## 03

Low cost

### Positive note home

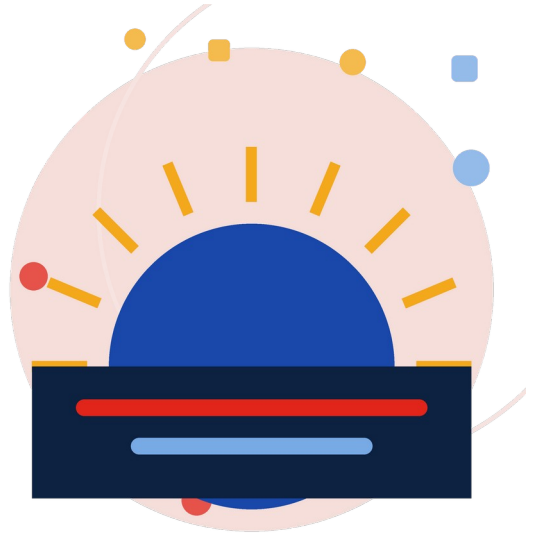
Send a Family Connection Postcard when attendance improves, before any concern.

# A PRESENCE™ prompt for your building

| P | R | E | S | E | N | C | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Problem definition | Research evidence | Environmental context | **Statistical analysis** | **Equity assessment** | Network and partnership | Compliance and legal | Evidence-based recommendations |

YOUR PROMPT

List your students with three or more absences. Next to each, write what you know about how they get to school. Where the column is blank, that is your first call.



# Common missteps, and how you will know it works

- ✕ Assuming families do not value school
- ✕ Sending warning letters before a friendly call
- ✕ Waiting for a pattern to become chronic in kindergarten

LEADING INDICATOR · Moves first

## Families reached with a positive contact

LAGGING INDICATOR · Confirms it worked

## Kindergarten and grade 1 chronic absence

SEAT 02 · 10 TAKE YOUR SEAT

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**KEEP GOING IN THIS SERIES**

Seat 01: Classify Before You Consequence
Seat 03: Building the Habit of Showing Up
Seat 04: The Hallway Test

## Take Your Seat

1,000 Seats campaign

*Every seat filled is one more person working to make showing up possible.*