THE SEAT SERIES · FREE ATTENDANCE SCIENCE™ RESOURCE

SEAT 03

Teachers · Grades 3-5

Building the Habit of Showing Up



How do I help upper-elementary students want to be here every day?

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

What separated low risk from high risk

“

In our study of more than 300 K-6 students and about 30,000 recorded behaviors, attendance and attendance-related behaviors separated low-risk from high-risk students. The values that mattered most were peer-relationship values: positive relationships and respect for people and spaces.

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



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

What teachers are asking

How do I help upper-elementary students want to be here every day?

1

Students this age begin to notice who belongs.

2

Peer conflict shows up as stomachaches and late mornings.

3

Recognition programs often reward only perfect attendance.

Shared words before shared work

A

Attachment

A trusted adult who knows the child by name and notices an absence.

I

Involvement

Active participation in school life: academic, social and civic.

B

Belief

Faith that school is a pathway worth following.

The numbers behind the moment

~30,000

reported behaviors used to train our K-6 risk model, then validated on another term

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

Ages 7-9

where medium and high risk concentrated in that study

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

10 items

in the PSSB, the validated measure of a student's bond to school

Gentle-Genitty, Keppens & Kearney (2025), Contemporary School Psychology 29(1), 213-220

Classify before you consequence

Avoidance

Peer conflict and a hard recess. Change the unsafe window.

Withdrawal

Older siblings in charge of mornings. Check the routine.

Refusal

Worry about tests or performance. Partner with the counselor.

Truancy

Uncommon. Look for the reason behind the choice.

Three moves you can make this week

01

Low cost

Recognize improvement

Celebrate growth in attendance, not only perfect records, with stickers and punch cards.

02

Cost: $0

Peer jobs

Give each student a class role that others count on.

03

Cost: $0

Morning meeting

Open the day with a short circle where every child is greeted and heard.

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

Compare students' attendance with their friendships and class roles. Who has no job, no partner, no club? That list is your belonging map.



Common missteps, and how you will know it works

- ✕ Rewarding only perfect attendance, which discourages students with health needs
- ✕ Public charts that shame absent students
- ✕ Treating peer conflict as a discipline issue only

LEADING INDICATOR · Moves first

Students with a named peer role

LAGGING INDICATOR · Confirms it worked

Grade 3 to 5 chronic absence

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HANDOUTS Seat Card (A) and Find Your Data worksheet (B)

KEEP GOING IN THIS SERIES

Seat 01: Classify Before You Consequence
Seat 02: Early Absence Is a Logistics Signal
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.