

**On time, every day** by Michael Grose During the current COVID-19 pandemic parents are rightfully urged to take a cautious approach and keep children and young people at home if they show symptoms of the virus.

It's a balancing act if you're a parent as one the most important things you can do to ensure your child has a bright future is to make sure he or she goes to school every day—and gets there on time. It sounds simple, but it's true. The correlation between school attendance and children's achievement levels is well established. The more time kids spend at school, the more likely they are to experience school success. Of course, most people know this intuitively, yet school absenteeism is a huge problem in Australian schools.

According to a report by the Australian Curriculum and Assessment authority nearly 13 per cent of Australian students are missing at least one year of schooling by the time they reach year 10. In today's highly competitive world, this rate of absenteeism is alarming, putting our kids at a distinct disadvantage.

Current research shows that mornings for most children are the most productive time of the day, with 10.00am the peak period for productivity. When children arrive late and take time to settle as they inevitably do, valuable learning time is lost.

It's reassuring to know that you can maximise their chances of future success just by making sure they turn up to school every day. And, of course, regular school attendance also helps kids prepare for the workforce, where it will be expected that they turn up each day work-ready. The real world is unforgiving of those who stay away with no excuse.

As a parent:

- Commit to sending kids to school every day
- Make sure kids arrive at school and class on time
- Inform the school when they are away, sending medical certificates and other evidence of genuine absence
- Follow current COVID-19 health guidelines and recommendations
- Consider catching-up on missed work
- Make kids who are away stay in their bedroom, which is where unwell kids should be



**Michael Grose**

Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's an award-winning speaker and the author of 12 books for parents including *Spoonfed Generation*, and the bestselling *Why First Borns Rule the World and Last Borns Want to Change It*. Michael is a former teacher with 15 years experience, and has 30 years experience in parenting education. He also holds a Master of Educational Studies from Monash University specialising in parenting education.