



# What do I do, my child won't go to school?

## **If your child has an IEP (is in Special Education):**

- Ask for a copy of the school attendance policy;
- Put in writing your request to hold an IEP meeting to discuss this issue (a meeting must be held within 30 days of your request);
- Either develop a behavior plan to address this behavior or redraft any existing behavior plan.

Note: – for a behavior plan to be effective, the function the behavior serves must be identified so the environment can be changed and new behaviors taught  
– consider all causes for the behavior: avoidance (social bullying, work too difficult) or seeking something (medical reason, needs more sleep, comfort of home).

- Consider if an assessment is needed to better understand what may be going on. If yes, request a Special Education psychological assessment;
- If there is a medical reason (anxiety disorder, sleep apnea, migraines, etc.), speak with your child's doctor and ask for a letter to the school describing your child's difficulties and requesting home/hospital instruction as an interim solution;
- Try to determine if short term adjustments in your child's schedule might relieve some of the pressure on school attendance (for example: arriving just at the start of school, starting later in the morning, eating lunch in a different setting, etc.)

## **If your child does not have an IEP:**

- Ask for a copy of the school attendance policy;
- Put in writing your request for a SST meeting (Student Study Team) and explain the circumstances;
- If your child has medical problems that interfere with school attendance, he/she may be eligible for a 504 Accommodation Plan;
- Try to determine if short term adjustments in your child's schedule might relieve some of the pressure on school attendance (for example: arriving just at the start of school, starting later in the morning, eating lunch in a different setting, etc.);
- Consider if your child is having difficulty due to learning challenges or emotional issues that may need to be assessed by the school to determine if Special Education eligibility may be helpful. If so, put your request in writing.

It is important to respond to any letters you receive regarding absences or truancy. Let the school know what you are doing to address this and ask for any help that they can provide.



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