

Community Resources

Counseling/Mental Health:

- Catholic Family Services
545-6145
- Nueva Esperanza
545-6506
- Lourdes
943-9104
- 3-Rivers
783-2085
- SARC
374-5391

Domestic Violence:

- Domestic Violence Shelter
582-9841

Substance Abuse

- Nueva Esperanza
545-6506
- First Step
735-6900
- Somerset
942-1624

Babysitting

- YMCA
374-1908
- Child Care Resource & Referral
547-1718
- CAC
545-4065

What can I do as a Parent?

- Make school a priority
- Talk to your child—ask them questions about their school day
- Make sure the school has current contact information for you
- Communicate with your child's teachers/school officials
- Develop a relationship with your child's counselor
- Stay in contact with the attendance office at your child's school
- Attend parent/teacher conferences
- Volunteer! Get involved!

Attendance

+Achievement

Graduation

?s Please contact:

Benton Franklin Juvenile Justice Center
5606 W. Canal Drive, Suite 106
Kennewick, WA 99336

Phone: 509-783-2151
Fax: 509-736-2728

What is
Truancy?



Benton Franklin
Counties Juvenile
Justice Center

509-783-2151

▶ Myth vs. Fact

Myth: A child is only truant if they are “skipping school”

Fact: A child is truancy any time they are absent from school for a reason other than: sickness, medical apt., or family emergency

Myth: It is the school’s responsibility to contact me every time my child is absent to discover the reason for their absence

Fact: It is the parents responsibility to contact the school each and every time their child is absent

Myth: Elementary school attendance isn’t very important—it’s when they get to high school it really matters

Fact: Elementary school attendance is extremely important. 1) Your child’s educational foundation begins in elementary school—when they miss school, they miss out on the building blocks they need as they go on to middle and high school. 2) Attendance is a habit, if your child is in the habit of attending every day, on time, in elementary school; that habit will continue to middle school, high school, and later college or a career

Myth: If I just ignore the school staff and don’t return their calls, they will eventually leave me alone

Fact: If you ignore the school staff and don’t return calls, they will eventually file a petition with the Juvenile Court

Myth: There are no consequences for me as a parent if my child is truant

Fact: The court may fine a parent up to \$25.00 per day or impose community service hours for every day your child is truant

What should I do if my child misses school?

1. Contact the school the day your child is absent.
2. Take a note to the school, or send a note with your child upon their return to school. A doctor’s note may be required (depending on how many absences your child has).

What if I don’t let the school know what is going on?

Washington State Law requires that children between the ages of 8-18 attend school regularly (if the child is between 6-8 and enrolled in school, the law applies).



You are in violation of Washington State Truancy Law if one or more of the following is true:

- If a student has five (5) or more unexcused absences in one month; or
- If a student has ten (10) or more unexcused absences in one year

A parent must be able to show they have done all they can to help their child attend school.

If a truancy petition is entered against a parent and the student continues to miss school then the court may find the parent in contempt.

- A parent may be fined \$25.00 per each unexcused day from school
- Community service hours may be ordered

If a parent fails to pay the fine

- Debt goes to collection agency
- May affect ability to receive state assistance

Sending your child to school on time every day, is one of the most important things you can do as a parent to help your child be successful in school and later in life.

Give your child the gift of an Education!

An education will help your child overcome any obstacles in their past or future—isn’t it awesome that we all have the right to an education, and it FREE!



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