Truancy: Just the Facts

What is Truancy?

Any **unexcused** absence from school by a student is considered truancy.

What are the laws regarding school attendance in the state of Texas?

- Children are required to attend school regularly from **ages 6-18** in the State of Texas.

- Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school

- **Parents can receive a citation for Contributing to Non-attendance**. If convicted, parents can be ordered to pay a fine of **up to $500** for each of their child's unexcused absences.

- If a student has three or more unexcused absences, days or parts of days within a four week period or ten or more days or parts of days within a six month period, they are considered truant.

- **A student can receive a citation for Failure to Attend School between the ages of 12-17**. Students can be ordered to pay a fine of **up to $500** for each absence.

What are the Consequences of Truancy?

CITATIONS: must report to court, and attend a hearing related to the case.

FINES/COURT COSTS: up to $500 per unexcused absence.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY: truant youth are more likely to become involved in delinquent activity as well as become victims/perpetrators of crime, and involved in gangs.

EDUCATIONAL FAILURE: missing vital instruction, discipline problems at school, or dropping out. In the State of Texas, one student drops out of school **every 4 minutes**.

How can you Prevent Truancy?

MAKE SCHOOL A PRIORITY: Allowing students to miss school for reasons other than illness or family emergencies sends the message that school is not important. Explain to your child that education is important.

GET INVOLVED: know your child's school administrators, teachers, and friends.

GET INFORMED: know your child's school attendance policies. Provide excuse notes when your child is absent.

ASK FOR HELP: speak to your child's school about what you can do to improve your child's school attendance. Ask that you be notified of any absences.