



### What is Truant Conduct?

If a student who is **at least 12 years** and **under 19 years of age** fails to attend school on **ten** or more days or parts of days in a six month period within the same school year, they are considered “truant” and may be referred to a Truancy Court.

### What does Texas law say about school attendance?

- Children are required to attend school regularly from **ages 6-18**.
- Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school.
- A **criminal complaint** may be filed against a **parent** whose child exhibits truant conduct for the offense of **Parent Contributing to Nonattendance**.
- A **petition** may be filed against a **student** in a Truancy Court for truant conduct.

### What are the Consequences of Truant Conduct?

**LEGAL:** A Student and Parent may be referred to court.

**FINES/COURT COSTS:** Parents and Students can incur fines and court costs.

**JUVENILE DELINQUENCY:** Truant youth are more likely to become involved in delinquent behavior and become victims/perpetrators of crime.

**EDUCATIONAL FAILURE:** Youth who continuously fail to attend school miss out on vital classroom instruction. In Texas, one student drops out of school **every 4 minutes**.

**LOSS OF CREDIT:** In Texas, a student may not be given credit for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered.

### 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 and make it a priority.

**GET INVOLVED:** Know your child’s school administrators, teachers, and friends. Play an active role in your child's school attendance.

**GET INFORMED:** Know your child’s school attendance policies. Promptly provide excuse notes whenever your child is absent.

**ASK FOR HELP:** Speak to your child’s school about what you can do to improve your child’s attendance and address any issues you may have. Ask that you be notified of any absences.

**REMEMBER: ATTENDANCE MATTERS!**