

ATTEND

Information and FAQ's



WHAT IS ATTEND?

ATTEND views school refusal behaviors (SRBs) as the symptoms of a deeper issue, such as anxiety. Our purpose is to treat the underlying root causes of school refusal behaviors by identifying and addressing the function of behavior. Along with addressing the function, family patterns, mental health, school communications, and other areas are also addressed. We aim for small changes that will impact behaviors over time, effectively helping the student and family. It takes time and requires patience.

HOW DOES THE ATTEND PROGRAM WORK?

The ATTEND purpose and plan of action captures four major components and encourages all participants to **stay the course**:

- Stay the **COURSE**
- Connect to **O**thers
- Utilize mind/body connection for **R**egulation
- Stretch with strategies (CBT)
- Enlist community provider assistance (when needed)

WHO IS ON THE ATTEND TEAM?

ATTEND School Psychologist – The family and student meet and work with the school psychologist to complete a full, detailed evaluation. The school psychologist then presents a full report with findings and recommendations at the evaluation meeting. At this meeting, the school team, with parents, decides whether to proceed with the recommendations. At this point, the school psychologist's responsibilities are completed. If ATTEND is recommended and embraced as a support, then the following may be part of the plan:

ATTEND Social Work Case Manager (CM) – A CM is responsible for communicating to all parties, including the family, district, school, agencies (if applicable), and others.

The CM:

- Coordinates, organizes, and initiates monthly ATTEND meetings to discuss celebrations, current status, goals, and next steps
- Provides consistent, clear, and relevant information to parents
- Addresses crisis mental health needs
- Visits/checks in/meets with students in school or home
- Coordinates with team members

ATTEND Mental Health Worker (MHW) – A MHW is responsible for daily (or otherwise assigned) motivation and support, typically in the home.

The MHW:

- Works individually with the student, typically in their home, daily or otherwise determined by the team
- Communicates regularly with the student and/or parents
- Meets with the student and parents to support their morning routine
- Communicates with the ATTEND team
- Encourages the student to reach their goals



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ATTEND IS INVOLVED?

The ATTEND team works with the school and family to develop an intervention plan based on the function of behavior. This plan varies greatly, as each child is unique with differing needs. Throughout the process, it is typical for the ATTEND team to advocate for change, modifications, and adjustments that may be a bit uncomfortable.

The school personnel may become uncomfortable when asked to make accommodations and allowances atypical of usual interventions. These may include flexible days, schedule changes or accommodations, interpersonal relationship building, and patience when implementing these changes.

The family may become uncomfortable when challenged to make small adjustments at home to the routine, with communication, when changing responses, or in other ways.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT WITH THE ATTEND PROGRAM?

Depending on the level of need and recommendations, packages vary. Typically, a school district makes a referral and initiates an extensive evaluation. Through this process, the function of the SRB is identified, and a general intervention plan is recommended to the entire team at a meeting. The team reviews the evaluation recommendations, and together, determines the best course of intervention.

If ATTEND is part of the intervention, many times that includes in-home MHW support daily or weekly, and case management support monthly. ATTEND schedules full team meetings monthly to assess progress and adjust the intervention plans as needed.

WILL MY CHILD'S ABSENCES BE HELD AGAINST US?

ATTEND is an attendance program, referred to and funded by districts. Participating in ATTEND means parents and school personnel are doing their best to help the student with school attendance. Consequences, such as fining for truancy, are discouraged while ATTEND intervenes, but ultimately each school district determines its course of action.

WHEN DOES ATTEND END?

The ATTEND program is individualized and the length varies for each participant. There are many factors in determining the length of ATTEND's involvement. Both the school district and the parent/guardian must agree to services. The school district funds the service and the parent/guardian/student are active participants in the intervention. The entire team (school district personnel, ATTEND personnel, parent/guardian, and student) meet monthly to review progress and discuss goals and next steps. This team is central to determining the continuation of the ATTEND intervention program.


HOW LONG DOES ATTEND LAST EACH DAY OR WEEK?

The School Psychologist makes recommendations for service. When mental health work is suggested the length of each session varies for each participant but does not exceed 60 minutes per session. Sessions are typically every school day but do vary according to each situation.

HOW DO I GET ATTEND INVOLVED WITH MY CHILD?

If you are a parent or guardian interested in ATTEND services for your child experiencing school refusal behaviors, reach out to your district administrator. The ATTEND team receives a referral for service from the child's home school district.

CONTACT

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