



ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Campaign Usage Guide

ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN

Attendance Matters is a community-wide initiative designed to raise awareness about the importance of regular school attendance and help reduce chronic absenteeism across Maricopa County.

Through the **Supporting Attendance Across Maricopa County** project, Valley of the Sun United Way has developed tools, resources and messaging to support schools, community organizations and families in improving student attendance.

Our campaign theme, **“Here Today, Ready Tomorrow!”**, reinforces a simple but powerful message: every day of school matters. Consistent attendance helps students build strong habits, stay engaged in learning and remain on track for long-term success.

THE CHALLENGE

A student is considered chronically absent when they **miss 10% or more of the school year**, regardless of whether absences are excused or unexcused. That equates to approximately 18 missed school days annually, or just two days per month.

Following the pandemic, chronic absenteeism rose dramatically across Arizona. In 2022, 32% of students in grades 1-8 were identified as chronically absent, compared to 13% in 2019. While rates have improved since their peak, absenteeism remains significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels.

OUR APPROACH

The chronic absence crisis is concerning, but it is also solvable.

Attendance Matters **promotes consistent, research-based messaging** that helps communities understand why attendance matters and provides parents, caregivers and educators with **practical tools** for prevention and re-engagement.

By working together, schools, families and community partners can create supportive environments that help students attend school regularly and succeed academically.

THE ATTENDANCE MATTERS TOOLKIT INCLUDES:

- Top Facts & Messaging
- Key Stats & Data
- Usage Guide
- Conversation Guide for Schools
- Phone Scripts
- Family Engagement Resources
- Social Graphics
- Social Media Copy
- Make Attendance a Priority Flyers (English and Spanish)
- Attendance Awareness Month Materials
- Community Resource Links
- Additional Attendance Support Resources

AUDIENCE

These materials are intended for schools, community organizations, educators and partners working to improve student attendance. The campaign **primarily focuses on students experiencing preventable or avoidable absences** and **seeks to equip families with practical information and support** before attendance challenges become chronic.

KEY MESSAGE

Here Today, Ready Tomorrow!

Too many absences—excused or unexcused—can keep students from succeeding in school and in life. Missing just two days of school per month can put students off track academically, socially and emotionally.

Showing up every day helps students build skills, strengthen relationships and prepare for future success.