



Department of Education & Workforce

Lesson Six: A Whole School Approach: Relationships Matter

OVERALL TRAINING OBJECTIVES

The focus of the Teaching Attendance curriculum is to support school staff in addressing chronic absence and improving academic outcomes.

Six Sessions



- Lesson One: What is chronic absence and why does it matter?
- Lesson Two: Shift to prevention and early intervention
- Lesson Three: The role of teachers in attendance
- Lesson Four: Understanding why students are absent
- Lesson Five: Effective communication with students and families
- **Lesson Six: A Whole School Approach: Relationships Matter**

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Identify how to ensure each student has a connection to a caring adult
- Identify how everyone in the school can support student attendance and engagement

Video: We all have a role!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Nyr1OizVo0>

Small Group Discussion

Purpose: Understand that everybody at the school has a role to play in improving attendance and engagement.

Break into groups of 4 and answer this questions:

- Why do we need everyone in the school to have a role in improving attendance at our school?
- Describe how different staff can contribute.

Large Group Discussion

Each group shares ideas on how different staff can be involved in supporting student attendance and engagement.

Strategies to Promote Student Attendance and Engagement

Relationship-Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Enrichment activities and clubs•Advisories and Homeroom•Mentoring and Tutoring•Youth Voice
Teaching & Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Positive greetings throughout the day in the classroom and schoolwide•Instruction is relevant to students' experiences and culture•Incorporate project-based learning
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Student work on the walls•Resources for learning e.g., books, learning collateral (crayons, markers, paper)•Warm and welcoming environment
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Individual wellness check•Provide a point of contact when there are requests for support•Behavioral and mental health services for the school community

Building Relationships as a Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy



how-to guide to relationship mapping

MAKING
CARING
COMMON
PROJECT



GRADES
K–12

IMPLEMENTED BY
School Administrators

CAPACITIES PROMOTED

Relationship-building; Student confidence; Shifting school norms

TIME & RESOURCE INTENSITY



Download in-person and virtual versions of this guide at:

<https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/resources-for-educators/relationship-mapping-strategy>

Key Elements

See all students at-a-glance.

See who is well-supported and who needs support by adults.

Involve *all* adults in relationship mapping.

Key Benefits

Connect all students to at least one school adult.

*A Relationship Map lists **all** students in a school (or grade, team, etc.).*

A Relationship Map allows adults in a school to have a quick and visual snapshot of students who are well supported and who most need support. Knowing this, adults can then strategize about how to best reach out to students who most need positive and supportive relationships with adults.

*A Relationship Map is most effective if **all** adult stakeholders with a connection to students participate in its creation. This includes administrators, teachers, counselors, sports coaches, mentors, community partners, and other school staff.*

A Relationship Map helps identify students who do not already have adult connections and provides opportunities for adults in school to build positive relationships with those students.



Targeted Relationship Mapping

Key Steps

- Review students with moderate chronic absence
- Identify subgroup patterns for those with and without relationships i.e. gender, race, socioeconomic status, vulnerable youth populations, others
- Determine which students are connected to school or after school activities
- Identify which staff are best positioned to build supportive relationships with students needing more support (ensure that responsibilities are evenly divided among staff)
- Monitor progress after 4 to 6 weeks (Relationship Building Takes Time!)

Examples of Relationship Strategy Tools

- ❑ **2 x 10:** *A staff spends 2 min a day for 10 days speaking with a student they don't know well to build a connection with the student that is non-academic related.*
- ❑ **Brief Student Meeting:** *Meet with students for 10-15 minutes 2-3 times a week in student-led activity.*
- ❑ **Giving Students Roles and Responsibilities:** *Identify a desirable job or opportunity to help an adult or another student to provide support in the classroom.*
- ❑ **Check-in:** *Plan a consistent check-in at the beginning of an assignment or unit to support transition to new learning concept.*

Small Group Discussion

Giving students responsibilities at school can encourage connection to school as students develop confidence.

As a small group, brainstorm roles and responsibilities that could be given to students struggling with attendance.

Large Group Discussion

Small groups share ideas

Key Messages

- Communicate supportive attendance messages throughout the school year.
- Everyone has a role in supporting student attendance and engagement.
- A welcoming and supportive school climate and culture can support student attendance and engagement.

Potential Ideas to Implement

- Pilot relationship mapping for students to determine which students have a connection to a caring adult.
- Identify a group of students to pilot targeted relationship building strategies.

Resources

- [Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Attendance Support](#)
- [Attendance Works](#)
- Harvard Common Ground [Relationship Building Mapping](#)
- [Edutopia: Making Sure Each Child is Known](#)
- [Turnaround for Children's](#) Strategies for Building Relationships