Ways to Limit Missed School

How important is it for kids to be in school? School attendance is an important factor in determining school success.

In order to be successful in school students need to come to school regularly. That may seem obvious. What’s less obvious is that the consequences of low attendance are serious for all children and for the community, not just the students who miss school.

The attendance rate is important because students are more likely to succeed when they attend school consistently. It’s difficult for the teacher and the class to build their skills and progress if a large number of students are frequently absent.

A 2008 study conducted by Rodel Community Scholars at Arizona State University that tracks students from preschool through high school found that dropout patterns were linked with poor attendance, beginning in preschool. It was discovered that as early as preschool, behavioral differences are apparent between those who go on to graduate and those who drop out, with dropouts missing an average of 124 days by eighth grade.

At the preschool level the reason children miss school the most is due to a variety of illnesses with colds, stomach flu, ear infection and pink eye being the illnesses most often reported.

It is therefore of utmost importance that your child be healthy so he/she can enjoy the preschool experience. As a parent you play a big role in helping to keep your child healthy and well. A healthy child is a happy child who is able to come to school on a regular basis. A child who attends school regularly benefits from all the learning activities that help prepare them for future educational experiences.

The key to a healthy child is a strong immune system. When functioning properly, the immune system fights disease-producing organisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites. All children are continuously exposed to these pathogens, but exposure does not mean a child will get sick. A strong immune system provides a child with powerful natural defenses against disease. Conversely, a child with a weakened immune system is vulnerable or more susceptible to colds, flu, and more serious illnesses.

It is virtually impossible to germ-proof your child. Germs are abundant everywhere, especially in situations such as daycare or preschool. Being exposed to germs is a part of life, but not necessarily unfavorable. Exposure to different viruses and bacteria can actually strengthen a child’s immune system. Furthermore, acquiring innocuous
childhood diseases such as chicken pox and measles can help to build immunity and give your child lifetime protection against these diseases. Lifetime immunity is important since these diseases can have serious negative effects if acquired as an adult.

If your child is overly susceptible to illness, you may want to take steps to enhance his or her immune system and make it as strong as possible. Prevention is the way to avoid subjecting your child to continuing cycles of antibiotics or other medications. The powerful tools of prevention include breastfeeding, good nutrition, nutritional supplements, a healthy mental attitude and emotional well-being, a nontoxic environment, avoiding unnecessary antibiotics and vaccines, low stress, and plenty of rest and exercise.

There is plenty you can do to reduce the toxic load and strengthen your child’s immune system and overall health and vitality. The best approach is to provide a healthy environment right from the start. A baby needs to be nourished during the entire pregnancy with organic, whole foods and lots of love, birthed in a peaceful, welcoming environment, then exclusively breastfed and nurtured immediately upon entering the world.

Long-term breastfeeding is, by far, the most important thing you can do. Breast milk provides the nutritional and immune factors crucial to building and maintaining healthy immunity. Breastfeeding into the toddler years provides the physiological and emotional factors necessary to develop and boost the immune system.

Also vitally important is good nutrition—plenty of fresh, whole foods. Processed foods place a burden on the immune system and create more of a toxic environment within the body.

A low-toxic environment is essential. In our current world, it is impossible to avoid all toxic exposures. But we can reduce exposure to a great extent if we know how our children are being exposed through their food, homes, schools and playgrounds. Vaccines and antibiotics can greatly increase the toxic load on the body, and these substances can weaken a child’s innate immunity.

Moreover, a child needs a healthy mental attitude, plenty of laughter, low stress, emotional security, and plenty of rest and exercise.

It is our jobs as parents to keep our children’s bodies healthy and in balance. We need to provide what they need to function properly and reduce the toxic exposures from food and the environment.