

CORRELATES OF TRUANCY

Children/Adolescents

1. Children/adolescents who are marginalized within the school setting are at higher risk for truancy. Marginalization of students often surrounds issues of racism and classism.
2. Children/adolescents who experience learning difficulties, i.e., learning disabilities, neurological problems, drug and alcohol problems, and/or emotional disabilities are at higher risk for truancy. This is especially true if their learning needs have not been adequately addressed by the school system.
3. Children/adolescents who have a history of being victims of bullies in the school setting are at higher risk for truancy.
4. Truancy often masks undiagnosed and untreated school phobia or other anxiety-related disorders.
5. Truancy often masks issues of depression.

Families

1. Parents can contribute overtly or covertly to rates of truancy in their children/adolescents when they keep their children home to care for younger children or to care for sick siblings so the parent does not miss work; send messages to their children that working to contribute to the family income is more important than school; depend on their children to negotiate agency/government “systems” when language is a barrier.
2. Parents who do not place a high value on education or who have a negative view of school because of their own negative educational experiences as a child often send conflicting or overt messages that school is not important.
3. Children/adolescents sometimes are conflicted about attending school if spousal abuse or child abuse of a sibling exists in the family. Often the child/adolescent refuses to attend school so they can protect a parent or a sibling from harm by staying at home.
4. If the parent has a history of anxiety, their own fears/worries while the child is at school can contribute to truancy issues.
5. If the parent has a history of depression, they don't have the energy to get their child ready for school in time or take a firm stance when their adolescent refuses to attend school.
6. If the parent has not established parental authority in the home, they often can not insist that their child/adolescent attend school.

CORRELATES OF TRUANCY

Schools

1. Schools contribute to truancy by marginalizing students, by not adequately providing for the educational needs of students who have learning difficulties, and by not adequately responding to issues of bullying victimization. Additionally, if schools do not have sufficient personnel resources to adequately meet individual student needs (especially high risk students); children/adolescents do not receive adequate attention and services. This can lead to insufficient mentoring programs, guidance services and individual connections with students.

Communities

1. Some communities view truancy as solely a school/family problem. Law enforcement (police and district justices) fail to support schools that try to enforce policies and procedures. Additionally, businesses fail to see how truancy impacts the community and do not support schools in their truancy prevention/intervention endeavors.