



# TWENTY TIPS FOR TAMING TRUANCY

By Bev Johns

[bevjohns@juno.com](mailto:bevjohns@juno.com)

[www.bevjohns.com](http://www.bevjohns.com)

1. **Teachers serve as a role model. If teachers are absent frequently, students perceive that attendance is not important.**  
In a study done by the National Council on Teacher Quality, in certain big city districts, the average teacher was absent 11 days per school year. (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2014).
2. **Catch it low to prevent it from becoming high. Catch attendance problems at an early age to prevent it from become worse. Track attendance for all students very closely.**
3. **Functionally assess a student's attendance problems. Why isn't the student coming to school?**
4. **Avoid school suspensions and don't suspend for truancy.**
5. **Utilize a multi-agency approach. Involve the community since truancy is a community problem. There is a strong relationship between truancy and daytime crime. Establish a truancy task force.**
6. **Link parents to needed services.**
7. **Give students something to look forward to at school: "Tomorrow I have this surprise activity for you."**
8. **Host parenting classes.**
9. **Recognize students for improvement in attendance, as well as perfect attendance. Activities such as attendance bingo, drawings, financial awards, are effective.**
10. **Recognize parents who get their children to school.**
11. **Conduct home visits to build rapport with children and their families.**
12. **Work with other agencies and the police department to establish a truancy ordinance. (Johns and Keenan, 1997).**
13. **Watch for signs that a student may be avoiding school because he or she is being bullied.**
14. **Illinois law requires a call home to parents in the morning when students are not in school.**
15. **Teach self-management to students, stressing student responsibility to get to school on time.**
16. **Establish clear policies and procedures for attendance and its relationship to grades.**
17. **Determine and teach the consequences for unexcused absences, such as reduction in grades.**
18. **Establish attendance contracts with students and involve parents in those contracts.**
19. **Make sure your school and classroom are warm, friendly, clean, and attractive places for students to be.**
20. **Make sure that students meet with success when they come to school. Start each day with something the students do well.**