

Truancy Resources

■ JIAC (Juvenile Intake and Assessment Center)

For children and youth who do not regularly attend school, services can be accessed on a voluntary basis by parents or the District Attorney's Office will refer youth to JIAC for an assessment. The primary purpose of the assessment is to refer the youth and parents to the most appropriate resource in the community to improve school attendance. One of these services is *Truancy Case Management*.

For information call: 913-764-4051

■ Project SKIP (School Kids Impacting Peers)

Project SKIP is a truancy prevention/early intervention program for youth ages 13 to 17. It is designed to help truant youth before the problem of truancy becomes a crisis. Referred youth appear before a Truancy Review Panel made up of trained students. Through questions from panel members, truant youth explain their truant behavior and identify ways to improve their attendance. Services may include attendance and academic monitoring, tutoring and educational classes. In addition, truant students will be assigned a Student Service Officer who they will meet with on a regular basis. Referrals to SKIP can be made by participating school districts before the student becomes legally truant, or by the District Attorney's Office after the student is legally truant.

For information call: 913-715-7430

■ Regional Prevention Center (RPC)

The RPC serves communities, families and individuals in Johnson, Leavenworth and Miami counties by promoting substance abuse prevention science. Services include presentations, a lending resource library, educational brochures, statistical and technical assistance.

For information call: 913-715-7880 . www.4prevention.info

■ Project SAM

This program serves students 12 to 18 years-old who are suspended from school. Project SAM offers full day supervision, educational monitoring and Social-Skills Training (Best Practices of Dr. Botvin) as well as access to Lexia reading improvement software. Parents should call as soon as notified of suspension by the school or the night before to confirm availability. Parents are requested to bring all school work assigned. Focus is on maintaining motivation to return to school and not falling further behind. Project SAM encourages schools to recommend this program for all suspended students. Review of over 800 students impacted suggests the earlier use of Project SAM may decrease recidivism. Project SAM is required for all youth on diversion, probation or Intensive Supervision. No student is refused for financial reasons.

For information call: 913-254-0001 . www.mutualrespect.org

■ Truancy Case Management

Truancy Case Management is offered by various community providers depending on the youth/family needs. Case managers meet weekly with the youth, and parents as indicated, for 1 to 2 hours to review and set goals, provide appropriate referrals to resources, and to advocate on the youth's behalf. This intervention typically lasts 12 weeks. For more information about Truancy Case Management, contact the Juvenile Intake & Assessment Center at 913-764-4051.

■ Functional Family Therapy

This evidence-based model of family therapy serves youth involved in the juvenile justice system and those at-risk of entering the system for behaviors including truancy. Working with the entire family, a therapist provides 12 to 14 in-home counseling sessions over a 3 to 6 month period. Outcomes are achieved by strengthening communication skills, teaching parents effective responses to problem behaviors and helping families create a strong support system in the community. For information call: 913-826-3150 . www.ifc-kc.org

■ School Resource Officer (SRO)

An SRO is a commissioned law enforcement officer whose primary assignment is within a local school to enforce the law, present law related workshops and presentations to students, faculty and parents, and to serve as a mentor to students.

To contact a School Resource Officer:

Blue Valley School District call: 913-239-4007

Olathe School District call: 913-780-7777

Shawnee Mission School District call: 913-993-6452

■ StandUp Parenting, Inc.

StandUp Parenting, Inc. offers education and support groups for parents with preteen through adult-age children who are displaying behaviors that cause them concern. This program also provides ongoing follow-up to parenting courses such as *Parenting with Love and Logic* and *Common Sense Parenting*.

For information call: 913-492-1200 . www.standupparenting.org

■ Personal and Family Law Website

The Law for Teens section of the Johnson County Library's Personal and Family Law website provides 24-hour access to community resources and legal information for Johnson County families of at-risk youth. Information is provided about School Resource Officers who can assist students with resolving problems at school. In the "Your Rights as a Teen" section, frequently asked questions are answered. Other sections include information on the legal aspects of driving, employment, relationships, emancipation, and the juvenile justice process. www.jocolibrary.org/teenlaw

TRUANCY: Understanding the Process

Truancy is a community problem and the combined efforts of schools, law enforcement, the District Attorney’s Office, families, businesses, courts, social service agencies, and youth service organizations are needed to help young people overcome the challenges that may interfere with regular school attendance. The cause of truant behavior is often a result of several interrelated problems that—without intervention—will likely become more problematic for the child and family. This Parent Resource represents a snapshot of the community partnerships that have been developed to promote school attendance in Johnson County, Kansas.

STEP 1

Youth aged 7-17 (or under the age of 7 and enrolled in school) has an unexcused absence from school or multiple unexcused absences that disrupt the learning process.

Schools can impose sanctions; the youth can be referred to the Juvenile Intake and Assessment Center (JIAC) for assessment and subsequent referral to community-based programs; participating schools can refer youth to Project SKIP.

STEP 2

Youth aged 7-17 has unexcused absences of: 3 days in a row; 5 days in a semester or 7 days in a year.

School sends letter to parents informing them they may contact JIAC for assistance.

The school waits three days for parents to receive the letter.

STEP 3

Youth has 1 additional unexcused absence from school.

The school refers youth to the District Attorney’s Office.

The District Attorney’s Office can refer the youth to Project SKIP, refer the youth to JIAC for assessment and subsequent referral to community-based programs including Truancy Case Management.

The District Attorney’s Office continues to monitor progress and may file a petition with the Court.

STEP 4

The District Attorney’s Office files a petition with the court alleging the youth is legally truant.

When formal court action is taken, the youth and parents will be required to appear before a District Court Judge and then follow orders of the court designed to improve school attendance.

Community-based interventions continue to be pursued to improve school attendance.



If you have additional questions about truancy laws, please contact the Johnson County District Attorney’s Office at 913-715-3024 or 913-715-3000.

We appreciate the participation of our community partners and their support to prepare this Parent Resource including the Truancy Initiative, a project of United Community Services of Johnson County (www.ucsjoco.org).