Lesson 8

There's 'No' Excuse Not to Come to School

Goal: To provide students with clear guidance on when they should come to school.

Materials: Marker board, markers, one copy for each student of 'Find the Reason to Stay Home from School', pens.

1. ▲ Ask the class members to share their opinions of how they can determine whether they should come to school or stay home.

▲ Inform the students that they will be examining a series of statements that students sometimes make about why they didn't come to school. Ask the class to determine if these are valid reasons for missing school. Distribute the pens and the copies of "Find the Reason to Stay Home from School" then discuss the students' responses with the class. Assist the students to determine that the list contains no valid reasons for missing school.

▲ Ask the students to add to the list, invalid excuses they've used, or heard other students use. Write these items on the board then discuss these additions with the class.

2. ▲ Ask the class to develop a guideline to help students evaluate whether they have a valid or invalid reason for missing school. Ask the class members to each take a turn formulating a one-sentence guideline for determining how to tell if a student should attend school. Write these suggestions on the board. Assist the class members to formulate a criteria that most students agree is valid. A popular criteria is "If you are breathing (and neither you or any of your family members are seriously injured or ill), then come to school". If appropriate, include in the criteria, references to religious holidays and other genuine ethnically/culturally based concerns, as other legitimate times to be absent from school.

3. ▲ Ask the students to each remember the last time that they missed a day of school and ask for volunteers who are willing to share with the class how their excuse rated using the new criteria.

4. ▲ Review the major points of this lesson:
   - Many of the excuses students offer for missing school are not important enough to justify being absent.
   - One way to tell if you are able to attend school is to evaluate your reason using a criteria such as "If you are breathing, (and neither you or any of your family members are seriously injured or ill), then come to school".
   - School is so important to your future that there is often no excuse not to come to school.
Find the Reason to Stay Home From School

Circle all the valid reasons for missing school

I have to wait for the mail to come.
I have to wash my hair.
My face is breaking out.
It might rain.
I have a test.
My teacher's probably mad at me for missing school yesterday.
I can't keep up in class.
I don't feel like it.
My Mom doesn't make me go.
I was going to be late for school anyway.
I had to baby sit.
I had to work.
I had to help my cousin move.
I didn't know there was school today.
I've already missed a lot of school.
Nobody notices.
I hate P.E.
I had nothing to wear.
My hair was a mess.
I only had dirty clothes to wear.
I didn't have lunch money.
I'm just gonna be a Mom anyway.
I've had a really big fight with my boyfriend and I might run into him at school.
My Dad never went.