

Practical Pearl: Back to School Readiness

INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back to school means “back to the doctors”. Helping patients do well in school requires care coordination to get our students into tip top mental and physical shape to meet the challenges of the new school year.• Many students require pediatric subspecialist input to manage their medications and regimens, so collaboration between the primary care provider and subspecialists is key to create care plans and manage chronic medical conditions that may impact school performance.
INITIAL EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT BY PRIMARY CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The AAP provides General Pediatricians with guidance on many issues related to school health: https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/Councils/Council-on-School-Health/Pages/Policy.aspx• Chronic absenteeism (missing >10% of school days/year – only two days a month!) is a significant problem in Springfield and the surrounding communities.• Chronic absenteeism puts children at risk of dropping out, substance use, risky sexual behavior, and criminal justice involvement. The link between school attendance and good health outcomes is outlined in the AAP report which provides concrete suggestions to improve attendance: https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/143/2/e20183648
WHEN TO REFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If a student’s medical or psychiatric condition negatively impacts their ability to attend school or perform well in school, reach out to our subspecialists.• Consult child psychiatry through MCPAP if a psychiatric condition is impacting school attendance or performance.
HOW TO REFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• (413) 794-KIDS Pediatric Subspecialties• MCPAP 844-926-2727