



What happens to learning expectations  
when a child is **H**ospitalized?

# Reaching Graduation for Students with Chronic Medical Needs



# OBJECTIVES: PART ONE

- **Elaborate on the educational constraints and attrition rates for our patients with chronic medical needs.**
- Improve understanding of the realities of school district expectations and expand on methods for promoting school engagement.
- Detail and evaluate alternative paths toward high school graduation.

# What is the definition of Chronic Medical Needs?

- Cystic Fibrosis
- Dialysis
- Hem/Onc
- TBI
- In-patient Rehab
- Chronic digestive disorders

- three or more months of hospitalization and medical care or treatment
  - ...may be NONCONSECUTIVE
- the definition of the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics



# What is the school definition of Chronic Absence?



**2 Absences per month**  
**X 9 Months of school**

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**Likely to fail a grade**

As early as elementary school, students who miss just two days per month are more likely to fall behind and less likely to graduate high school.

Find help at: [AbsencesAddUp.org](https://AbsencesAddUp.org)

**Missing 15 or more days annually is approximately 9% of the school year.**

- [Chronic Absenteeism in the Nation's Schools](#)
- <https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html>

# What is the cognitive impact of absence? Does research confirm?

**Any YEARLY absence above 10% increases the risk for failure and dropping out by seven times.**

Percent	= days	= weeks	Note
95%	0-9	Less than 2	acceptable
85-90%	10-29	Less than 6	Chronically absent
<85%	More than 30	More than 6	Severe chronic absenteeism

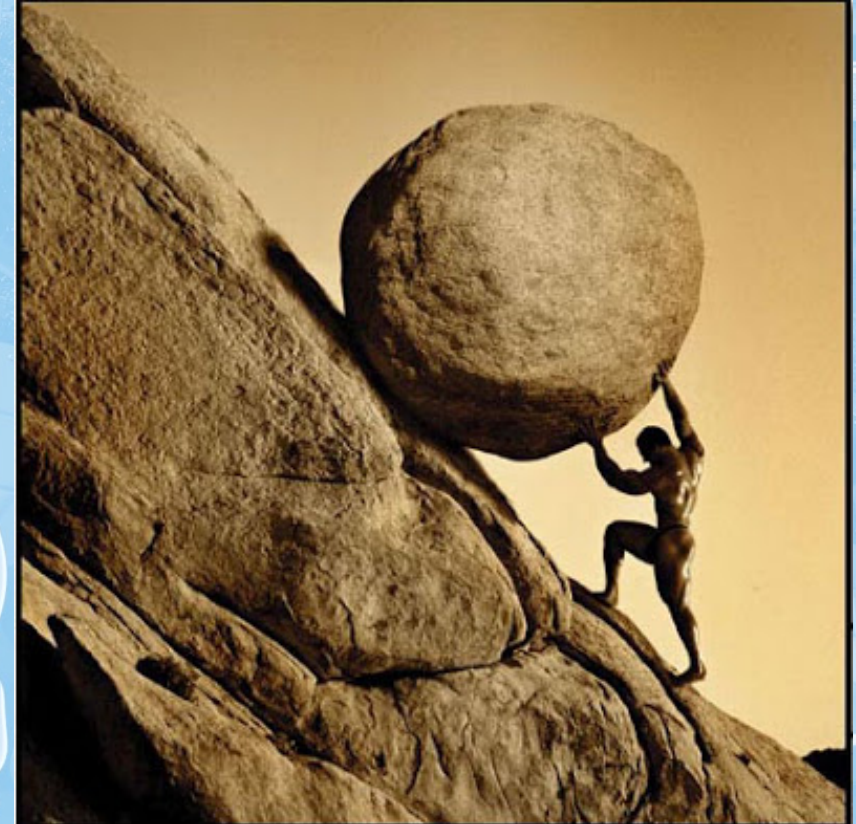
# years chronically absent	% who drop out
1	36.4%
2	51.8%
3	58.7%
4	61.3%

**Every YEAR of chronic absence multiplies the risk for dropping out exponentially.**

Source: Utah Education Policy Center, *Research Brief: Chronic Absenteeism*, University of Utah, July 2012

# What is the cognitive impact for Chronic Medical Needs Students?

- Disease
- Treatment
- Medication
- Hospitalization
- School absence
- Stress



# Which comes first?

*Frequently missing school*



*Always behind in school*

# Does research confirm?

“The combination of chronicity, absence, and side effects of illness and treatment are subtle, but the **cumulative effect** is potentially damaging. Falling behind academically leads to catching up, and catching up takes time away from keeping up. Self-confidence and achievement motivation are undermined.”

*(Association for the Education of Children with Medical Needs, 2015)*



# Does research confirm?

Chronic absenteeism puts students at risk for falling behind academically, dropping out of school, and negative consequences **over their life time** for health, employment, and financial potential.

*(Association for the Education of Children with Medical Needs, 2015)*

# What happens if you don't graduate?

The US has a 85% graduation rate or about a 15% attrition rate

Those who don't graduate:

- earn at least \$200,000 less over a lifetime than a HS graduate
- commit about 75% of crimes



# OBJECTIVES: PART TWO

- Elaborate on the educational constraints and attrition rates for our patients with chronic medical needs.
- **Improve understanding of the realities of school district expectations and expand on methods for promoting school engagement.**
- Detail and evaluate alternative paths toward high school graduation.

# What are the School Influenced Barriers to Education for Students with CMN?

- Too hard to modify or accommodate
- Perception of truancy
- Misconceptions and misinformation
- Ignoring: the Black Hole



# What are Student Influenced Barriers to Attendance?

- Illness or medical treatment
- Negative school or social experiences
- Lack of engagement /decreased academic performance
- Misconceptions /self-esteem /body image
- Trauma (ACE score factors)



# What are Parent Influenced Barriers to Attendance?

- Anxiety and stress
- Illness-related uncertainty
- Maladaptive coping strategies
- Trauma (ACE score factors)



# Does state attendance reimbursement impact students with CMN?

- Attendance equals money



# When does freezing grades help?

- Freezing grades is most common... because students are dropped.
- Schools get a higher reimbursement.
- Frozen = students aren't responsible for work
- Work does not have to be made up
- **BUT** learning does.



# How can schools help?

...illness and frequent or extended hospitalizations impair a child's participation in school, and necessitate **educational interventions** as an essential component of supporting this student population.



# Which Educational Interventions work?

- Tutor
- Homebound
- On-line
- 504 Plans
- Modified schedule
- Partial enrollment
- IEP / SPED placement



# OBJECTIVES: PART THREE

- Elaborate on the educational constraints and attrition rates for our patients with chronic medical needs.
- Improve understanding of the realities of school district expectations and expand on methods for promoting school engagement.
- **Detail and evaluate alternative paths toward high school graduation.**

# How can we provide schools with enough information to support students?



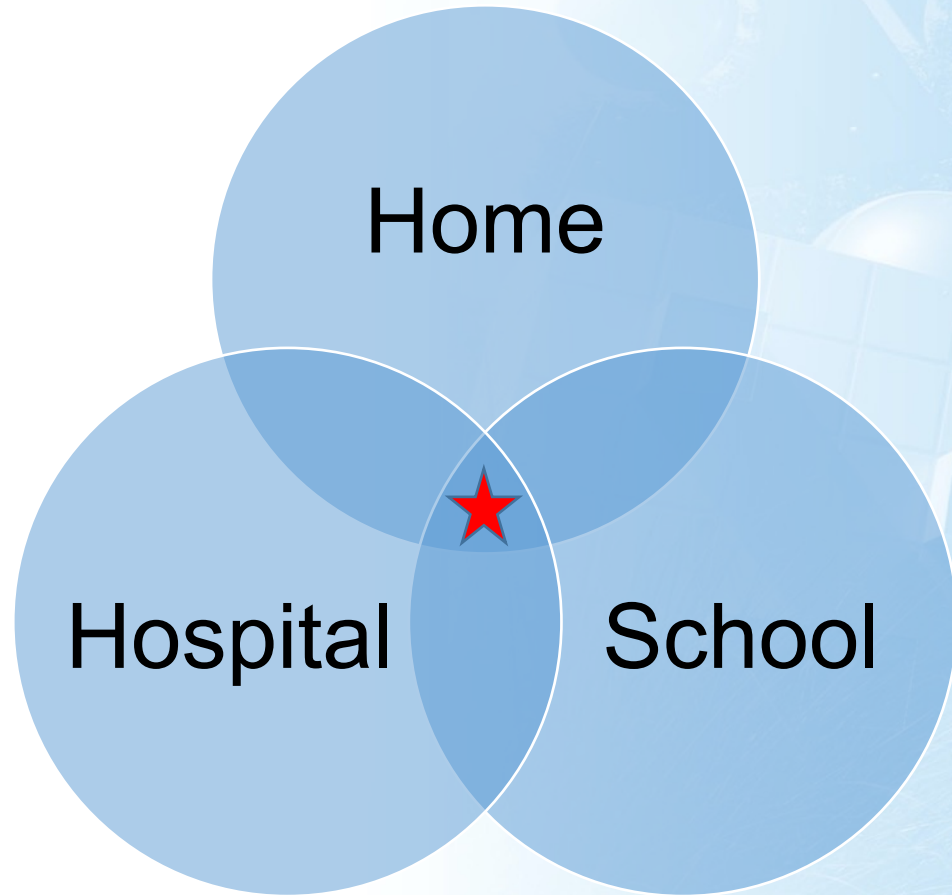
- **Initial diagnosis information**
- **Medical needs information**
- **Cognitive impact information**
- **Making an educational plan**
- **Consistent communication with parents**
- **Self-advocacy**



# Which graduation options are best?

- Graduate with instructional modifications
- Graduate on IEP goals
- Graduate with On-line classes
- Graduate with GED or HiSET courses through the district options program

# TEAMWORK



- ★ Patient
- Parent/Guardian
- Hospital Social Worker
- School Team
- Hospital Based School Teacher
- Academic Liasson

# Why graduate?

## A Compelling Argument for Finishing High School by Options For Youth

for parents and patients

OPTIONS FOR YOUTH presents

### A Compelling Argument for Finishing High School

High school dropout rates have been increasing since 1960, steadily climbing to epidemic levels. Many students across the country, often from low socioeconomic backgrounds, are leaving school in search of employment - typically without great success. Studies show that graduates are not only more likely to be well employed, but also healthier, happier, and more financially secure than those who didn't complete high school.

Every **26 seconds** a student drops out of public school in the US



On average, high school graduates live **4 years** longer than high school dropouts.

Amazingly, the difference in life expectancy between high school dropouts and those with Bachelor's degrees is over **14 years** for men and over **10 years** for women.



High school dropouts are **50%** more likely to be unemployed than high school graduates.



An average high school graduate earns **37%** more than an average high school dropout.

Those with a bachelor's degree earn income nearly **2.3x** that of high school dropouts.



And folks with a post-graduate degree earn a whopping **2.7x** more!



Incidences of **divorce** and **poor health**, including cardiovascular disease, are highest among high school dropouts.



High school dropouts are more likely to be incarcerated. In fact, **80%** of current prison inmates do not have a high school diploma.

LOVE WILL.

# How do you support students beyond homework help?

## Explicit Teaching of Self-Advocacy Skills

<https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/self-advocacy/the-importance-of-self-advocacy>

## Check and Connect

<https://checkandconnect.umn.edu/>

## Mentoring

<https://blog.summitlearning.org/2019/02/five-strategies-for-mentoring-high-school-students/>



# Why and how do student need to develop self advocacy skills?

Self-advocacy is a skill that enables kids to understand their strengths and weaknesses, know what they need to succeed, and communicate that to other people.





**Children's Mercy**

**LOVE WILL.**