September Monthly Mentor Tip:  
**Attendance: Strive for 95!**

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school - and themselves. Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college, and at work. Our most prominent partner for change, Omaha Public Schools District is initiating the *Strive for 95 attendance initiative*. The goal is for students to attend school 95% of the time! To support this effort below are some facts and talking point to speak with students throughout the year.

*Did you know?*
- Starting in Kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (about 18 days) can make it hard to learn to read.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Each minute a student is tardy, those minutes are accumulated and applied toward absences.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.

*But YOU make a difference:*
- Students that have a community of caring adults to inspire and support them tend to have better attendance.
- Students often won’t remember what you do/say to them but they remember how you made them feel.
- Share with students how to have a voice in their own attendance by setting positive, healthy routines.

*Talking points with students:*
- *Share how good attendance has helped you in your career and life.*
- *Establish a regular school week routine:*
  - Set a regular bed time and morning routine
  - Set an alarm clock and get yourself out of bed on time
  - Go to bed ten minutes earlier, and get up ten minutes earlier
  - Pick out your clothes the night before
  - Take a shower or bath the night before
  - Pack my backpack the night before
  - Make sure your coat is ready for the night before (&/or hats, gloves, umbrella, etc. when appropriate)
  - If you pack a lunch, prepare your lunch the night before
- *Keep track of your own attendance.*
  - Use your school (or other) calendar to track the days you attend school.
  - Let’s set a goal of 95% attendance and see if you can reach it.
- *Come to school every day, on time, and attend for the full day.*

*Partnering with kids from kindergarten to careers!*