

Risk factor: Insufficient attendance

Different approaches towards school aversion:

- Work on school attendance
- Sustaining factors model
- Argyris' Ladder of inference

Guides for action:

Mental Health Challenges – anxiety and depression, low self-esteem

- Inform all teachers, counselors and adults around the student (with the student's consent).
- Offer the student a focused meeting.
- Adjust teaching methods.
- Collaborate with healthcare workers.
- Use the Guides for action in **3. Relations with teachers and adults in school**

Social Factors:

- **Bullying:** Students who are bullied may be more likely to avoid school.
- **Lack of friends:** Social isolation can make school less attractive.

Guides for action:

- Actively work on improving the school/classroom environment.
- Focus on common rules and the use of mobile phones/social media.
- Quickly address reports of students who do not feel safe or supported in the school/classroom environment.
- Collaborate with the student council on organizing social activities at school.
- Make sure classroom rules are clear and followed.

Family Relationships:

- **Unstable home environments:** Issues such as divorce, violence, or substance abuse can impact the student's school experience.
- **Lack of support at home:** Students who lack support at home are more likely to miss school.

Academic Challenges:

- **Learning problems:** Students who struggle academically may feel frustrated and avoid school.
- **Boredom:** Boring lessons can make students less motivated and less involved.

Guides for action:

- Use the guides for action in **6. Poor academic performance / learning difficulties**

Physical health problems:

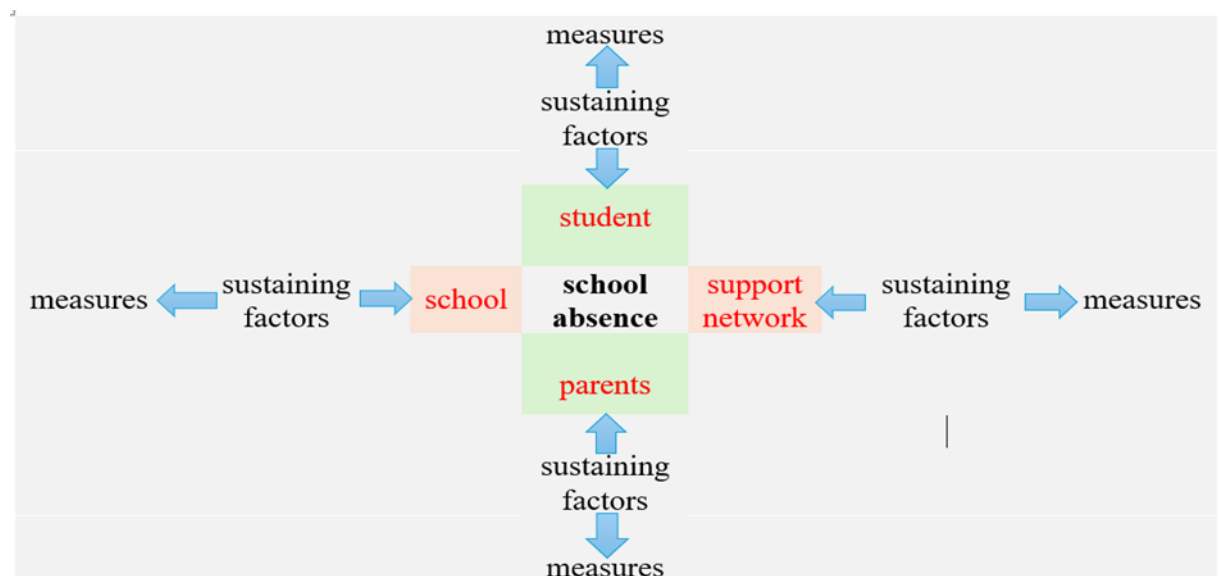
- **Chronic illnesses:** Students with long-term health problems may have more frequent absences.
- **Physical discomfort:** Issues like headaches or stomach problems can also affect school attendance.

School Environment:

- **Cultural adaptation:** Students from different cultural backgrounds may face difficulties adjusting to school.
- **Learning environment:** A poor or unsupportive learning environment can lead to students missing school.
- Use the guides for action in **3. Emotional Support**

It is very important to spend time identifying why the student avoids attending school so that appropriate measures can be taken, as illustrated in the figure below:

Sustaining factors model



Argyris' Ladder of Inference is another model that shows how to map out and analyze the causes of school avoidance, allowing for the use of specific measures.

Argyris' Ladder of Inference describes how people make conclusions based on observations. It includes several levels:

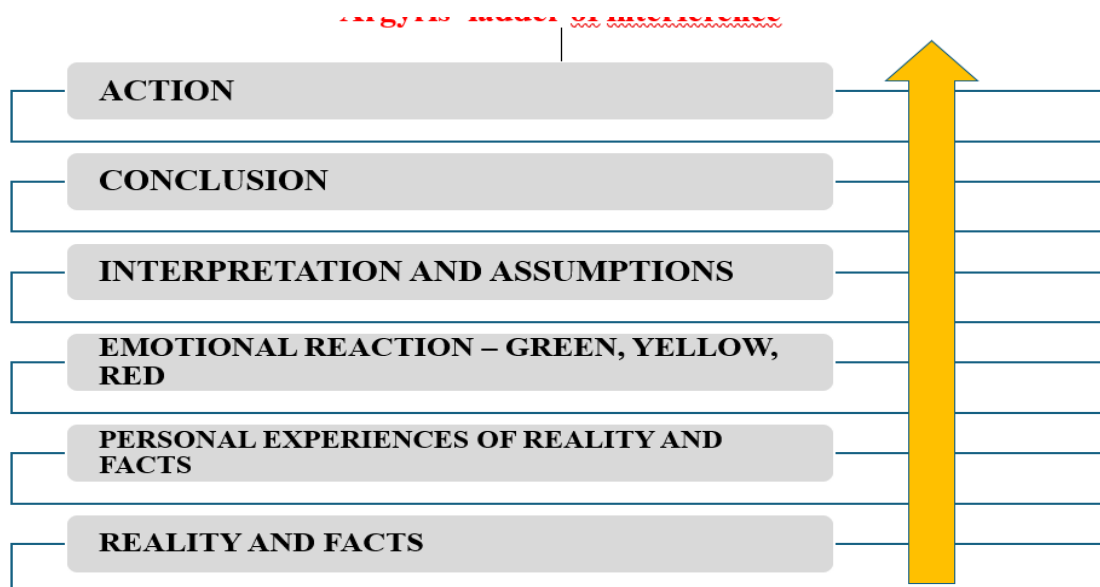
1. **Observations:** What do we see?
2. **Interpretations:** What does what we see mean?
3. **Conclusions:** What do we conclude from the interpretations?
4. **Actions:** What do we do based on the conclusions?

Start with observations: Ask teachers to reflect on what they observe regarding school absences. For example: 'Which students are frequently absent? What could be the reasons?'

Interpretations: Discuss how different interpretations can come from the same observations. For example: Is it a health issue? Family dynamics? Lack of motivation?

Conclusions: Ask teachers to think about the conclusions they draw from these interpretations. For example: 'If a student is often absent, it might mean they are not interested in school.' 'It could also mean they are dealing with personal problems.'

Actions: If we think a student is not interested, we might be less likely to offer support. If we know they are facing personal issues, we can be more proactive in offering help.



Skoe & Bølstad (2022), Figur 7.1.

Key measures to ensure a safe and positive school environment:

- Good transitions: Ensure smooth transitions between school changes, teacher changes, and lesson-recess periods.
- Academic support
- Classroom as a safe space
- Student Involvement
- System for monitoring attendance
- Close home-school collaboration
- Early Interventions: building on students' interests and strengths
- Collaboration between all members of the support network