



## **Tier 2 curriculum improves student attendance and engagement**

According to the CDC and US Surgeon General, students who are more connected with others achieve better academic and mental health outcomes including higher grades and test scores, better attendance and graduation rates and decreased probability of engaging in risky behavior.

## THE CHALLENGE

Robin partnered with an innovative public high school in NYC that offers a four-year CTE program. In addition to preparing students with the skills and knowledge for their future educational and life experiences, the teachers and administrators of the high school pledge to support the academic and emotional well-being of each and every student so they can reach their full potential.

Like many NYC schools, this high school faces school attendance challenges. In fact, the NY Department of Education recently reported that 36% of its students citywide were chronically absent in the 2023/24 academic year. Chronic absences have major implications on student outcomes. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2019), chronically absent students are much more likely to fall behind in reading levels, are much more likely to withdraw from school prior to completing 12th grade and are more likely to experience poverty or the criminal justice system.

As part of an MTSS approach, the NYC public high school required students at risk of chronic absenteeism to attend small group advisory class every day after school in the spring of 2024. This targeted intervention aimed to educate and support students and their families in order to improve their school attendance and engagement.



## THE SOLUTION

School attendance and engagement are critical for learning success. We know that when students feel connected and a sense of belonging they are more likely to come to school ready to learn. The NYC public high school decided to partner with Robin to assess their students and teach them skills to build connection and positive mental health skills.

Students first took Robin's Connection Diagnostic Assessment<sup>®</sup> providing a data-driven snapshot of their feelings of connection to themselves, peers, school, family and community. Pre-program results dictated an action plan of Tier 2 lessons and activities focused on skills to:

- Handle stress and pressure
- Build stronger peer relationships
- Find deeper purpose and meaning in life
- Feel a greater sense of belonging
- Improve perceptions of their body image





An experienced advisory teacher met with students every school day over a 3 month period. She introduced and guided them through the targeted Robin action plan of video-based lessons, individual activities, group discussion prompts and reflections. The school was also given access to a library of SEL activities to build student connection and engagement. While all lessons required virtually no preparation, the advisory teacher was supported with teacher guidance materials and planning support.

At the end of the 3 month period, students took a post-program assessment to measure program outcomes and impact.

## THE RESULTS

**2x**

more students  
reported that they had  
the skills to better  
cope under pressure

**90%**

of all assessed areas  
saw a positive increase  
after 3 month  
curriculum usage

School attendance improves when students are more connected to themselves, their peers and their community. Post program CDA<sup>®</sup> results showed that a greater percentage of students felt they could handle stress and pressure, build stronger peer relationships, improve perceptions of their body image, find deeper purpose and meaning in life and feel a greater sense of belonging.



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