

Backpack Awareness

Did you know...

- A child's spine develops until about **age 18**.
- Carrying excessive weight while the spine is developing could **impair growth**, changing a child's **posture**.
- Heavier backpacks **compress the spine** and **increase curvature**.
- Over **90%** of children wear a **backpack every day**, most over the recommended weight limit.
- More than 50% of children experience **discomfort** when carrying over 10% of their body weight.



1. Pack It!



Backpacks should weigh no more than 10% of your child's body weight.

If your child must carry more items back and forth to school consider hand carrying an item outside the bag or considering a bag with wheels if your school will allow it.



Put the heaviest items closest to the child's back.

Utilize all of your compartments to evenly distribute the weight. Keeping the heaviest items closest to the back and lighter items in the front pockets and side pockets.



Re-Pack Nightly

Keep backpack weight light by having your child check their bag nightly and removing the items that are not necessary for the next day.

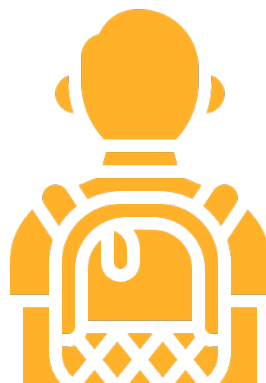
2. Put it On

Bend with the knees, instead of the waist when picking up the pack to prevent injury.

3. Adjust It!

Wear both straps
Wearing one shoulder strap can cause spine curvature.

Bottom of the pack
The bottom of the pack should rest at or slightly above waist level, never more than 4 inches below the waistline



Adjust straps snugly

A pack that hangs loose can pull child backwards and strain muscles.

Wear the waist belt

If you have a waist belt, use it to help distribute the weight more evenly.