

Choosing and Using your Backpack!

As you get ready for 'Back to School' a new backpack may be on your shopping list. Your child uses their backpack daily, make sure that the backpack you purchase, and the way you pack it, has their spine in mind!



Take to the Store

Purchase Checklist:

What to look for when buying a backpack.

- Size:** Ideally, the backpack will extend from 2 in. below the shoulder blades to waist level or slightly above the waist.
- Shoulders Pads:** Well padded shoulder straps that can be worn with both shoulders. Shoulders and necks have many blood vessels and nerves that can cause pain and tingling in the neck, arms, and hands when too much pressure is applied.
- Hip/ Chest Belt:** Hip and chest belts can take some excess strain off the neck and shoulder muscles, improving the child's balance.
- Fit:** Just like you would try on clothes before purchasing, try on your backpack. Even consider bringing a few hand weights/ bags of rice so that your child can feel what 10% of their body weight feels like in the pack.
- Storage:** Consider what your child may need to bring back and forth each day (books, binders, electronics, water bottle, lunch, etc) and ensure there is enough space to do so without over packing.

Getting Ready for School

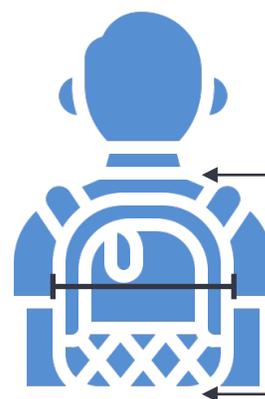
Packing Checklist:

My backpack before walking out the door.

- My backpack weighs less than 10% of my body weight: _____ lbs (backpack).
- Heavier books/ items are packed closest to the back.
- I am only taking what I need for today.
- Both shoulder straps are on and pulled snug.
- Lower part of backpack rests no more than 4 inches below my waistline.
- Hip/ chest belts are fastened, if available.
- I have good posture.

I should look like this...

Pack is Centered:
Never more than 10% of body weight. Fits secure and snug.



Top of Backpack: 2 in. below shoulder blades.

Bottom of Backpack: rests at or slightly above waist level. Never more than 4 in. below.