

Vista

POWERED BY WORKfit

BACKPACK SAFETY

It's not just for kids!



1. NOT THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD

A backpack should weigh in at no more than 15% of a child's body weight! So your 80-lb. kid's pack shouldn't be more than 12 lbs.!

We adults shouldn't carry more than 20% of our weight either.

2. LIGHTEN UP! (HEAVY DOWN)

Pack the heaviest items at the bottom and back of the pack, lightest stuff on top and in front.

This minimizes backpack sway and reduces stress on the back.

3. PAD IT

Look for padded straps and padded backs to keep books from digging into your child's spine and shoulder blades.

Remember to use BOTH straps!

4. STRAP IT ON

Use both shoulder straps. Look for a backpack with a waist strap and/or a chest strap to more securely hold the load.

5. LOOK INSIDE

Does your kid look like he/she is struggling to lug a load?

Take a look and be sure that he/she needs everything inside.

6. WATCH OUT

Don't create a trip hazard by leaving it in the hallway or on the steps.

Did You Know?

- A filled backpack should weigh no more than 10-15% of your body weight.
- The average 6th grader's backpack weighs 18 lbs.!
- Many kids carry backpacks weighing 30+ lbs. (and that doesn't include band instruments and gym bags!)
- Over-packed or improperly packed backpacks account for over 7,000 emergency room visits per year.
- Over 50 % of all students between the ages of 9-20 suffer from chronic back pain related to wearing backpacks.
- One study showed that even wearing a 13.2 lb. backpack reduced lung function in adults!

Here's What an Overstuffed Backpack Can Do To You

Head/Neck

A drooping/ forward head puts stress on the spine and fatigues the muscles of the neck/shoulders.

Shoulders

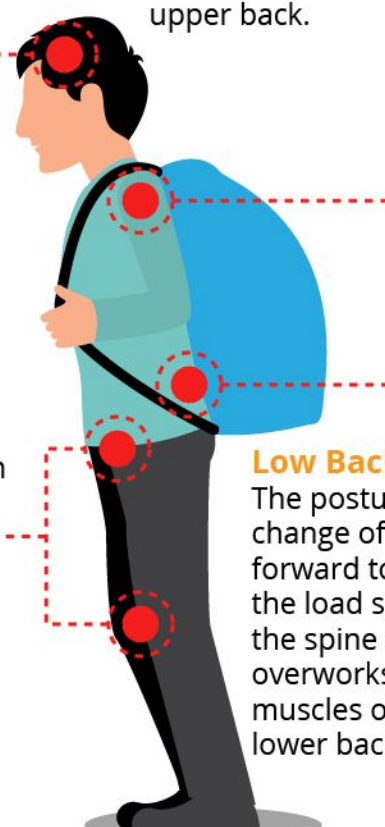
They were never meant for hanging things! The weight of a backpack can pull on shoulders and put added stress on the upper back.

Hips/Knees

A heavy backpack can change the way you walk. This, and the effort to propel yourself forward can cause aching hips and knees.

Low Back

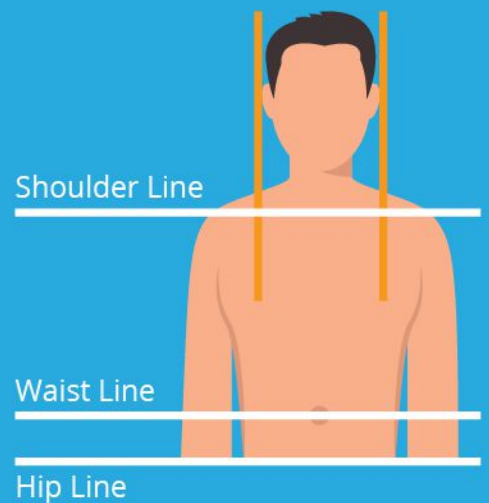
The postural change of leaning forward to carry the load stresses the spine and overworks the muscles of the lower back.



Get the Right Fit

Back Width = Ridge of Shoulder Blade to Ridge of Shoulder Blade

Your child's backpack should only be this wide!



Back Height = Shoulder Line to Waist Line + 2 Inches:

Your child's backpack should only be this high!

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