

# SCHOOL HEALTH

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## BACK TO SCHOOL WITH BACKPACKS

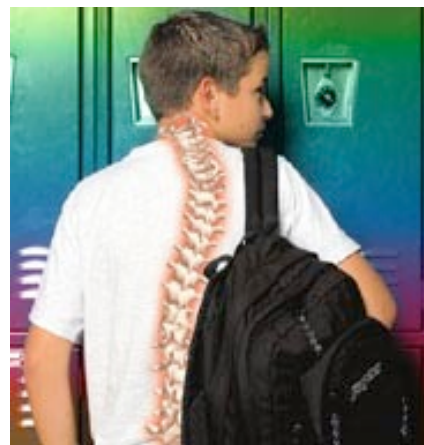
How did we ever survive without backpacks? Now nearly every student carries one full of books and supplies around with them all day. Parents and school staff should monitor the student to ensure they use them appropriately.

Backpacks should not weigh more than 10 to 15 percent of the child's body weight. This means that a student that weighs 100 pounds should not carry a backpack that weighs more than 10 to 15 pounds. If a student has to lean forward to support the weight of the backpack - it is too heavy. Backpacks with wheels can be a good solution for those students that must transport more than 15 percent of their body weight.

Straps should be wide and padded, and students should ALWAYS wear both straps over their shoulders. Even better - choose a backpack that also has a waist strap. Adjust the straps so that the backpack rests in the middle of the child's back. Always pack the backpack with the most

weight lower on the back near the waist with the heaviest books closest to the body.

Children should clean out their backpacks regularly to remove unnecessary items. Students that have lockers should use them and not carry their books around all day.



These pictures show what can happen to your spine when your backpack is worn incorrectly.