



Backpack Safety

Overloading and improper use of backpacks continues to be a concern for students. Statistics show that students who use backpacks regularly carry more than the recommended safe weight. Also, the Consumer Product Safety Commission reports an increase in injuries treated in emergency rooms related to wearing backpacks incorrectly or carrying too much weight in a backpack.

Several important points:

- Choose a backpack with well-padded, wide straps. Students should use both straps.
- Choose a lightweight backpack.
- Choose a backpack that has a waist belt. This provides extra support and transfers the weight more evenly across the body.
- Choose a backpack that is appropriate for the age and size of your child.
- Teach your child to pack the heaviest items closest to their back.
- Teach your child to not carry unnecessary items.
- Teach your child to lift their backpack by bending at knees and lift with both hands.

The following web sites provide more information on backpacks safety and the appropriate weight for your child:

www.kidshealth.org/parent/firstaid_safe/travel/backpack.html

[www.aap.org/publiced/BR **Backpack**.htm](http://www.aap.org/publiced/BR_Backpack.htm)

www.promoteot.org/AI_BackpackStrategies.html