

Your child and their backpack...

Did you know...

that research shows that children carrying more than 10% of their body weight is damaging to their spinal and postural health. Just because you can't see the internal damage, doesn't mean it isn't happening! Have you ever wondered how this is affecting my child?

- The 2010 MRI study was the first of its kind and was done by an orthopedist. It showed damage to the spine, mainly in scoliosis, herniated discs and decreased vertebral disc height, significantly advanced as backpack weight was incrementally increased.
- For every 1 inch the head is carried in front of the spine (anterior head carriage), the head weighs 10 more pounds. Studies have shown significant changes in anterior head carriage with heavy backpacks. This not only can cause stress/pain in the neck and shoulders, but because of the altered overall posture, the whole spine, joints, tendons and muscles can be affected.

Why is this important to parents and teachers?

- School age children's spines are still growing and substantial changes at this point in their growth could cause irreparable damage.
- If our children are focusing on pain, they are not able to focus on their school work and learning.

Most of these findings are PREVENTABLE, if caught early!! So, what can you do to help?

What we can do about it?

Make sure your child's backpack is worn correctly and weighs no more than 10% of their body weight. Pick a wide and cushioned straps, wear close and in center of back using both straps. Be sure that the backpack is making contact with back and not leaning away from the body.



See Alabama's Backpack Law on the ALSDE website at

<https://www.alabamaachievers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/BackPack-2017RS-SJR008-ENACTED.pdf>