



Special Back to School Edition

W.O.W.

Way Of Wellness Newsletter

Start the School Year Right!

Getting back into the school year routine can cause stress within the family. Bedtime schedules, early mornings, hectic after-school timetables and homework can all lead to frustration, tension and anxiety. These simple tips can get you and your young ones back on track for a productive school year.

- Set expectations about homework, bedtimes and other responsibilities. Agreeing on the homework rules upfront can save you from frustration later. Depending on the age of your child, they can be responsible for some of their own daily routines like selecting their school outfit the night before, preparing their own breakfast, making their beds, assembling school supplies and books, etc.
- Discuss after school arrangements like transportation and childcare. Have a backup plan and communicate it with your children. Help them commit it to memory in case of an emergency or miscommunication. Knowing this information will help your child relieve fears and build their confidence.
- Ensure your children are eating healthy foods and drinking water. Food sensitivities and diets high in sugar, preservatives, dyes and additives can affect learning and behavior. While it can be difficult to monitor your child's eating habits when they are away from you, teaching your child about nutrition and setting a good example for them at home does influence their choices while out of your sight.



Surprising Back Pain Culprit

Young children are suffering from back pain much earlier than previous generations and this trend is linked to a very surprising culprit—backpacks. Backpacks are fast becoming a safety concern for our kids. In fact, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that backpack-related injuries sent more than 7,000 people to the emergency room in 2001 alone. They also report a 300 percent increase in backpack-related injuries among schoolchildren over the last 10 years. What can you do? Follow these tips to prevent needless pain from backpack misuse.

Fitting a Backpack: Ensure the backpack is the correct size for your child. It should never be wider or longer than the torso with the bottom of the pack resting in the curve of the lower back. The pack should never rest more than four inches below the child's waistline. Your child should wear the pack as intended—on their back with both straps over their shoulders. Wearing a pack slung over one shoulder causes a child to lean to one side, curving the spine and causing pain or discomfort. Wide, padded shoulder straps are essential to overall comfort. Non-padded straps that are uncomfortable cause your child to compensate by carrying their bag by one hand or over one shoulder. Also, the shoulder and neck vessels and nerves that when and tingling in the neck, arms, shoulder straps so that the child's back. A pack that back can pull the child muscles. And, your child if the backpack has one. This helps distribute the pack's weight more evenly.

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areas have many blood irritated can cause pain and hands. Adjust the pack fits snugly to the hangs loosely from the backwards and strain should wear the waist belt

Packing a Backpack: Your child's backpack should weigh no more than 10 percent of their body weight. This means for a child that weighs 100 pounds, their backpack when fully loaded should not exceed 10 pounds in weight. Don't select a pack that is too big. A big pack is an invitation to pack more, which of course adds weight. Consider a backpack with separate compartments and pockets. This helps distribute weight evenly. Arrange the contents of the backpack so they don't slide around. It's also helpful to place the heaviest items closest to the child's back. Pack bulky and awkwardly shaped items away from the area that rests on your child's back so they are not poked by hard or sharp corners. Check the child's backpack regularly. Make sure it only contains items necessary to the day's activities. On days when extra items are necessary, load the backpack as instructed and have your child carry any additional items in his/her hands.

Additional Steps to Consider: A healthy spine and strong back muscles are one of the best defenses against injury. Instill healthy habits early.

- Ensure your child is getting proper exercise.
- Instruct your child to report any discomfort or pain immediately.
- Just as you make certain your child regularly visits the dentist to maintain oral health, ensure you are maintaining the health of your child's spine and nervous system through regular visits to a chiropractor.

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Did you know that backpack related injuries among school-age children have increased by 330 percent since 1996? Healing Touch Chiropractic's Backpack Clinic is the ideal way to spread the word about the proper fit and use of backpacks. Available as a 30 minute presentation for your next parent or teacher meeting or include the Backpack Clinic in your next health fair or school open house. Have the kids bring their backpacks and each will receive an individual fitting and learn the proper method of calculating their safe backpack weight. Contact our office today to schedule a workshop date.