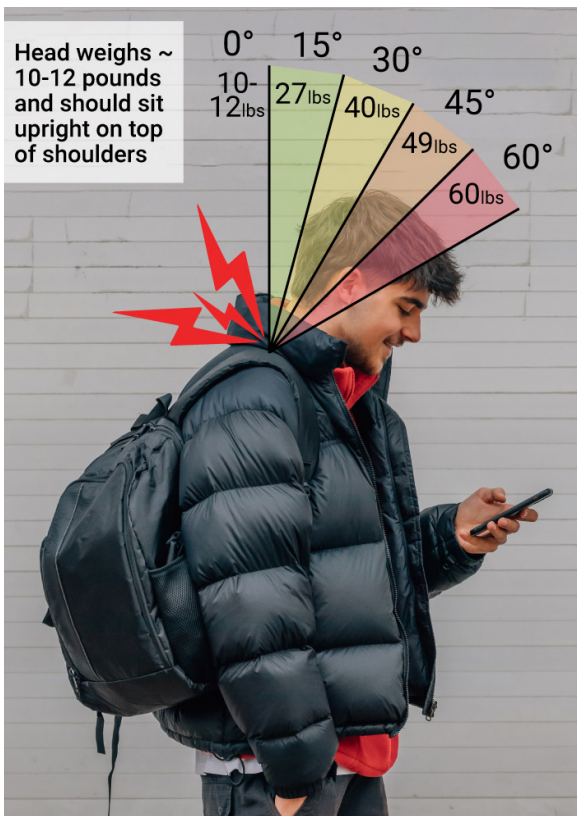


Backpack & Tech Use

YOUTH SAFETY



School Life Includes Backpacks & Tech

Used Incorrectly Can Have an Impact on the Body, Regardless of Age

School life includes backpacks and tech (computer tablets/desktops, and cell phones). Using these items incorrectly can negatively affect the body, regardless of age.

Heavy backpacks and improperly used tech use can put more stress on the cervical spine (the spine between the neck and shoulders). Both move the head forward, causing the neck and shoulders to work harder because the weight of the head becomes heavier.

More school-age kids are seen in emergency rooms with complaints of neck and shoulder pain. "Text/Tech Neck Syndrome" has "affected all pediatric ages," according to Johns Hopkins and Mayo Clinic.

More kids and teenagers are experiencing neck, shoulder, and back pain from improper use of tech and overstuffed bags and backpacks. This can throw off good posture and cause more muscle strain.

Use Tech in an Upright Position



Keep tech up closer to eye level, looking forward instead of down



Work more upright working at a desk with a supportive chair



Use a stand to prop up tech to keep neck and shoulders relaxed

Backpacks For All Around Comfort



It's About Backpack Weight, How it's Packed and Fit

Kids may not need to carry all that “stuff” in a backpack. Use the guidelines below for the best use and fit.

When Purchasing a Backpack, Look for:

- Lightweight When Empty
- Reflective Material
- Waist Belt
- Wide Straps
- Multiple Sections
- Padded Back

How to Pack:

- Put the heaviest item closest to the back when the pack is worn
- Use the pack sections or compartments for lighter items

How to Lift:

- Squat down, bending the legs to grab both sides and then lift with the legs.
- Do Not Bend at the waist to pick up the pack (the spine is not designed to do so).

How to Carry:

- Use both shoulder straps
- Using one shoulder strap can cause “lopsidedness.”
- Use the waist belt, adjusted snugly to carry the load close to the body (to avoid putting the load on the back or shoulders)

When the Backpack is TOO Heavy:

- Leaning forward, unable to stand up straight
- When the user is complaining of pain or soreness

Maximum Weight to Carry in a Backpack

10% to 20% of Person's Weight

60lb person
X 10% (.10)

6 pounds

60lb person
X 20% (.20)

12 pounds

A 60-pound (lb) person may carry between 6 – 12 pounds depending on physical health and strength.

140lb person
X 10% (.10)

14 pounds

140lb person
X 20% (.20)

28 pounds

A 140-pound (lb) person may carry between 14 – 28 pounds depending on physical health and strength.



MichiganWorkSafe.com/Youth-Safety

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