Need help choosing the best backpack for your child?

It's that time of year again and choosing the correct backpack is extremely important to your child's physical health.

Here are a couple of things to consider when buying an appropriate backpack:

Choose a backpack that is lightweight and proportional in size to your child!

- When sitting, the backpack should not go above your child's shoulders.
- Some backpacks can be larger than the child and as a result, they often end up carrying a heavier load than necessary.
- Children should never have to carry any more than 10% of their own body weight; the heavier the bag they have to carry the more they will lean forward to offset their centre of gravity and thus lead to poor posture and increased force on their spine.

Ensure the backpack sits over both of your child's shoulders.

- By placing the backpack over both shoulders it allows for the load to be placed evenly without your child having to compensate for an uneven load.
- This compensation by carrying the backpack on one shoulder

alone causes muscles to shorten and spasm, which is a common cause to back pain.

Try to pack heaviest items as close to the spine as possible.

- This allows the majority of the weight of the backpack to be encompassed with your child's centre of gravity and makes carrying this weight easier on them.
- A waist and chest strap can aid in keeping the backpack close to their spine and can help take some pressure off the shoulders.

Lastly, it is best to have a backpack with adjustable, padded shoulder straps, and a padded back for comfort.

Still have questions? Our physiotherapists at Generations Physiotherapy Centre can help!

We also offer baseline concussion testing, which can be extremely beneficial with hockey season around the corner! With baseline testing, if your child is diagnosed with a concussion, we are able to use their baseline testing results to create an individualized rehab protocol to get them back to their normal! Visit us at 371 Mountainview Rd. S., Georgetown or call 905-702-0888.

We wish you all a safe, happy and healthy return to school and sport!



PERFECT FIT: First-grader Ella Ryan (left) and Naia Jiskra, who will be heading into grade 2 this September, show off their new backpacks at Generations Physiotherapy in Georgetown. Generations has some helpful tips for parents about the importance and effects of proper-fitting backpacks on kids' short and long-term physical health.

Photo by Graham Frisque







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