BACKPACK INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL

DID YOU KNOW…..

Overloaded backpacks are causing an increasing problem of back pain and spinal strain for students across the nation. Spinal ligaments and muscles are not fully developed until after age 16 and overweight backpacks are a source of repeated low-level stress that may result in chronic neck, shoulder or back pain in children. Heavy loads carried on the back have the potential to damage the soft tissues of the shoulder, causing microstructural damage to the nerves and damage to internal organs. Studies have shown an increase in curvatures of the sine and compressed intervertebral height when backpacks exceed 10 % of a child's body weight.

Backpack education:

1. Backpacks should weigh no more than a maximum of 10% of a child's body weight.

2. Encourage ergonomic backpacks with individualized compartments to efficiently hold books and equipment.

3. Encourage children to wear both shoulder straps and not sling the backpack over one shoulder.

4. Encourage wide, padded adjustable straps that fit a child's body.

5. Encourage the heaviest books be left at school and handouts or workbooks be used for homework assignments.

6. Many schools are moving toward e-textbooks as funding becomes available.

