



Watch Your Back

Taking care of children's backs with the British Chiropractic Association

From the bag and shoes they choose, to the amount of TV they watch, young people are constantly putting strain on their posture.

Lifting, carrying, sitting for too long (particularly sitting slumped forward) and sporting injuries can all affect the proper movement of the spine if steps are not taken to actively protect it. The spine protects a vital part of the body – the spinal cord, which delivers the messages from the brain to the body. Are you sure your children are protecting their spine?

Results of the study¹ conducted by the British Chiropractic Association among Year 7 pupils found that, on average, 11 year olds spend a day and a half per week watching TV and playing computer games.

The results highlight the risks school children are under, and the BCA suggest that long-term back pain really can begin this early on in life, but be minimised by correcting bad habits.

Tim Hutchful, BCA Chiropractor, says: "The survey illustrates the sedentary lifestyle that children in the UK are leading. Children are especially vulnerable as their bones are 'soft' and still developing. Even something as simple as a child using two straps on his rucksack, rather than one, can make all the difference between a healthy back and dangerously bad posture."

The British Chiropractic Association makes the following recommendations for parents:

Bag it up

- If your child has to carry a bag to school – make sure you offer advice as to the type of bag they choose.
- A rucksack is the best option as long as it is carried over both shoulders, and the straps are adjusted so that the bag is held close to the back and weight is evenly distributed.

Keep it light

- Make sure your child is not carrying any unnecessary excess weight - check that all the items in their bags are essential

¹ Survey conducted amongst Year 7 pupils at St Joseph's RC High School & Sports College, Bolton

Best Foot Forward

- Make sure your child has good footwear; soft-soled shoes that are supportive and have a good grip will make it easier for them to carry a heavy school bag.

Exercise

- Lack of exercise is your child's worst enemy. Encourage your child to take regular exercise as the fitter your child is the less likely they are to injure themselves.

Move around

- Staying still for a long time is bad for your spine.
- Limit your child to small sittings of no more than 40 minutes on the computer or watching TV, before they get up and do something else for a while

Computer posture

- When using a PC or a computer console - make sure they are set up so they are sitting comfortably and their spine is supported. They may not realise that the position they are sitting in is painful because they are being distracted by the games!

REMEMBER, PAIN IS A WARNING SIGN - DO NOT IGNORE IT
If you are worried about your child's posture, visit a BCA chiropractor

Chiropractors treat problems with your joints, bones and muscles, and the effects they have on your nervous system. Working on all the joints of your body, concentrating particularly on the spine, they use their hands to make gentle, specific adjustments (the chiropractic word for manipulation) to improve the efficiency of your nervous system and release your body's natural healing ability. Chiropractic does not involve the use of any drugs or surgery.

Members of the British Chiropractic Association (BCA) abide by a strict code of ethics and the association only accepts members who have graduated from an internationally recognised college of chiropractic education after a minimum of four years full-time training. The BCA ensures its chiropractors maintain high standards of conduct, practice, education and training. Like medical practitioners and dentists, all chiropractors are registered by law.

To find a BCA chiropractor in your area:

The British Chiropractic Association

Tel: 0118 950 5950

E-mail: enquiries@chiropractic-uk.co.uk

Website: www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk

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