

SKILL-BUILDING

- ✓ Evaluation
- ✓ Solving problems
- ✓ Identifying issues

Activity 4: Posture perfect (basic ergonomics)

It takes approximately 15 years for your body to start to show the effects of negative postures and positions. By the time Kindergarten students are in post-secondary school or out in the working world, the stresses of poor posture when sitting, awkward carrying of heavy backpacks, and stresses on the body from playing video games and long hours on the computer may begin to show up as “aches and pains.” This activity is designed to help your students grow up with better posture.

Getting started

Safe use of backpacks

Photocopy the “Connect the Dots” handout on the following page and have students take it home. Ask them to connect the dots and record the maximum weight for their backpack, which should be no more than 10% of their body weight.

They will probably need help from someone in the family to find out how much they weigh and to figure out how heavy their pack should be.

That “magic number” can be written on the page to remind both students and parents to weigh the backpack periodically to make sure it’s not too heavy to carry safely.

Home computer check

It’s great that the world is available to children through the Internet and that they have so many great software programs to work on their literacy and numeracy skills.

Unfortunately, extended periods of time on a computer that isn’t set up properly for young children can result in immediate aches and pains and, if the poor postures continue, long-term musculoskeletal damage.

See page 17 for a two-page take-home handout you can photocopy and send home to parents to help them assess their home computer set up for young children.



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- ✦ Reinforce good posture every day:
 - when students are sitting on the floor to listen to a story, ask them to straighten out their backs and sit tall
 - when students are sitting in chairs, ask them to keep their backs straight and both feet flat on the floor
 - when students are standing in line, ask them to stand straight and tall.
- ✦ Invite a local chiropractor to do a backpack demonstration for your students.
- ✦ Provide parents with the backpack tip sheet on page 64 in the Grades 4-6 chapter.