1, 2, 3’s of Basic Backpack Wearing
1 Pack It

Utilize different compartments and pockets to distribute weight

- Heavier items closer to the back center of the backpack
- Lighter items in the front of the backpack
- Sharp items away from the back

Lighten the load so it is no more than 10% of your child’s weight; heavy backpacks can cause falls and spinal damage

2 Put It On

Teach your child to pick up the backpack by bending and lifting in the knees instead of the waist to prevent back injury

"The selection of a backpack is a family affair. By joining together as a team children will realize the importance of proper backpack wearing. It should be considered a fun family activity. The bottom line message is to have children begin to take more responsibility for their physical health."

-Dr. Karen Jacobs, Occupational Therapist & Ergonomist

3 Adjust & Carry

Always use both shoulder straps to prevent injury

Adjust the sternum strap

Secure the hip belt

The backpack should rest snugly against the back

Watch for warning signs that the backpack is too heavy, including:

- Difficulty when putting on or taking off the backpack
- Pain when wearing the backpack
- Tingling or numbness in the arms or legs
- Red strap marks over the anterior part of the shoulders
- Any change in side to side posture while wearing the backpack

Adjust the shoulder and waist straps so that the pack fits comfortably.

To ensure a proper fit, make sure the backpack does not extend past your child’s shoulders, or below the top of the hipbones.
Happy Back to School!

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To learn more, please visit www.aota.org/backpack