

How to Help your Children Reduce the Weight of School Bags?



Education Bureau

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Introduction

All along, parents and educators have been very concerned about the impact of the weight of school bags on students' health. To carry over-weight school bags for a prolonged period will cause muscular fatigue. According to a precautionary measure recommended by the Department of Health of Hong Kong, students should avoid carrying school bags which exceed 10% of their body weight for a prolonged period.

Cooperation among the Parties Concerned

To effectively reduce the weight of school bags, cooperation from all the parties concerned is required. Apart from exploring with publishers ways to further reduce the weight of textbooks, the Education Bureau also hopes that the schools could continue to show concern and take corresponding measures which include fostering the students' habit of packing school bags on a daily basis; designing different ways of submitting homework; adjusting the timetable appropriately to minimize the amount of learning materials to be brought to school on the same day and providing storage facilities as far as possible. At the same time, the cooperation and support of the parents are also required to reduce effectively the weight of school bags for their children and enable them to enjoy a healthy and happy school life.



Proposed Measures



Foster the habit of packing school bags according to the daily timetable and instructions of teachers from early childhood. Children are suggested to choose light-weight stationery items. At the same time, students should avoid bringing unnecessary items to school.

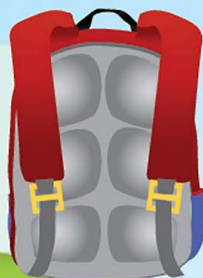
TIMETABLE				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
Eng	Eng	AE	Math	Eng
PE	Chi	Chi	Eng	Math
PE	GS	GS	Math	GS



Teach children to pack the largest and heaviest textbooks and items closest to the inner sides of the school bag while the lighter items should preferably be placed on the outer sides of the school bag. By doing this, the weight can be distributed evenly across the back and be partly absorbed by the pelvis to reduce overall stress on the students' bodies.



Select school bags which are made of light-weight materials. Backpacks with wide padded shoulder straps and length adjustable devices to suit the body shape are preferred.



Advise children to carry school bags properly. When using a backpack, it should stay close to the back. Do not let its bottom part sticking out from the waist while its upper half hanging loosely away from the back. If the school bags are to be carried by single shoulder or single hand, they should be carried with alternate hands or shoulders.



Proposed Measures

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Remind children to carry light-weight containers and refill drinking water at school if necessary.



Advise children to make good use of lockers and other storage facilities in school for storing textbooks, exercise books, stationery items and learning materials of Visual Arts, etc.

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Explore with children the causes of over-weight school bags and discuss the ways to lighten the load. Make practicable suggestions to schools to reduce the weight of school bags if necessary.



Participate actively in talks to enhance understanding of spinal health. Develop a healthy lifestyle and foster good living habit from early childhood, such as a balanced diet as well as doing appropriate exercise regularly.

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Suggestions and Enquiries

For suggestions and enquiries, please contact the Education Bureau.

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