

HEAVY SCHOOL BAGS CAN CAUSE BACK DEFORMITIES FOR SA SCHOOLCHILDREN

Xx July 2015: The South African Department of Education should follow the example of the Indian state of Maharashtra which has now imposed a regulation that school children are not allowed to carry school bags that exceed 10% of their body weight. Carrying heavy weighted and oversized school bags full of heavy books can cause young children to develop irreversible back deformities.

This is according to Dr Robert Delgado, Principal Chiropractor at Delgado Chiropractic and Wellness Expert, who says that this issue has been raised by various chiropractors over the years. “The issue has been receiving great attention internationally, such as in the United States, and should start to be considered in South Africa too.”

He explains that by carrying heavy school bags children are developing forward head posture as they are hinging forward at the hips to compensate for the heavy weight on their back. “This strains the muscles and in turn pushes the body to go into an unnatural posture alignment.”

While children might not show symptoms or experience pain strain away, in the long term they are developing imbalances in the body which causes the spine to be unhealthy, says Dr Delgado.

He advises parents to ensure that their kids have high quality back packs, with shoulder pads that are carried on both shoulders and not just one. “They should also encourage their children to be more active in order to foster healthy habits and have them checked out by a chiropractor on a regular basis.”

Dr Delgado is keen to discuss the below points;

- Why school children’s backpacks should not exceed more than 10% of their body weight
- What are the long and short term effects for children carrying heavy bags throughout their lives
- What are some of the solutions to address this issue
- His advice to parents to ensure that they children do not develop forward head posture