

# Kids Spinal HEALTH

## CHECKLIST









**A GUIDE FOR PARENTS & TEACHERS**

**SUITABLE FOR YEARS K-6**

## **A Healthy Spine Supports a Growing Mind**

With up to 4 in 10 Australian students affected by low back pain at any point in time, teaching children some simple steps to help maintain spinal health can minimise back pain.

### **How to improve spinal health in kids – POSTURE MATTERS!**

-  Whether sitting, standing or walking, children should maintain a healthy upright posture with ears, shoulders, hips, knees and ankles aligned from top to toe.
-  Encourage children to walk comfortably tall, with shoulders back, relaxed, and with heads held straight and high, facing forward.
-  Backpacks should not be too heavy or overloaded. Encourage children to only pack essential items with the heaviest items positioned closest to the spine.
-  Backpacks should be worn using padded straps over both shoulders with waist and chest straps fastened.
-  Whether in the classroom or studying at home, students should sit comfortably in an upright position with shoulders relaxed and both feet flat on the floor.
-  Computer or tablet screens should be positioned at eye-level to reduce neck, shoulder and eye strain.
-  Unnecessary screen time (tablets, smartphones, computers) should be reduced with recreational screentime limited to no more than two hours per day while encouraging children to exercise and play to help maintain a healthy spine.
-  **IMPORTANT** – Regular movement breaks every 30 minutes can reduce stress on the body.

Good posture, 60 minutes of exercise and healthy, nutritious lunches and snacks daily, can help maintain a healthy spine to support a growing mind!

