



Back Pain In Our Youth .. I Wonder Why ? Part 1

By Wilma Rizal-Bilton, MS, OTR/L, CDP

As an Occupational Therapist (OT), I have a background in activity analysis. My role is to break down the parts of an activity or action in order to identify its effects on the human body. In my everyday practice, I observe my patients and I attempt to identify a better way to complete a task. The goal is to identify an easier, more efficient or safer way to do things that will essentially decrease the risk of injury or strain. One day, as I was driving along behind a school bus, I watched students get off a bus carrying oversized, overweight back packs; it was the norm, not the exception. I soon realized I didn't need to be an OT to identify that there was a problem.

I continued along Route 139, behind the school bus, stopping at every stop, but no longer being annoyed that I was going to be late for my next patient. I took this time to take note of what I saw. No matter the size of the student, the backpack that was carried was far too big and far too heavy and each student was at risk for injury. I noted each student's posture in an attempt to compensate for the added weight on the body. Some students had the backpacks on their backs in a traditional way. Straps around both shoulders forcing them to bend extremely forward at the waist to accommodate the weight. Some students had only one strap on one shoulder forcing them to lean forward as well as twisting the upper body in the other direction. Other students had backpacks on wheels which were also overstuffed and I observed the students walking, pulling their packs behind them, bent forward at the waist as the arm that was holding the handle was strained at the shoulder and forced into extreme hyperextension and rotation behind the back.

Tip for Better Living:



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Youth Health Connection Meetings & Events

South Shore FACTS: Oct. 22
8-9:30am with Dr. Kerensky
from the new Bridge Center

Positive Parenting: Nov. 4, 3:30-
5:30pm with Emily Miller, BS,
M.Ed

Annual YHC Meeting: Dec. 3, 9-
11am with Brennan Srisirikul:
Motivational Speaker around
Diversity

Back Packs Part 1 (cont.)

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None of what I observed was good for the body, especially a growing body but what could be done?

I did some research and here is what I found. According to an article written in the Journal of Clinical Chiropractic Pediatrics in 2014, the load should not exceed 10-15 % of a child's body weight. If the average 15 year old boy weighs 120 pounds, then the back pack should not weigh more than 18 pounds. I know from experience, all of the notebooks and books that a freshman in high school must carry far outweighs this limit. I can remember my own son telling me that he often carried all of his books around with him because his locker was not located in a convenient place in the school for him to go to between classes and not be late. The article also went on to state that there was increased risk of pain when the load was carried on one shoulder. This is often the way that students carry their back packs, on one shoulder, thus putting them at risk.

Youth Ambassador Training

by Margaret Curley, Cohasset High School Senior

Safe Harbor Youth Ambassadors began September 2018 with the mission to build upon Cohasset youth leadership skills, raise awareness around health issues affecting the Cohasset community, and facilitate relationships amongst peers and stakeholders. Fast forward to this past August when I had the pleasure of attending a youth advocacy training session by Dover Youth to Youth, sponsored by Safe Harbor Cohasset Coalition. This training was presented to middle and high school students as a launch pad into the 2nd year of the Youth Ambassadors program. The event was heavily youth led by a group of knowledgeable teens, each bringing their own insight to the conversation from a catalog of individual experiences in prevention in their own community of Dover, NH. Fellow Youth Ambassadors and I were challenged to find our public speaking voice by perfecting intonation and learning strategies to communicate messages professionally and effectively. Facilitators educated attendees on a wide array of advocacy skills such as interacting with the press, and crafting effective media to educate the public, all the way down to smaller details such as logistical roadblocks in gaining approval for events or scheduling. The members of Dover Youth to Youth also introduced "Samantha Skunk", a medicine safety presentation written to educate early elementary school children about the dangers of taking medication without permission. In smaller groups, Youth Ambassadors had a chance to practice the "Samantha Skunk" script with one of the facilitators and had the opportunity to engage in valuable conversations about promoting prevention and what it means to maintain sobriety as a teenager. The afternoon was wrapped up with an overview of the progress made by Dover Y2Y including local policy change, public art installations, and radio PSA's. This experience has ignited the Youth Ambassador group with passion, inspiration and plenty of new skills to utilize as we go forward into the year.



Positive Parenting Workshop

**November 4, 2019 at South Shore Health
Home Care Division At 3:00 pm. (See Flyer)**

Most parents have a common list of character traits they hope their children acquire before being launched into the world as adults themselves. This list often includes the skills of empathy, perspective-taking, kindness, respect, negotiation, etc. The tools that parents often use to teach these skills though are rewards and punishments-- which become less and less effective as kids get older. Positive Parenting takes advantage of recent research around interpersonal neurobiology to equip parents with more effective tools to teach their kids these skills. By being clear about boundaries while also being empathetic and kind, parents can build strong relationships with their kids and lay the foundation for kids to become the best versions of themselves.

This workshop will give an overview of Positive Parenting and provide experiential learning exercises to help parents put the tools into practice.



Duxbury FACTS Takes on Fake News

**October 22, 2019 at Duxbury Performing Arts Center
6:15 pm. (See Flyer)**

On Tuesday, October 22, join Duxbury FACTS for a free evening of facts vs. fake news about the use of cannabis and vaping among youth and adults. The night has several segments; tune in for one or take part in the entire program. Dr. Marisa Silveri and Dr. Jason Tracy will discuss the knowns and unknowns of cannabis use, which is legal for people over 21 but still can have serious consequences - mental and physical health, performance, and legal - for adolescents.

As access to legal (and illicit) cannabis products grows, so do the questions about its effects. THC levels and delivery systems (think vapes and edibles) offer lots of choice to consumers but it can be difficult to know how those products and devices might affect any one individual. One thing is certain: the impact on the teen brain. Hear some answers and ask your questions with the experts.



Mindfulness At Mealtime And The Back To School Routine.

The back-to-school schedule adjustments have occurred and hopefully your family has settled into a routine that is working. Now is the time to pause and consider how to help ease everyone towards a calmer end of the day transition. One way is to consider a "Mindful Mealtime."

Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment with openness and curiosity. It has a variety of research-backed impacts, including reduction in stress, and improvements in job satisfaction, emotional regulation, and focus.

Mindfulness can be used in our everyday lives and in a world that at times can be chaotic and stressful taking a few minutes for ourselves doesn't seem like such a bad idea. Being in the moment with our loved ones seems like a pretty great gift to give.

For more information:
<http://bit.ly/2paq7uo>



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Youth Health Connection is a community benefits program of South Shore Health dedicated to the positive mental health and physical well-being of youth. Our programs collaborate with schools, families and community providers to help young people deal with the various challenges they face and the decisions they must make as they grow and mature. By combining efforts, we can ensure that local youth have access to the health-related knowledge, skills and resources they need to make healthy decisions throughout their lifetime.

Youth Health Connection:

*Builds and sustains
community connections
through healthy dialogue and
sharing knowledge to keep our youth
safe today and moving forward.*

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