Strains at School – Proper Lifting Techniques Stats and Facts



FACTS

1. Improper Lifting Techniques: Bending at the waist or twisting while lifting can strain the lower back.
2. Awkward Postures: Reaching above shoulder level or extending arms to lift objects increases the risk of musculoskeletal injuries.
3. Overexertion: Attempting to lift heavy or bulky items without assistance or mechanical aids can cause injuries.
4. Repetitive Lifting: Performing the same lifting tasks repeatedly without breaks can lead to cumulative trauma disorders.
5. Poor Footwear: Wearing inappropriate shoes can lead to slips, trips, or falls during lifting activities.
6. Lack of Training: Students and school staff often lack formal training on proper lifting techniques, increasing the risk of musculoskeletal injuries when handling heavy classroom materials or sports equipment.

STATS

- In 2021–2022, musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) accounted for 27.7% of all serious work-related injuries and illnesses in private industry.
- The healthcare and social assistance industry experienced the highest number of musculoskeletal injuries and illnesses in 2021–2022.
- WorkSafeBC noted in 2025 that lifting-related musculoskeletal injuries, including sprains and strains, are a leading cause of workplace claims among school staff, with over 3,000 claims annually in British Columbia.
- A study revealed a high prevalence of MSD (77.9%) among special education teachers, with the lower back, shoulder, and neck being the most affected regions.
- The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) reported in 2022 that 40% of school staff in high-risk roles (e.g., custodians, physical education teachers) experienced strains due to lifting without proper ergonomic practices.
- A 2020 report from the Journal of School Health found that 20% of middle and high school students experienced shoulder or back strain from carrying backpacks weighing more than 15% of their body weight.