



# for BUS Drivers



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## The Right Way to Lift

Lifting, pushing and pulling is a leading cause of injury to school district employees, including bus drivers. Back injuries are a leading cause of lost work time. Back injuries aren't usually caused from one incident; it is years of abuse, wear and tear that leads to an injury. And once a back is injured it is often more susceptible to future injuries.

As a bus driver you may have to lift: students, cleaning supplies and equipment, wheelchairs and student's belongings. Here are some tips to maintain a healthy back.

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### Ways to reduce injury

- ☆ Be aware of your surroundings. Make sure pathways are clear before moving items.
- ☆ Store frequently used items where they can be accessed easily.
- ☆ Repackage items into smaller, lighter loads.
- ☆ Use a dolly or hand truck to move large items.
- ☆ Seek assistance. Never lift items that are too heavy or bulky alone.
- ☆ Exercise – strong, flexible abdomen and leg muscles help take pressure off the back during daily activities.
- ☆ Stretch before doing strenuous or heavy lifting.

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### Do's and Don'ts of Lifting

- DO** assess the load before lifting – get assistance if it is too heavy or large.
- DO** stand close to the load with your feet spread apart about shoulder width, with one foot slightly in front of the other for balance. Point your toes outward slightly and keep your knees pointing in the direction of your toes.
- DO** squat down; bend from the hips and knees. This allows your legs do the work. To keep your legs doing the work, do not let your knees go beyond your toes.
- DO** tighten your back and stomach muscles prior to lifting to help support your back.
- DO** get a firm grasp of the object before beginning the lift.
- DO** keep the load close to your body while you lift.
- DO** balance the load when you are carrying heavy packages. Holding equal weights in both arms is better than one heavy package in one arm.
- DO** turn your feet-not your torso, if you must turn while carrying the load.

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- DON'T** bend from the waist to pick up an object.
- DON'T** twist your body as you lift. Always place yourself in front of the object you are lifting.
- DON'T** lift objects higher than shoulder height. Use a step stool or ladder to move objects at heights.

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Careful attention to lifting on the job and at home and regular exercise to maintain fitness and strength will help you maintain a healthy back.

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