

National School Backpack Awareness Day

School Backpack Awareness Day is a nationally recognized event that was created by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). The purpose is to educate and build awareness around backpack safety. A backpack should not weight more than 10-15% of a student’s body weight. This event also creates a platform to gather data by weighing backpacks, enabling us to compare how our students’ backpacks measure up to the recommended limits.

How to host a Backpack Awareness Day

First Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the AOTA website for BPA Day date (or create your own) • Gain Approval from PTSA Board and Principal to host event 	One Month prior
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event: 30 mins in am prior to bell ringing • Volunteers: 1 hr prior to morning bell (set-up and educate on process) 	Ex: if morning bell is 8:15; Volunteers start 7:15, event runs 7:45-8:15am
Admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Building Use Form (from school secretary) to reserve space and tables 	2-3 wks prior
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a local PT, OT or chiropractor to team with/have host a booth/bring giveaways • Solicit prizes (ex: donated backpack for drawing) 	One month prior
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs at School –have kids make them! • Newsletter, FB page, virtual postcard, study hall • Announce at lunchtime 	1 week prior 1-2 weeks prior Day before
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign Up Genius for volunteer sign ups • Approx 22 volunteers: -20 people working 10 stations in pairs (one weighs, one records) • 2 or 3 floaters -Encourage kids to participate -Man the sticker chart for visual representation -Makes more copies/help where needed 	1-3 wks prior, ongoing until all slots are full
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables – approx. 8 (5 weight stations, sticker station, vendor booths) • Scales- bathroom scales from home, the simpler the better • Calculators (or use your phone calc) 	Day of event *Plan for 70% participation when printing materials

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout forms (for edu and to write weight for student) <i>Example attached</i> • Forms to document data- <i>Example attached</i> • Banners/signage/balloons for visibility • Chart that visually compares body wt to pack wt (<i>Example attached</i>) • Clipboards • Pens • Wipes (to clean scales) • Tents if uncovered area and raining 	
<p>Process for Volunteers</p>	<p>Goal: weigh as many packs as possible in 30 mins</p> <p>Set-up: stations go on perimeter of main entry of school to maximize participation w/o blocking flow of traffic. Sticker graph table (chart affixed to wall) should be closest to the entry so they do that after pack is weighed. Educate volunteers <u>at same time</u> so all hear the same instructions: We <u>DO NOT</u> weigh kids (big nono) Find a partner to work your station w/you One measures. One scribes.</p> <p>Measurer: weigh self (privately 😊) on scale to be used at your station. For each child you will zero scale and weigh yourself <i>and</i> their pack. Subtract to calculate pack weight. Tell scribe pack weight. You are only weighing backpacks. <u>NOT</u> other things they are carrying separately (ie coat, gym bag, skateboard, instrument) unless they are inside or attached to their backpack.</p> <p>Scribe: Fill out data collection form with child's grade, gender and pack weight for your records. Add their pack weight to the educational flyer and give to student to take home. Direct student to the sticker chart near entry door.</p> <p>Person at Sticker Graph: IF kids know their own bodywt, help show them how they can find it and their backpack wt to add a sticker to the chart and see what their % is, and if they fall within the 'safe zone.'</p> <p>Floaters: Encourage kids to participate. Point</p>	<p>Day of event</p>

	<p>out open stations. Help where needed.</p> <p>Professional Partners: educate and answer questions</p>	
<p>Additional EDU (extra credit!) 😊</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun ideas for a lunchtime presentation: • Have kids guess the weight of different backpacks • Show a visual comparative representation of a 20 lb pack using bricks • Review tips/tricks applicable to your school (ex: floppy plastic folders instead of binders) 	<p>BPA Day - lunchtime</p>
<p>Analyze/Communicate/Act</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attached is an overview of how to compile and understand the data you have collected • Create a summary to be shared with school administrators, families, students and PTSA. • Discuss findings and determine areas and methods to improve, goals for future 	<p>(need Ivana's help developing this)</p> <p>1 week after event</p> <p>2 weeks after event and ongoing</p>

Additional materials and information on the AOTA website: <http://www.aota.org/backpack>