

# CHILDCARE AND GOOD BODY MECHANICS

Childcare is hard work and can take a toll on your body. When lifting a child, bending over to play, or pushing a stroller it is important to think about how you are using your body and practice good body mechanics. Body mechanics is the way you hold your body during daily activities. When you practice good body mechanics you will avoid muscle fatigue and injuries when you walk, bend over, lift objects, and care for your grandchild.

## REASONS TO USE GOOD BODY MECHANICS

- Best use of muscles
- Makes lifting, pulling, and pushing easier
- Reduces stress and strain to your muscles and joints
- Saves energy and prevents fatigue
- Maintains good body control and balance



## LIFTING

When lifting heavy objects like car seats, strollers, or children. Remember:

- Lower body by bending at the hips and knees not back
- Keep feet shoulder-width apart
- Keep object or child close to chest
- Lift from the legs to a standing position

## STANDING

It is important to use good posture while standing.

Remember:

- Keep you feet flat on the floor shoulder-width apart
- Do not lock your knees
- Keep your shoulders down, chest out, and back straight



## PUSHING, PULLING, AND CARRYING

- Use your body weight to help push and pull
- Stay close to the load, do not lean forward
- Whenever possible, push rather than pull. You can push twice as much as you can pull without strain
- Avoid twisting the body or bending for long periods of time
- If carrying a child, switch the side you carry the child on, to give your other side a break

## SITTING

Training your body to sit with good posture helps prevent back pain and fatigue. Remember to:

- Sit upright with head facing forward
- Keep shoulders relaxed and avoid a rounded back
- Chair should support the lower back
- Feet should be flat on the floor



Ties That Bind is a program of the Jessie F. Richardson Foundation. With this program, we aim to connect grandparents and kinship caregivers with the resources they need.

Visit us at <http://tiesthatbindor.org/> for more.