



Genius

Pediatric Therapy Center

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Body Mechanics Education

PHYSICAL THERAPY FORUM

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Parents: Safety Tips for Lifting Your Children

The "APPLAUSE" system for teaching the body mechanics of lifting.

A is for apart - keep your feet apart when lifting. A wide base of support keeps the load centered over your base of support.

A is for pivot - Be sure to pivot or turn with your feet rather than twisting or turning with your body. Twisting and turning can weaken and put pressure on the discs and eventually lead to a spinal injury if the force is great or repetitive.

P is also for plan and practice - If you are unsure about the weight of the load or whether you can handle the weight safely, check the load by doing a practice lift. Simply lift the object and place it back down to judge whether you need help. Planning the lift helps you to be safer.

L is for leg - Lift with your legs. The muscles of the legs are power muscles, designed for power activities. So perform the lift by keeping your back erect (in its normal curves) and squatting with your legs to perform the lift.

A is for approach - Approach the lift close to your body. Keep the load as close to your body as you can. A load held at arms length will make you work harder than a load held close to the body.

U is for up - Keep the head up while lifting. Keeping your head up (eyes level, not down) helps to keep your spine in its normal curves.

S is for stomach - Tighten the stomach muscles as you lift. Just as weight lifters use belts to protect their backs, we can contract our abdominal muscles when we lift, to add support to our backs.

E is for easy - Move slow and easy to lift. Quick jerks are much harder on the bones, joints and muscles. Slow and easy is kinder to the body.