

# Back pain at school *Campaign on a page*

## **BACK PAIN IS THE WORLD'S LEADING CAUSE OF HUMAN DISABILITY**

**Why back pain** • Back pain is the now the world's leading cause of human disability and, together with related musculoskeletal conditions, accounts for a quarter of UK sickness absence. But contrary to popular belief, back pain is not just an adult problem.

## **ONE IN FOUR UK KIDS HAVE REGULAR OR DAILY BACK PAIN**

**New findings** • In 2015, BackCare surveyed 900 secondary school pupils (11-16 years) across the UK, revealing that two thirds of UK secondary pupils have experienced back pain. One in four UK secondary pupils suffers from back pain regularly or every day – this was higher amongst girls (27%) than boys (19%). Neck and shoulder pain were also very common, affecting a similar number.

## **HEAVY OR TIRING SCHOOL BAGS = 10 TIMES MORE BACK PAIN**

**School bag burden** • was found to be very common and strongly linked to back pain. Half of those surveyed said their school bag often or always felt tiring or too heavy for them. Back pain was ten times more common amongst pupils with heavy or tiring school bags.

## **BACK PAIN ALMOST DOUBLED WITH MORE HOURS SITTING**

**Prolonged sitting** • Pupils were also asked to estimate the number of hours they spend sitting per day in the classroom, at meal times, whilst travelling, when doing homework and during their free time. The survey revealed that UK secondary pupils sit for an average of 9 hours per day. Back pain was almost doubled amongst pupils with higher than average sitting times. Studies have linked sitting for more than 4 hours per day with increased risk of diabetes, obesity, heart disease, cancer, depression and dementia.

## **HELP US REACH ALL 8,000 UK SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**Prevention begins at school** • Our lifelong relationship with health begins in childhood. But are schools creating the next generation of back pain patients?

**Help us raise £50,000 to reach all 8,000 UK secondary schools with our full report and guidance on preventing back pain in children.**

[www.backcare.org.uk/8000schools](http://www.backcare.org.uk/8000schools)

**Got back pain? Free monthly email newsletter: [www.backcare.org.uk/join](http://www.backcare.org.uk/join)**

