

OCTOBER, 2013

Failure is the key to success; each mistake teaches us something.  
[Morihei Ueshiba](#)

# Therakids

## ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EDUCATORS AND PLANTING THE SEEDS OF CLASSROOM WELLNESS.

### LIFTING, TRANSFERS, AND BODY MECHANICS

When completing a lift from the floor or transfer from a wheelchair, it is important to use proper posture and keep your back in alignment. This can be done by maintaining the curves in your spine. Lift with the large muscles in the legs and hip not the small muscles in your back around your spine. Between each vertebra of the spine is a shock-absorbing cushion called a disc. In addition to the discs; muscles, ligaments, and nerves make up the back. Your muscles surrounding the spine (stomach, back, buttocks, hip and thigh muscles) all provide support and stability to the back. They must all work together when lifting or moving an object to prevent an injury.

#### LIFTING AN OBJECT FROM THE FLOOR

Keeping the spine's natural curves during lifting movements is very important. The design of the leg and buttocks muscles makes them better for lifting than the back muscles. Bend at the hips and knees, not the back, and squat when you lift an object. Keep the load as close to you as possible. Straighten your legs. Be careful not to twist as you return to a standing position.



© Healthwise, Incorporated

#### STANDING TRANSFER FROM A WHEELCHAIR

When transferring a student, remember that he or she should do as much as they are capable of throughout the transfer.

- Position the wheelchair as close as possible to the transfer surface at a 45-90 degree angle.
- Stand in front or to the side of the student, depending on the assistance required. If two people are needed to perform the transfer, you will either have one on each side of the student, or one in front and the other in the back, depending on the situation.
- Have the student scoot forward to the edge of the chair so that the student's feet are flat on the floor.
- Instruct the student to stand up by pushing up from the chair using the armrest and coming forward with their nose over their toes.
- Once the student is standing, make sure they have their balance.
- The student should take steps toward the surface they are transferring to.
- When the student has backed up to the surface, they may begin to reach for the armrest and slowly sit down.

#### ONE-PERSON LIFT TRANSFER FROM A WHEELCHAIR

Always allow the student to do as much as they are able to throughout the transfer even if it is just to lift their head or bend their knees.

- Stand on the side of the wheelchair or mat with both feet firmly planted shoulder width apart for good balance.
- Have the student lean forward slightly and place your arm around their back near the shoulder blades.
- Place your other arm under the student's knees. Be aware of your body mechanics and bend from your knees, NOT from your back.
- Bring the child close to you and lift on the count of 3. When lifting and carrying, keep the child as close to your own body as possible.
- Move the child to the transferring surface and lower the child down safely by bending your knees. Shift the position of your feet to turn.



**For past newsletters, go to**  
[www.therakids.org](http://www.therakids.org) and click on newsletters.

Therakids P.C. provides specialized occupational, physical and speech therapy services to help children overcome developmental concerns. Services are provided in the school setting throughout southwestern Illinois by licensed occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, physical therapists, physical therapist assistants and speech-language pathologists. **Email: [www.Therakids.org](http://www.Therakids.org)**

