

**Antelope Valley Union High School District
Facts about Body Mechanics for Staff**

Proper posture and body mechanics for staff

- Proper techniques used by staff in the course of lifting and carrying are to ensure the correct positioning of the body's center of gravity
- Consistent use of proper technique promotes health and movement, increases energy and endurance, and dramatically reduces the risk of injury for everyone
- Proper techniques are **required to be learned and used consistently by all** employees when lifting or moving ANY objects or persons
- Proper techniques may include a mechanical lift (Guldmann, Hoyer, etc.); if available, employees are **required** to use them

What can happen to you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headaches, neck, and / or back pain• Pain that worsens with movement• Sudden uncontrollable muscle contractions or spasms | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty walking, bending forward or sideways or standing up straight• Temporary or long term aches and pains, muscle strain, and increased tension on the tissues in the joints |
|---|---|

Key Points to remember

- Explain what you are going to do and ask the person to help because this relaxes the person, decreases fear, prevents startle reflexes, and decreases the chance of injury to both the lifter and the student
- Test the weight prior to lifting it in order to make sure it can be lifted safely
- Plan the move by decreasing the distance between the person and the lift, clear the travel path, make sure floor is dry and safe, provide a firm and stable surface, and lock the wheelchair brakes, remove the arm and foot rests, if necessary
- Use a wide stance by increasing base of support, putting feet shoulder width apart, and wearing low-heeled, non-skid shoes
- Monitor your body positions and those of your assistants by bending at the knees, using buttock and leg muscles to lift, evenly distributing the load between both sides of body, pulling the load / student close to your torso (center of gravity), tucking the chin, keeping the head and trunk erect (which helps the lower back maintain its normal position), and tighten abdominal muscles
- To change positions during the lift, move the torso (navel), head (nose), knees and toes in the same direction at the same time while avoiding bending and twisting

What should you do if you have an injury?

- Contact the site Principal's secretary for referral to a health provider
- Contact the Director of Risk Management at the District Office
- If there is no immediate injury, when should you contact your health care provider?
 - You have severe pain and cannot walk for more than a few steps
 - You have numbness in the area of injury or down your leg
 - You have injured your lower back several times before
 - You have a lump or area with an unusual shape
 - You have pain that interferes with sleep

Revised 2008