



Weighted backpack FACT SHEET



Proprioception is the information that we get from muscles and joints to tell us where our body is in space. Activities that make **muscles work hard**, such **carrying**, provide lots of proprioception.

A backpack weighted with rice bags can help some children to calm, or can increase alertness in other children. This is because the weight of the backpack provides extra resistance during movement. This then helps a child to get their attention levels just right to sit and complete activities or help them improve their body awareness.

NEVER USE MORE THAN 10% OF YOUR CHILD'S OWN BODY WEIGHT IN THE BACKPACK.

Important Notes

- As each child will have a different amount of rice then backpacks should not be shared between children.
- Only use rice as weights for the backpacks DO NOT use bottles, books or tins as these can hurt your child's spine.
- Your child should only wear the backpack when completing "active" activities. It should not be worn when they are sitting or lying.
- If your child shows any concerning behaviours or dislikes the backpack then stop using it and contact you Occupational Therapist.

Backpacks should be used with guidance from an Occupational Therapist.

When to wear it?

The backpack should be worn at various points during the day when the child is walking/ marching around school in the playground, at the park or walking to and from school. Don't wear it all of the time.

How to make your weighted backpack....



You will need:

- Your child's weight in kilograms (kg)
- A backpack that fits your child well and has wide padded straps
- Uncooked rice
- Food bags

In order for the backpack to be effective it will need to be weighed down with 10% of your child's body weight in rice.

Use this calculation below to work out how much rice is needed for your child:

Child's weight =

Weight _____ divided by 100 = _____ multiply by 10 = _____
(amount of rice)

For example, if a child weighs 45kg:

45 divided by 100 = 0.45, then multiply by 10 = 4.5kg

So for this particular child 4.5 kg of rice would be needed.