

10 ways to protect your back on the job

1. Hold a child close to your body and avoid twisting motions. Lower the crib side before lifting a child out. If it is appropriate and safe, encourage toddlers to climb up or down stairs—with your help—rather than carrying them.
2. Have some full-sized furniture as well as child-sized chairs, tables or desks. Sit in comfortable chairs with good back support when rocking or holding children.
3. Ensure that diaper-changing tables are at an appropriate adult height. Offer toddlers a step-stool so they can climb up onto a change table (with your help) rather than being lifted.
4. Use a stroller for outings if there's a possibility that children might get too tired to walk.
5. Have proper footwear. Choose comfortable non-slip shoes that provide proper arch and foot support.
6. Store items for easy access, with the heaviest items at waist height. Use a stool when reaching for items on high shelves.
7. Don't move or lift heavy furniture by yourself.
8. Transport garbage in manageable loads, and use a cart for heavier loads.
9. Avoid prolonged bending. Reduce or eliminate bending by kneeling or squatting to face a child. Avoid being on the floor in uncomfortable positions for extended periods. When sitting on the floor, use a wall or furniture for back support.
10. Be aware. Educate staff about preventing back injuries and use an *Injury report form* to determine where and how an injury occurred.