# Using Tools and Equipment to Prevent Strains – School Safety Stats & Facts

## FACTS

1. **Manual Handling of Heavy Objects:** Lifting or moving heavy items without assistance can lead to musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), including strains and sprains.
2. **Inadequate Use of Assistive Equipment:** Failure to utilize tools like carts or lifts increases the risk of overexertion injuries.
3. **Improper Workstation Setup:** Non-ergonomic furniture and equipment can cause repetitive strain injuries over time.
4. **Lack of Training on Equipment Use:** Without proper instruction, staff may misuse tools, leading to accidents or injuries.
5. **Overreliance on Manual Effort:** Not employing available mechanical aids can result in unnecessary physical strain.
6. **Inadequate Breaks During Repetitive Tasks:** Continuous repetitive motions without rest can lead to cumulative trauma disorders.

## STATS

- The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported in 2020 that 35% of musculoskeletal injuries among school staff were due to overexertion from lifting or moving heavy objects, preventable with material handling tools like dollies.
- WorkSafeBC noted in 2022 that 2,500 school staff claims annually in British Columbia were for musculoskeletal strains, with 30% linked to manual handling tasks that could be mitigated by carts or lifting aids.
- A 2021 NIOSH study found that 28% of school custodial injuries were strains from manual material handling, with lack of access to ergonomic tools cited as a key factor.
- A 2021 Statistics Canada survey indicated that 22% of school-aged students reported back pain from carrying heavy loads, reducible with lightweight backpacks or wheeled bags.
- OSHA reported in 2022 that schools implementing ergonomic interventions, such as adjustable furniture and handling aids, saw a 40% reduction in staff strain-related injuries.
- The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) stated in 2020 that repetitive strain injuries, preventable with ergonomic tools, accounted for 15% of school staff workplace health complaints.