

# NEWSLTR

## The Workplace Wellness Conference and Exhibition

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Corporate role models  
Speaker highlight  
Dr. Michael Longyear

The Workplace Wellness  
Conference and Exhibition

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## Role-model healthy behaviors.

A strong well-being culture starts at the top. When employees see senior leaders and managers actively focusing on health, they become more comfortable devoting time to their own health. It also signals that well-being is an integral part of the culture, not just a nice-to-have.

Creating a culture where employee well-being comes first is not just about providing benefits and perks, it's about creating an environment where employees feel supported, valued, and empowered to grow.

Leadership can play an important role in creating such a culture by encouraging compassionate leadership. Compassionate leadership involves listening to and supporting employees in a way that helps them overcome obstacles and succeed. This can involve providing individualized support, mentoring and coaching to employees.

Leaders can also set the tone at the top level of the organization by modeling healthy habits and behaviors. For example, if leaders eat well and exercise regularly, they are likely to encourage their teams to do the same.

Employee well-being is critical to the success of any business. It's important for leaders to take steps towards improving employee well-being as part of their overall strategy for success.





## Children and ergonomics

You wouldn't think using your computer or carrying a backpack would be dangerous. But thousands of kids are injured each year by too-heavy backpacks or Repetitive Stress Injuries (like Carpal Tunnel Syndrome) that come from poor posture and typing habits.

The good news is that these injuries are easy to avoid. That means designing backpacks to put less stress on the back or arranging computer monitors so that you don't have to strain to see the monitor. Kids have special needs when it comes to computers, from a smaller mouse for smaller hands to footrests that support the dangling feet of children in adult-sized chairs. Keeping your kids safe means tailoring the workstation to their pint-sized frames using good products, the proper setup, and healthy usage habits.

Read on for a quick list of tips and suggestions on keeping your kids comfortable. Since kids often sit in adult chairs, they tend to look up at the monitor, lean forward in their chairs, and tilt their heads back in a position that can cause neck pain. Your child's eyes should be level with or just slightly below the top of the monitor, about 24 inches away, or arms within reach. (Ensure you don't raise her chair so high that their feet are unsupported). Their monitor should be directly in front of them, not off to the side.

*Ergonomics is fitting the task to the worker, not the worker to the task.*

Consider using a document holder if your child frequently works from papers or a textbook. These allow you to support books and papers closer to the monitor and at a more ergonomic angle. Positioning documents close to the screen will minimize the time your child has

to turn or twist his head while working. And try to put the document on the dominant eye side of the monitor.

Childhood is also when most eye conditions (such as nearsightedness) tend to develop, so if you find your child leaning in to see the monitor, check their eyes. Finally, consider using a good quality, anti-glare glass screen to help your child avoid squinting and eye strain.

If you and your child use the same computer workstation, you'll want to ensure it is adjustable. Proper posture is essential; it helps kids learn what's known as "neutral" posture.

Their arms should lie close to their body (not outstretched or reaching to the side), their elbows should be at a 90° or greater angle (this is known as an "open angle"), and their wrists should be neutral (i.e., with their wrist at about the same level as their forearm). In general, kids aren't as attuned to the position of their bodies. Hence, it's imperative to watch your child's posture and habits, reminding him when necessary.

Kids have small hands, but most use their parents' keyboards. This can be uncomfortable at best and dangerous at worst. A few companies make smaller "kid-sized" keyboards that may be helpful for younger children (these keyboards have more minor keys and shorter distances between the keys). Many companies also make miniature mice for small hands. Laptops afford a smaller keyboard and are better for children as long as neck flexion is avoided. Typically a laptop stand will solve that problem.

Make sure to regulate your child's time on the computer and encourage breaks. These frequent rests can help reduce the likelihood of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Computer Vision Syndrome, and other conditions. However, since adults are better than children at remembering when to stop, you'll need to watch a little

more closely - or use monitoring software that pops up the occasional "break reminder."

Most of us remember carrying backpacks in school; we're also familiar with the aching backs and sore necks they can cause. But backpacks don't have to be so uncomfortable - and there are ways to ease the load. Read on for backpack usage tips and guidelines for choosing the right backpack.

Start by ensuring the backpack has padded straps - the more expansive, the

better. Wider straps

help distribute the

load better, meaning

there's less stress in

any area. While at it,

consider a backpack

with multiple

compartments; these

can help you better

distribute your child's

belongings and even out the load. Find a backpack with

additional padding in the area that rests against your

child's back. And if you find one with a waist belt, choose

it - this help distribute the load more evenly and removes

stress from your child's lower back.

*A good rule of thumb is to limit the weight of your child's backpack to no more than 15% of their weight.*

For those on the cutting edge, consider a backpack on wheels. Similar in design to the luggage that many flight attendants carry, they're becoming increasingly trendy and help take the load off your child's back.

Encourage your kids to wear both straps when carrying their backpacks. While it may



Being fashionable to carry the backpack on one shoulder makes their load harder to bear and focused in one area - increasing their risk of injury. Also, many kids tend to wear their backpacks "low," resting against the lower lumbar region or buttocks. Bringing the backpack up to the mid or upper back (just below the shoulders) and letting the bottom rest on the hips/pelvis is ideal. (Remember - the closer their backpack is to their body, the less strain they'll feel). If their backpack has a waist belt, use it.

Try to avoid overpacking. While the exact weight limitation varies by child...

### How parents can help

Remember to pack the heaviest, flattest items in the back (i.e., the area that touches your child's back). Consider purchasing two sets of textbooks for your child, keeping one at home, and leaving one at school. Since your child then has a textbook at either location, he doesn't need to carry them back and forth. If this isn't possible, encourage your child to use his locker between classes, carrying only the textbooks he needs for that class. (If the school's administration has removed lockers, let them know your concerns about ergonomics and safety).

*Dr. Mark Vettraino*

### Conference Details

[Website](#)

[Early Bird Registration](#)

[Hotel Discount](#)



### Michael Longyear, DC, DACNB, CCSP

Dr. Michael Longyear is a Functional Neurology Clinician. Dr. Mike's passion for helping others comes from personal experience. Having been paralyzed through a traumatic football injury during his sophomore year in high school, he beat the odds and did what the doctors said was impossible.

Feeling defeated hearing that he would never walk again, he used their words as fuel to drive his rehab and he walked out of the hospital a month later. Since that time, he has dedicated himself to helping others defy the odds and never accept their new normal. In his own case, none of his doctors really had a consistent diagnosis.

So he started researching his case. His passion led him to Parker University to study chiropractic, where he graduated valedictorian and continued his studies in Applied Clinical NeuroScience. Still searching for answers, he continued to study many disciplines: Chiropractic, Neurology, Psychology and Functional Medicine, just to name a few.