

## POSTURE

(see also Competency #4)

### ACTIVITIES FOR POSTURE SECTION

Discuss the importance of good posture. Walk the students through a series of activities to help them improve their posture. Have them practice these steps.

### DISCUSSION

Like the expression of your eyes or mouth, your carriage is a key to character. Standing and moving well signal self confidence and good self esteem.

People who droop and just sort of drift around look like nonentities. Those who hold themselves with pride and walk with purpose appear vital and stimulating.

If a boy slumps his shoulders or a girl ducks her head and stares at the floor as she walks, it is a safe bet that they may want to disappear, or at least hope that no one will notice them. Standing as though you know you are worthwhile and self confident will help you to feel that way and make others see you that way too.

Are you that picture of perfect posture? Standing with shoulders straight, pulled up rib cage, tucked in tummy, or are you a slouch? A slouch is someone who slumps. They may slump due to fatigue or trying to appear shorter.

Posture is the position of your body when you sit, stand, and move. For good posture, you should stand with your head centered over the rest of your body. Keep your back straight and shoulders back but relaxed.

Pull your abdomen in and up while tucking your hips under slightly. Bend your knees a little, but keep relaxed.

As you walk, hold the upper part of your body as you should for standing. Swing your legs from the hip as you step. Be sure to keep your toes pointed straight ahead and your feet parallel.

Sit with your back straight and your hips touching the back of the chair. Keep your neck in line with your upper back. If you are working at a desk or table, lean forward from the hips.

When you bend, move with back straight, bend from the knees to pick up things from the floor. Picking up objects from the floor or low places while bending from the waist can damage the back.

Whether you are bending, sitting, walking, your body should be in good alignment. Alignment means that the bones, muscles, and organs are lined up correctly in relation to each other.

Good posture will make you look taller, more poised, and sure of yourself.

**TAKE THIS POSTURE TEST TO CHECK !**

1. Sit down, naturally like you usually do. Can you fit both hands flat, one above the other, between the lowest point of your chest and your waist? If you can't, you're too crumpled up!
2. Stand up with your back against a wall. Where does your body touch the wall? It should touch at your head, shoulders, and buttocks, and the small of your back won't be more than a hand's thickness away.
3. With a friend, check your profile in a full-length mirror. Do you see a straight line from your head to the bottom of your feet. Does it bisect you at the shoulder, hip knee, and ankle bone? It should!
4. Stand as you usually do and measure your waist with a tape measure. Now pull up your rib cage with your diaphragm muscles and measure again. Slimmer? The straighter you stand the more you flatter yourself.