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## Attention: Assignment & Photo Editors

### Quick tips for creating a healthy homework station

*Avoid the kitchen table to avoid low back pain.*

**Markham, ON - August 10, 2004** - Today's students are sitting for longer periods of time doing homework or using the computer and complaints among school aged children are growing.

“Creating a healthy ergonomically correct homework station can go a long way towards preventing muscle tension and pain in the shoulders and back.” says Sue Pridham, a health and wellness consultant for STAPLES Business Depot and president, of Tri Fit Inc.

Sue offers these simple tips to create a healthy homework station that can go a long way in reducing spinal and joint stress and improving posture and productivity.

1. Create a space dedicated to homework and using the computer.
2. Ensure workstation is big enough to hold all your equipment and frequently used items are close by to avoid excessive twisting or reaching.
3. Position computer monitor at arms length away and with the top of the monitor at eye level.
4. Use a document holder when typing from a textbook or document to avoid unnecessary head twisting.
5. Use a height adjustable chair-with a comfortable seat, good back support and adjustable arm rests.
  - Allow for a hand-width distance between the back of your knees and the edge of your chair.
  - When writing, tilt the seat slightly forward to reduce pressure on the discs of the spine.
  - When doing computer work-tilt the seat slightly backwards up to 5 degrees to create more lumbar support in the backrest.
6. Ensure proper sitting position:
  - Arm rests:* elbows rest close to your body and bent at a 90 degree angle.
  - Seat:* hips and knees at a 90 degree angle, thighs parallel to the floor. Sit all the way back in the chair, to avoid slouching and poor posture.
  - Shoulders:* relaxed, not hunched or forward.
  - Wrists:* neutral or slightly up.
  - Feet:* resting flat on the ground. If they don't consider using a footrest.
7. Use a negative slope/tilt down keyboard system
8. Ensure the mouse fits the size of your hand or use a smaller keyboard for a better fit.

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