

Shoe Shopping Tips for Children

Summertime is almost over and school bells are getting ready to ring. It's Back to School time and shoe sales are popping up in malls and stores all over the country. It's that time of year again when kids begin begging for the most fashionable new shoes to wear to school.

While parents may want to keep their young ones happy and content, it's important for them to remember their most important task; keeping their children safe and protected. That's why the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) wants all parents to understand the importance of buying properly fitted, supportive shoes that offer protection and comfort.

Unfortunately some of the most trendy shoe styles do not provide proper support for the feet. Certain shoes, such as platforms and sandals, can cause serious problems such as ankle sprains, ingrown toenails, bunions, blisters, calluses, and painful tendinitis. Parents should know that the condition and fit of the shoe is more important than any price tag or brand name.

Here are some tips from APMA to help make sure students are in the best pair of shoes for the first day of school:

1. Check out the shoe itself. Look for stiff material on either side of the heel, adequate cushioning and a built-in arch. The shoe should bend at the ball of the foot, not in the middle of the shoe.
2. Always have your child's feet measured every time you purchase new shoes, as children's feet change sizes rapidly.
3. Shoes should not slip off the heels.
4. High-tops or boots generally help prevent ankle sprains
5. Limit the time children wear platform or heeled shoes. Alternate them with good quality sneakers or flat shoes during the day.
6. Don't buy shoes that need a "break in" period. Good shoes should feel comfortable right away.
7. For athletic activities, choose a shoe that is designed for the sport your child will be playing.
8. Be aware that children might not complain about their foot discomfort. Proper foot care is important to the overall health of children. Go to a podiatrist at the first sign of foot problems.

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