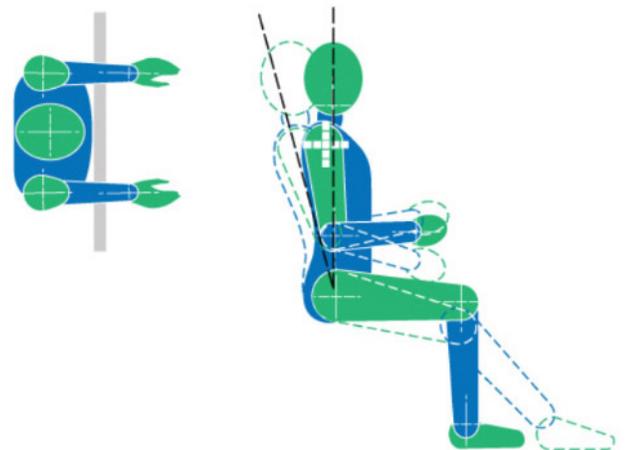




Does my child need an ergonomic desk chair?

With online learning and gaming becoming more of a norm, establishing the right workspace for your child is crucial to ensure remote learning is as impactful as it can be. It is also important to emphasize that children should not lounge on their bed or sofa during class and study times, as this can quickly become a bad habit. For students who are still growing, and don't quite reach the work surface comfortably, a height-adjustable chair is important for proper posture and supporting their musculoskeletal system. When working at a desk, or a makeshift workstation, our goal is to sit in neutral posture which is the least fatiguing posture for the body to maintain. Neutral posture includes:

1. Knees at 90° or greater
2. Hands, arms, and wrist are in line and parallel to the floor
3. Feet are resting flat on the floor or a Foot Flexor
4. Head is upright with the head aligned to the torso
5. Shoulders are relaxed
6. Elbows are kept close to your sides with a 90° angle
7. Thighs and hips fit comfortably in the seat which is parallel to the floor
8. Spine is upright, and fully supported



Source: Figure A.2, CSA Z412-17, Office ergonomics - An application standard for workplace ergonomics. © 2017 Canadian Standards Association. (Standard to be reaffirmed late 2022). Please visit store.csagroup.org

The good news is that you can purchase a chair based on your child's current measurements. You should ensure that it has the maximum number of adjustment features built in to it so that the chair can grow in size with your child, while helping them achieve the recommended neutral posture.

Adjustability features to look for in an ergonomic chair for your child

- Height is determined primarily by the growth in the bones of the legs. Choosing a chair with a **seat slider** provides seat depth adjustment, letting you extend the length of the seat as your child's femur (thigh bone) continues to grow.
- The **pneumatic gas lift** controls the chair's height, and can be adjusted accordingly or replaced with a lift that has a different height range, to accommodate growth of the tibia (shin bone), or if the height of their work surface changes.
- As your child's body mass changes, a new **seat pan** may be required to permit for changes in the width of your child's hips.

Other options to consider for a child's desk chair

- It may be necessary to introduce a foot rest when the child is not quite tall enough to reach the tabletop and their feet don't touch the floor. The ergoCentric Foot Flexor also helps encourage movement while seated, which could be a perfect calming activity for those who can't sit still.
- As your child's chair may be used for tasks other than schoolwork, choosing an easily cleanable upholstery material such as Nymatrix is a good idea.

Every ergoCentric task chair is built using a modular manufacturing system meaning individual components – for example, seat pans, gas lift, casters – can be replaced when required. In other words, you don't need to buy a "kid-sized" chair. An ergoCentric task chair purchased for your pre-teen can support their growing bodies and minds all the way through to university, and beyond!



By Lyn Hatt, Certified Ergonomics Specialist

With more than 20 years of experience, Lyn Hatt has been raising public awareness and sharing her abundance of knowledge through training sessions, ergonomic assessments, and as one of our Ergonomic Seating Specialists.