

Ask the schoolchildren!

If there is to be any hope of limiting the number of back-patients, the school is unquestionably the place where the preventive measures must be taken.

School children have always shown an aptitude for avoiding the most harmful sitting positions, and I suggest that a closer study of their evasive manoeuvres may be used to give an indication of how the furniture of the future should look.

The people who decide which furniture the children should use today are for the most part in their fifties and sixties. They have stiff backs and their eyesight has deteriorated; that is to say, they have an optimal reading distance more than double that of a child.

Surely it would be better to ask the children themselves what they find to be most suitable. It really is about time that people began to relate the various types and heights of furniture to the children's sitting positions.

Using an automatic camera, it is quite easy to take a series of photographs of the working postures of a class of students during the course of a whole day. The result is an excellent piece of documentation to use as the starting-point for an evaluation of furniture's applicability as something other than decorative objects.

From: A.C. Mandal, *The Seated Man* (p 21)