



SAFETY: Jay Richards and Rod Jameson show Jesse, Max and Lily how to limber up. Pictured on the sides are teacher resource materials .

Picture: TOM LEE

Preventing spinal injury among kids

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TWO SUPER safety heroes are coming to classrooms across the state aiming to spread the word about a new spinal safety program.

Back to Basics, which was launched on Friday by the Neil Sachse Foundation, is a web-based program which offer teachers age-appropriate information, online games and activities that could be integrated into English, maths, science and PE lessons.

Program developer Jay Richards said the program was highly interactive, with all activities able to be downloaded.

“Back to Basics is centred around two primary-school children, Wendy and Victor, who in their imagination have developed their own cartoon characters, Wonder Wendy and

Captain Victorious,” he said.

“Students follow them as they develop a dangerous obstacle course in their backyard.

“Their next-door neighbour, Yvie, who is wheel-chair bound, notices what they are doing and shares her own story to illustrate how easy it is to damage your spine. Yvie explains what Wendy and Victor should do if a spinal injury should happen and offers strategies to still have fun, but keep your spine safe.”

Students can follow the characters, taking part in quizzes, games and safety surveys - which they can complete at home with their parents. Once completed, students qualify as “Super Safety Heroes”.

In resources sent out to schools, teachers receive warning signs, posters and bookmarks. Mr Richards said Back to Basics was not compulsory.

Instead, teachers are able to choose how much they use - from a single lesson to an hour a week.

At the program launch, Education Minister Jay Weatherill announced the State Government would be contributing an extra \$10,000 on top of the \$50,000 already offered to the program.

“The real credit goes to Neil Sachse and his effort to make a real difference,” he said.

The Neil Sachse Foundation was established in 1995 with the aim of finding a cure for spinal cord injury. Mr Sachse has been wheelchair-bound since 1975 after injuring his spinal cord while playing football for Footscray (now the Western Bulldogs).

Former Crows premiership player Rod Jameson is an ambassador for the foundation.

Visit www.adelaidenow.com.au/education or www.bactobasics.org.au for more information.